

Castle Douglas with the Bengairn Parishes

Unrestricted Call



**“Let us build a house where love can dwell...”
at the heart of Galloway’s green and pleasant land**

Registered Charity Numbers: Castle Douglas SCO 11037
The Bengairn Parishes SCO 16850

Past history and present situation

The historical rural parishes of Auchencairn, Rerrick, Buittle and Kelton have seen changes, linkages and unions since 1977. After the departure of the last minister, the churches at Dundrennan and Buittle were closed.

Against the background of the evolving Presbytery plan, the two linked charges, Auchencairn with Rerrick and Buittle with Kelton, united and then linked with Castle Douglas Parish. The Formal Service of Union and Linkage took place in October 2013.

The churches of St Ringan's and St Andrew's, united since 1990, are now known as Castle Douglas Parish Church. Rev Robert Malloch came here in 2001 after the sudden death of Rev Jack Fraser.

Mr Malloch developed strong community relationships, especially through the Church's Friday youth club. He introduced us to more modern themes of worship and established ecumenical links with other local churches.

In 2013 Mr Malloch was called to a charge in the Central Belt.



Castle Douglas Parish Church

The Vacancy

The unrestricted Charge of Castle Douglas with the Bengairn Parishes offers a unique opportunity to forge links between town and country.

The local Presbytery Plan indicates a possibility of providing unpaid ministerial support to this Charge through the help of an Ordained Local Minister or Reader, though any actual appointment would have to depend on availability.

The Parishes

The linked Charge of Castle Douglas with the Bengairn Parishes is in Dumfries and Galloway in South West Scotland. It is centred upon the town of Castle Douglas and the villages in its hinterland to the west and southwest covering an area of approx. 200 square miles and a population of approx. 4,500.



Balcarry Bay and Bengairn

Castle Douglas Parish Church

The Parish Church serves the people of Castle Douglas and those from outwith the town who have chosen to worship with us.

The Bengairn Parishes

The parishes cover a predominantly rural area, lying between Castle Douglas to the north, Dalbeattie to the east and Kirkcudbright to the west and the Solway Firth to the south. These newly united parishes, to be called The Bengairn Parishes, contain the villages of Auchencairn, Dundrennan, Gelston, Palnackie and Rhonehouse.



Balcary Coastline

The Communities



Castle Douglas Library

The town of Castle Douglas is situated in SW Scotland, some 15 miles west of Dumfries. The town is an important population centre in the Region, supporting the agricultural and service sectors through businesses, plus significant numbers of tourists.

Castle Douglas has good links to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, the Lake District and Belfast. The town's population is 3,600 and it is well served by amenities.

There is a large new Primary School, a 6-year Secondary School with a good academic record, a modern Health Centre which houses two medical practices and a local Cottage Hospital which is the centre for out of hours medical services.

The D and G Royal Infirmary in Dumfries, is a multi-speciality Regional facility, due to be replaced with a new Infirmary in 2017.



King Street, Castle Douglas



Castle Douglas Primary School

Castle Douglas enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a vibrant retail centre, with many family owned outlets such as butchers, bakers, ironmongers, chemists, toyshops, jewellers, cafes and restaurants existing alongside more specialised dress shops, shoe shops, clothing and antiques businesses. A large supermarket came to the town in 2009, and, in spite of initial reservations, local businesses continue to thrive.

Leisure interests in the town and further afield are well catered for, with opportunities for many pursuits, such as golf, horse riding, sailing, fishing and cycling or mountain biking, not forgetting rugby, football, swimming, tennis, squash, badminton and hill walking. There are many Clubs and Societies in the town and further afield offering a wide range of leisure activities as well as thriving local drama groups. Community spirit is fostered by Community Councils, Rotary Clubs, and a Civic Week Committee to enhance the appeal for local residents and visitors alike.

In the Bengairn Parishes the population is spread across a predominantly rural landscape of farming communities with the villages of Auchencairn, Dundrennan, Gelston, Palnackie and Rhonehouse as focal points, each of which has an enviable community spirit with a variety of active organisations.



Auchencairn

The linked charge offers a small-town rural life-style in a largely unspoilt part of SW Scotland, but with good communication links to transport hubs.

The Churches and the Church families

Castle Douglas

In 1990 the Castle Douglas congregations of St Ringan's and St Andrew's were united, naming the new congregation as Castle Douglas Parish Church. St Andrews Church by the loch was sold and has been successfully altered to form a theatre and conference venue for the community.



