



NET ZERO



SUSTAINABLE PLACES



INCLUSIVE GROWTH

A clear picture of
infrastructure needs



Town centre living report takes to the towns



DURING the 19th and 20th centuries, Scotland witnessed substantial growth in the number of towns spread the length and breadth of the country, fuelled by the expansion of coal and steel industries and textile manufacturing.

Scotland's towns have always been places of change as business and

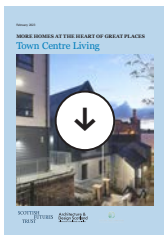
investment interests shift. Many of our towns are vibrant places that are attractive to visitors, businesses and residents, but others have not been as successful, particularly those places that have lost out as industries have closed or moved away.

As part of the effort to support a new future for all of our towns, Scottish

Government and local authorities have made town centre living a key policy aspiration.

In February 2023, our Housing team published and promoted its '**Town Centre Living – more homes at the heart of great places**', a report which highlighted some of the barriers and constraints to town centre living, as

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Town Centre Living

well as presenting a series of good practice examples.

Following the report's publication there was substantial interest from across a wide range of organisations to learn more about how the barriers surrounding town centre living can be overcome.

Working with key partners (Scotland's Towns Partnership, Architecture and Design Scotland, and Scottish Land Commission) and in discussion with Scottish Government, the team identified an effective way to share the findings and learnings from the report through a town centre 'roadshow' where case studies would be used to demonstrate what can be achieved.

In total, five events were delivered as part of the roadshow; four in-person events (Perth, Paisley, Inverness and Falkirk) plus one on-line event to allow people from rural and island places to attend.

The events were attended by 220 people from across 26 local authorities, Scottish Government, agencies, and a range of private companies and community groups. The outcome for attendees was learning and knowledge based on 25 exemplar case study projects to promote and encourage more town centre living developments.

The roadshow topics were:

- Repurposing empty buildings
- Attracting private sector investment
- Creating the right conditions to live in town centres
- The benefits of adopting a strategic approach
- How rural and island communities can embrace opportunities

The outcome for the delivery partners was gaining detailed insight from attendees on the barriers to the delivery of more town centre living projects.

Feedback from the events was presented to the Scottish Government Ministerial/COSLA joint Town Centre Forum with five overarching themes based around the need for:

1. Strong leadership and good collaboration
2. Holistic planning and placemaking
3. Funding and resources
4. Local engagement and partnerships
5. Risk mitigation

Kimberley Guthrie, Chief Officer of Scotland's Towns Partnership, said: "Getting out and about has been an important reminder as to how town centre living can be a major catalyst for positive change.

"As we develop work to encourage more people to live in our town and city centres, this series of events has given us the chance to explore both opportunities and complexities around projects."