
an comann

fifty small towns in scotland

by laura hart + joanna hooi

an comann in scots gaelic means ‘in society, a collection, group or bringing together’

preface

Small towns are an important part in the urban fabric of Scotland. This document de-constructs 50 case studies over a 150 year period. Using figure ground illustrations it provides a graphical record of their physical development to reveal patterns of growth. This is accompanied by background research looking at significant historic events and trends. Current socio economic statistics are used to establish a broad picture of each town today, to illustrate how the past has impacted on the present performance of each settlement.

The purpose of this study is to identify key factors that have led to past failure or success. These towns are categorised selected and grouped to show a correlation between typology and performance. The town types included are; market, industrial, planned, coastal, commuter and tourist. There seems to be a link between historical type and the current success of the settlements. This connection is shown visually through the town’s figure ground.

This study seems to show that across the case studies a crucial factor in the development of our towns is function. The demise of industrial towns which after the loss of their main employer have struggled to adjust to the 21st century. Conversely, those towns that have adapted to suit modern lifestyles appear to be thriving.

Above all, this study illustrates that important trends of the past can provide the foundation to steer future development whilst respecting the integrity of our towns.

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introduction

Small towns are very much part of the urban landscape of Scotland. They provide not only a historical legacy but are important drivers for the economy, activity and culture; they are an important focal point for rural communities. Creating a successful town can have significant effects for its hinterland and protect the countryside from unnecessary development.

Over the course of the twentieth century, many of Scotland's small towns have been threatened by decline. Loss of industry and employment has taken the heart out of some of our small towns leaving a legacy of derelict buildings and a commuting workforce. Subsequently the identity, purpose and pride of many small towns are under threat and the economic potential and benefits these towns can offer the rest of the country is not being realised. Conversely, some towns appear to be thriving. This document aims to investigate the factors that influence these situations by providing a comprehensive graphical resource to show the evolution of small towns in Scotland over the past 150 years.

A variety of town types and sizes throughout Scotland is analysed to give a broad range of patterns and trends. Historical figure grounds are used to provide a visual record of development over time and to compare and contrast the growth of towns at 50 year intervals. These are then paired with current socio-economic statistics in order to establish the effects that historical development has had on the present status of the selected case studies.

As we enter a new age of urban renaissance the way our towns grow and are shaped may be markedly different than the past fifty years. The document is based on the concept that to appreciate small towns and how these may be best adapted in the future, it is important to fully understand how they have evolved over time. It is a morphological study of the built form and the people and processes that have shaped it. The document is divided in to four sections:

Section one - Methodology - process undertaken to compile this book

Section two - Background Research

Scotland over time - [1] History of small towns and planning Scotland
[2] Statistical analysis of current demographic trends.

Section three - Case studies and analysis - Market towns
Industrial towns
Planned towns
Coastal towns
Commuter towns
Tourist towns

Section four - Results

scotland over time

Part 1- History of Small Towns and Planning.

Part 2 - Demographic of Scotland Today and Tomorrow.

This chapter is in two parts. The first section looks at the past giving a brief history of small towns and the Scottish planning system over time. The second part gives an account of current socio-economic conditions and demographics. It then predicts how these may change in the future.

12th - 15th centuries

12th century - Market towns were the first type of settlement to emerge. They were designed in a defensive pattern, with high streets often tightly arranged along routes to Castles.

- Introduction of Royal Charters. These titles were appointed to settlements giving them trading monopolies and access to ports (Royal Burgh, Burgh of Barony etc).

- 13th century - Expansion of trade and discovery of water power introducing mills and the textile industry.

- 14th/15th centuries - Success achieved in the 12th and 13th century came to an abrupt stop in 1296. For 21 weeks Edward I of England launched a campaign on Scotland, sweeping through the country taking every notable castle.

- Throughout the 14th and 15th centuries numerous towns were burnt to the ground on the commands of the English kings, sparing nothing. This period was intermingled with war, famine and economic decline.

- In an effort to mend the failing economy laws were introduced regarding clothing, drinking times and sport. In the later half of 15th century, empty sites were given grants to repopulate areas where trade was depressed. 40- 50 new Burghs formed between the 14th and 15th century.

- Towns designed by surveyors appointed by King, layouts related to defence and the protection of public buildings.