Castle Douglas Church Easter Service

The Parish Church, built in 1801, stands in a central position in the town. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation it has been fitted with its first phase of solar panels and recent upgrades to the heating and lighting. It is carpeted throughout and the pews have been replaced with comfortable chairs which can be rearranged to suit specific needs. There is a hearing loop and IT equipment allows for computer generated graphics. The pipe organ and choir are in good voice and continue to be challenged by the enthusiastic organist.

A new suite of Halls has been built and offers a variety of room sizes for use by church organisations and the community. Land around the church has been reorganised to allow increased car parking space.

The Manse is a modern detached bungalow on the edge of the town but within walking distance of the church and schools. It has four bedrooms a kitchen, lounge and dining room, a bathroom and separate shower room for family use and, accessed by a separate entrance for official duties, a study and toilet. There is a garage and garden space.



The Manse

Castle Douglas Parish

Roll – 406, 26 elders in ‘quod omnia’ session, organist, choir, young women’s group, ladies’ club, prayer group, youth club, bible study, Sunday School and Bible Quest. Ecumenical involvement with other denominations in Christian Aid, Lenten study, Vine Trust, and Fair Trade.

The Bengairn Parishes



Auchencairn Church



Kelton Church

The Church

The Bengairn Parishes formally came into existence in October 2013, uniting the former linked charges of Auchencairn and Rerrick with Buittle and Kelton. During the lengthy journey to this Union, the congregations agreed to the closure of two of the four churches sited in the linked charge (Rerrick and Buittle).

The churches of the Bengairn Parishes are located in the village of Auchencairn and at Kelton, to the west of Castle Douglas. Both churches have a modern sound system, with Loop, also good parking.

Kelton Church, built in 1807 has an adjoining Hall, encompassing function room (currently used by a playgroup), meetings room, kitchen and toilets. The Murray Hall in Auchencairn, a community facility, is readily available for a variety of uses, and is a very short walk from the church.

There is a modern four-bedroom Manse (built in 1993) situated behind the Church at Auchencairn, with family accommodation and office-space, a garden and stunning seaward views. The manse is currently let unfurnished on a Short-term Tenancy Agreement.

The Church Family

Roll 300, Model Constitution with 20 Elders, 12 Congregational Board members. Services are held at Auchencairn and Kelton on alternate Sundays.

Ministry and Mission

As in other areas of Scotland, the economic downturn has put pressure on both charges to adapt and refresh their approach to ministry. It is fair to say that, whilst most challenges are universal, there are also subtle differences between 'town' and 'rural' environments. The congregations in both charges have been, and continue to be flexible in adapting to, and responding to, necessary change. There is recognition that our ministry needs to be relevant to the times in which we live, particularly given the drift towards an increasingly secular society, especially amongst our younger generations.

Under the fresh impetus of this Linkage, forged in October 2013, both congregations are looking forward to harnessing the potential for refreshing and reinvigorating the Church's presence in our communities. We acknowledge that the challenges in working towards these goals will be significant. Nevertheless, as a new chapter opens in our Christian life, we look forward to working in partnership with a new Minister, to embrace new ideas and to be open to further change in order to meet the needs of all our parishioners in the changing community in which we live.

For further information please contact

The Clerk to the Nominating Committee

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Informal enquiries can be made to

The Interim Moderator:

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or to the

Convenor of the Nominating Committee

Mr Iain McDonald 01556 504711

Our Church Websites

www.castledouglasparish.org.uk

www.thebengairnparishes.org.uk

Useful websites

Auchencairn Community www.auchencairn.org.uk

Castle Douglas High School www.castledouglashighschool.dumgal.sch.uk

Medical practices www.castledouglasmedicalgroup.co.uk and www.drscog.co.uk

Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary www.nhsdg.scot.nhs.uk/Hospitals/DGRI

Tourist Board www.visitsouthernscotland.co.uk

Castle Douglas www.castledouglas.com

Food Town www.cd-foodtown.org

The Fullarton formally Lochside Theatre www.thefullarton.co.uk

Dumfries and Galloway What's going on? www.dgwgo.com

Hard Rock www.hardrock-cc.org.uk

Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities www.kirkcudbright.co.uk



*View from Castle Douglas
towards Bengairn*



Rough Firth looking towards Bengairn



Carlingwark Loch, Castle Douglas



Markethill, Castle Douglas



Screel and Bengairn



Torrs Point, Auchencairn