



## **COLINTRAIVE AND GLENDARUEL COMMUNITY PLANNING STUDY**



### **Authors**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Colintraive and Glendaruel is a rural community set amongst some of the most magnificent scenery in Scotland. Local people, through this study, have identified a number of changes that they would like to see and a number of aspects of life that they do not wish to change. They are keen for any development to be led by local people, to ensure that development is owned by the community and not imposed by outsiders. People reported a sense of being left out of the development agenda, detailing gaps in services, poor infrastructure, the need for improved amenities, the need for marketing of the area and for the tourism experience to be enhanced, amongst many other issues. These were concerns that the local council should have addressed but have not and people now feel that it is time for more action from within the community.

In response to this, local people have formed a number of organisations to tackle these issues, and are keen to form a Development Trust that will represent the two villages, to move forward the priorities identified in this study. The Colintraive and Glendaruel Community Council Development Trust Steering Committee (a precursor to this) – CGCCDT (SC) - was formed in 2006 to commission this investigation. The investigatory work began in March 2007.

CADISPA carried out this study within its remit of seeking to 'help communities help themselves' and within the context of sustainable development. In conjunction with the CGCCDT (SC), CADISPA defined the parameters and scope of the study. A questionnaire was designed in partnership with local people and was the principal investigation tool, supplemented by more qualitative research including focus groups, semi-structured interviews and H-evaluations. The returns were analysed in-house and, as a team, the results were interpreted. The main aim of the study was to document and analyse the current social and micro-economic climate of the area and to identify factors for development over the next ten years, as set out by local people in the area.

The findings of the study will provide the basis for a development agenda that can be used to take the community forward over the next ten years, after establishing the priorities and concerns of local people. Through a combination of questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, CADISPA reached as many members of the community as was possible. The response rate to our survey was 38%, and this was further strengthened by interviewing businesses and focus groups with young people and the primary school.

The key priorities for future development were identified as the following: -

- More social, educational and sports facilities/opportunities are needed within the community in order to improve both quality of life for residents, and to provide alternative venues for visitor activities.
- The preservation and protection of the built (artefacts, buildings and other points of interest) and the natural environment. This is the very reason many people come to the area and why local people take such pleasure from the area.
- There is a dearth of activities for people locally, in particular, those in the 12-18 age group and the older population. Residents intimated a strong need for new activities to overcome issues of boredom and loneliness.
- The need to stimulate economic development, job and wealth creation and service provision through enterprise and training – perhaps create a business association with strong links to any new development trust.
- There is a great desire among respondents to market and promote the area further to encourage more visitors and to strengthen local people's sense of heritage. This could create economic and social benefits to the villages.
- The need to improve the tourist experience - encouraging new and return visitors.
- The need to improve the transport infrastructure.
- The need to tackle the lack of affordable housing for the elderly, young families and local people. Also identified was the risk that the village would become further dominated by older retired people or, those with second homes, at the expense of young/local people.
- Any new Trust/group must work to become the voice for local people and to empower the community. This will mean regular consultation with the community to ensure that the Trust has a mandate to act, and then working with external agencies on behalf of the community.
- There was a great sense that development needed to be driven by local people in partnership with outside organisations.
- The research identified a need for improved broadband provision, accessible to all, and for an improved telephone connection.
- Identified was the limited ambulance service, not acceptable to local people, and the need for an improved service.

In order to take forward the issues and ideas identified in this research, there is a need for the community to identify a strategic approach to staged development, and to work together to achieve development for the village over a period of years.

There is a clear role and need for an organisation such as a Development Trust to lead these developments and to capture the skills and enthusiasm of local people.