- Some early regulation monitored by the Dean of the Guild. They would control alterations and additions to the town as well as ensure uniform appearance and disposal of waste. Mainly concerned with protection

16th & 17th centuries

16th Century - Developments in quarrying techniques leads to a change in building material & stone takes over from timber construction. This allowed important buildings to become more prominent.

- Foreign Trade prospered and development continued with a further 77 royal burghs forming throughout the 16th century.

17th Century - Period of development with over 160 small villages elevated to burgh status, however only a few of these succeeded.

- Industrialisation began with factories appearing in Glasgow and Greenock and smaller burghs venturing into glass and pottery.

- New buildings and institutions, such as banks, were required to support new industry. Royal Burghs formed; they accommodated most of these becoming administrative and financial centres.

- War with England lead to a depreciation in trade as commerce with the country ceased, the two competed for overseas trade.

- Plague and famine devastated Scotland leading to a 20 % loss in population

- Dean of the Guild evolve from being concerned with mainly mercantile interests to protecting the public.

- First set of building control clauses is published in Edinburgh in 1674, this addresses fire safety, protection of private property and the introduction of a land use register. However, adoption of the regulations was not compulsory and was often ignored.

18th & 19th centuries

- The Union of the Parliaments in 1707 joined Scotland and England. Peace allowed the country to develop.
- Scotland entered a new era in economics and wealth brought on by the progress in manufacturing and engineering methods.
- Towns emerged as industrial settlements, a new second rank of town after the Royal Burghs.
- New settlements were often villages that had merged together or extensions of existing rural parishes. They did not manage to assume any of the power of the Royal Burghs, but instead formed as single function industrial towns.
- Early 19th century saw the arrival of railways, this had huge consequences for Scotland's towns. A mobile population created the tourism market and the transport of goods vastly improved industrial productivity. Cities and towns multiplied.

Dean of the Guilds established to enforce regulations. Many local authorities chose not to have one as it hindered development and financial gain. Number of Dean of the Guild Courts reduced from 49 to 12 by 1869. Distasteful consequences for built environment followed with overcrowded, unsanitary, disease ridden conditions emerging as people flocked to towns for work. Urban population was housed in traditional tenements, often overcrowded.

Some planned settlements emerged, but these were generally funded by private landowners.

The Victorian era linked social and health issues to the built environment and a full set of building regulations was introduced by the 1890's. Building regulations came too late and the cost of compliance was too much for some landlords. Conditions of new buildings improved while older ones declined further.

20th & 21st centuries

- Legacy of the industrial revolution century left Scotland's urban communities in an appalling condition.
- First part of the century was dominated by the first and second World Wars, through which Scotland continued as an industrial nation.
- 20th century drew a great blow to Scotland. From the 1970's onward traditional industries that had brought great wealth through the 18th and 19th century began to decline, mainly through competition from foreign counties.
- Between 1981 and 2001 70% of all jobs in the primary and manufacturing industries had been lost and vast quantities of industrial land has been left vacant and undeveloped.
- Economy becomes based upon service industry with 4/5 jobs expected to be in this sector by 2010. Some communities struggle still with industrial decline

1909 Housing Act started an era associated with Public Housing Policy. 1919 Housing Act followed - this promoted an ideal model for housing, the garden city.

1930 Housing Act - allows for slum clearance and the construction of New Towns. Nothing is constructed until the end of the second world war. 1947 housing acts creates modern planning system. Vast estates are built. In cities, tenement slums are demolished and replaced by tower blocks or population sent to new towns. Small towns see lower density terraced estates form.

1970/80s - Policy change to rehabilitate rather than demolish existing slums. Tower blocks are already proving unpopular. In the 1980's Thatcher government sell-off council houses under the 'Right to buy' scheme and housing policy is no longer as important. High rise and peripheral estates fail and are hot beds for social problems, industrial decline creates social tensions

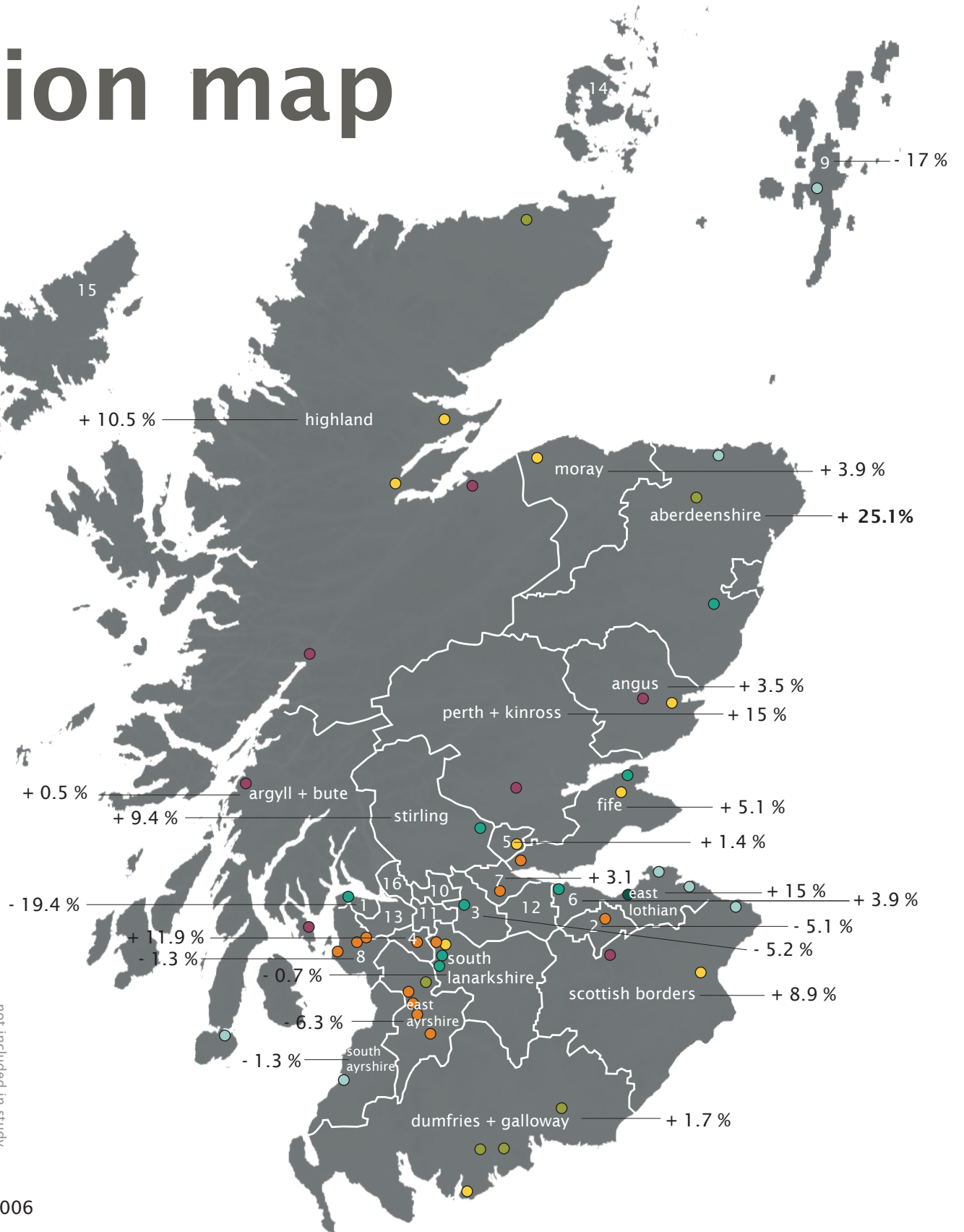
1900- 2000's - Modern slums are as problematic as Victorian ones and begin to be demolished. A return to traditional urban form is seen.

location map

- 1 inverclyde
- 2 midlothian
- 3 north lanarkshire
- 4 east renfrewshire
- 5 clackmannanshire
- 6 edinburgh, city of
- 7 falkirk
- 8 north ayrshire
- 9 shetland islands
- 10 east dunbartonshire
- 11 glasgow city
- 12 west lothian
- 13 renfrewshire
- 14 orkney
- 15 eileen star
- 16 west dumbartonshire

not included in study

% shown = growth 1981 - 2006



demographic of scotland today + future predictions

Scotland's population is relatively the same as it was in the 1950's with no major change expected until the 2030's. However the demographic has altered. This will pose challenges to the economy and planning considerations of the future. The current population of 5,144,200 [june 07], marks the fifth consecutive year of growth. The population is expected to gradually rise until the end of the next decade. It is then expected to reverse and decline to 5.07 million in 2031, lowering to the 5 million mark by 2036.

Since the 1960's the standard of living has improved considerably. This is expected to continue and a change of lifestyle anticipated. Key facts affecting future demographic:

ageing population

--> people are living longer - one in eight people will be over 75 by 2031

--> women are having less children - children under 16 will fall from 18% now to 15.7% in 2031

smaller families

--> family size has been reducing for the last 50 years leading to a decreasing available workforce - working age population will decline from 62.7% in 2006 to 58.5% in 2031

--> former "typical" family household of (at least) two adults and two or more children will account for only one household in eight in 2024

migration

--> traditionally Scotland has been a net out-migration country with loss of population to England or overseas destinations however the trend for migration of eastern europeans to Scotland over recent years has reversed this.

--> internal movements now dominate with the rural areas losing population to the north east.

--> highest out-migration regions 1996 - 2006 were the Shetland Islands, Aberdeen City and Dundee city.

--> highest in-migration regions 1996 - 2006 were Perth + Kinross, East and West Lothian.

employment

Industrial job losses of the 1980's hit Scotland hard, particularly town and village communities.

--> this left large amounts of derelict land; 50% of which was still unrecovered in 2004.

--> 1981 - 2001 the manufacturing and primary industrys lost 36.8% and 34.7 % of their employment respectively.

--> by 2011 it is predicted that 2/3 of the above industries will have vanished

--> in 2006, 44.67% of the population aged 16-74 were in employment with 3.97% classed as unemployed.

urban structure - households

The above categories of ageing population and smaller families both impact on the structure of households

--> the population is not expected to markedly change up until 2024 however predictions state that there will be in 11% increase in the number of households

--> the number of single person households is expected to increase by 33% for women and 47% for men in the next 16 yrs.

--> by 2024 single person households are expected to make up 42 % of all households

--> even when the overall population is expected to decrease around 2031 the no. of households is still predicted to increase

uk perspective

--> Scotland is the only of the 4 countries that is expected to decline from 2031

[England is expected to reach approximately 57 million by 2031 which is an increase of 6million. This pattern is expected to then continue, reaching 61.4 by 2074]

--> Scotland doesn't follow British trends it follows european population trends

--> Scotland's proportion of the UK population has consistantly fallen since 1861, by 2071 it is projected to decline to 6.1 %.

how to read this book. . . .

key



% non flatted accomodation



average house price



area [ha]



number of dwellings



density [u/ha]

photo timeline

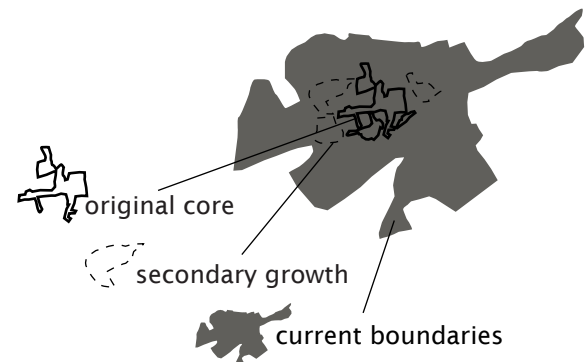


indicates population unknown



indicates known population

table: growth diagrams



timeline



populations have been taken from 1851, 1901, 1950 + 2006 census figures

maps have been sourced as closely as possible to these 50 year intervals

tables

individual town type tables



education

[type of employment] --> top three types based on % breakdown of working population

[% in employment] --> represents all people aged 16 - 74 in employment

[% with a qualification] --> includes; standard grades, highers, HND, SVQ [or equivalent] + degree level

[% good general health] --> refers to health rated as good or fairly good over the 12 months prior to census day (29 April 2001)



real estate

[average house price] --> refers to percentage above or below the scottish average; current, 7th august 2008

[owner occupied] --> includes those who own outright, owns with a mortgage or loan + shared ownership

[railway station] --> refers to towns with an active railway station; current august 2008



retail

[30 miles from larger settlement] --> distance measured to settlements with populations of 30 000 or above

[% growth] --> percentage difference calculated between the 1950 + 2006 census data

[s.a.] = scottish average



health +
social work

↑ indicates better than the scottish average ↓ indicates worse than the scottish average ✕ p indicates previous railway
[excluding growth which just indicates positive or negative which no relationship to the scottish average]



hotels +
restaurants

final table - comparison of town types



manufacture

[type of employment] --> represents the top employment type only

[% in employment]

[% with a qualification]

[% good general health]

[% owner occupied]

[average house price] --> % of towns in the category rating above the scottish average

[railway station]

[30 miles from larger settlement] } % of towns in the category with

[% growth] --> % of towns in the category with positive growth



construction



market towns are those that grew historically as they possessed the legal right to hold a market. This distinguished these towns from other settlements and signified their importance. In Scotland, market towns were often awarded Royal Burgh Status. This guaranteed certain trading privileges and extra protection by the monarchy.

case studies - brechin, clackmannan, cupar, dingwall, forres, kelso, kirkcudbright, lanark , tain

population

8210

10444

date of map

1856

1903



brechin

Brechin has a long history. The reason for its existence is its cathedral originating in the 12th century. The town struggled in its early years until it was awarded Royal Burgh Status in the 1400's. This allowed the town the right to hold a market and provided the town with great wealth. By the 19th century the town became an associated with the textile industry and there were four major mills in the town. Furthermore distilleries provided a vital source of employment. Subsequently between 1851 and 1900 the population grew by over 2000. Railways came to the town in 1895. Industry did not sustain the town throughout the 20th century and the population decreased considerably between 1900 and 1950. This decline has continued but slowed down in subsequent years with a population loss of 100 between 1950 and 2006. Passenger rail services have left the town. However Brechin is home to the Caledonian Railway, a steam train run by enthusiasts for tourists during the summer months.



56.74%



£132,091



267ha



3364



12.59 dwellings/ha

8203

1959

6950

2008

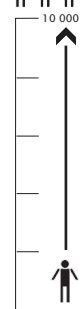


1400 royal burgh at cathedral

1850 textile industry and trade centre

1950 industry declines

2008 town becomes tourist centre



population

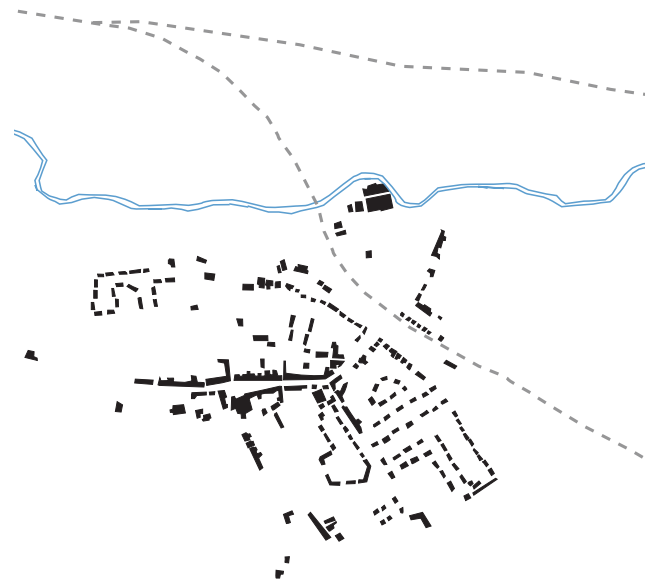
3002

2501

date of map

1850

1920



clackmannan

Clackmannan's early role was that of a port where the River Black Devon met the River Forth. The location was also home to Clackmannan Tower, built in the 9th Century. However the port silted up and the town came to dominance as the administrative centre of Clackmannanshire. The towns tollbooth built in 1592 was the main administration building in the county containing a court and prison. This enjoyed a prominent position in the town's market place. Here also stands The Clack - an ancient stone dating back to Celtic times. The town's role continued to be that of an administrative centre throughout its history. Although, some industry was present during the 18th and 19th C, such as shallow shaft coal mines, an iron foundry and a distillery. However, the town's prosperity did not continue and many people left to seek work in other locations, especially in neighbouring Alloa where there was a booming manufacturing industry. By 1901 the population of the town had halved. The 20th Century saw the towns grow both physically and in terms of population. This may be due to its location along the A907 to Stirling.



82.55%



£129,499



104ha



1453



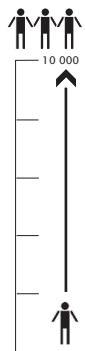
13.9 dwellings/ha

3024

1958

3420

2008



800 town established at castle

1800 admin. centre and weaving town

1900 industry/population declines

2008 pleasant town retains residents

