Your Town Audit:

Moffat

September 2016
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Report produced by:

Economic and Social Development

Report: 15/09/2016
For: Moffat and District Community Council
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1. **Introduction**

This report presents a *Your Town Audit* (YTA) report for Moffat, prepared by Scotland’s Towns Partnership and EKOS. The report is prepared for the Moffat and District Community Council and sits alongside the development of a Community Action Plan for Moffat and Beattock.

Located in Dumfries and Galloway, Moffat has a settlement population of around 2,500 residents and is a bustling town that draws large numbers of tourists and day visitors. The Local Development Plan (LDP, September 2014) for Dumfries and Galloway defines the settlement and town centre boundary (see map over) and identifies a number of development opportunities for ‘housing’, ‘mixed use’ and ‘business and industry’ uses.

Dumfries is established as the Regional Capital, and Moffat is one of 16 District Centres – the level immediately below Regional Capital in the settlement hierarchy.

The LDP establishes five planning objectives for Moffat:

1. Consolidate and enhance Moffat’s role as a District Centre within the settlement hierarchy.
2. Protect and enhance the conservation area and the landscape setting to sustain and encourage tourism and for the benefit of residents.
3. Support in principle the redevelopment of brown-field opportunities.
4. Focus development towards the east of the settlement which offer suitable areas for growth.
5. Identify land to accommodate the medium-long term provision of enterprise/small business start-up units at the former academy.
Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan.

Moffat (MOF) Inset Map

Key:
- Settlement boundary
- Allocated Housing Site
- Protected Area of Open Space
- Town Centre Boundary
- Allocated Industrial Site
- Established Business and Industry Site

Meters
2. Baseline Evidence

The Understanding Scottish Places (USP) data platform provides a summary analysis for Moffat and identifies 11 comparator towns that have similar characteristics, with the most similar being Biggar, Kingussie, Lochgilphead and Ullapool\(^1\). The USP platform – [www.usp.scot](http://www.usp.scot) – describes Moffat in the following general terms:

**Moffat’s Interrelationships:** Moffat is an ‘independent town’, which means it has a high number of assets in relation to its population. This type of town has a strong diversity of jobs; and residents on the whole travel shorter distances to travel to work and study. Independent towns attract people from neighbouring towns to access their assets and jobs.

**Moffat’s Typology:** This type of small town is extremely mixed in terms of demographics. There is a particularly wide range of people, housing and activities. The number of older couples with no children is higher than average. There is a mix of professional and non-professional jobs, and part-time and self-employment are both important for a significant proportion of residents. Socioeconomic status is higher than in other types of town and there is a mix of professionals and non-professionals, those with higher and lower educational attainment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Interdependent</th>
<th>Dependent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of jobs</td>
<td>Diverse jobs</td>
<td>Diverse jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance travelled to work</td>
<td>Number of public sector jobs</td>
<td>Number of public sector jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hospitals</td>
<td>Number of GP surgeries</td>
<td>Number of GP surgeries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in primary schools</td>
<td>Number of children in secondary schools</td>
<td>Number of children in secondary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Distance travelled to study</td>
<td>Distance travelled to study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Number of shops</td>
<td>Number of shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Number of charities</td>
<td>Number of charities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Average for the category</td>
<td>Average for the category</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing Moffat to the 11 towns with similar USP typology and interrelationships shows it has similarities to these towns in terms of the number of charities, GP surgeries, children in primary schools, jobs and shops. It also has similarities in the diversity of jobs, and the distance travelled to study.

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\(^1\) Other similar towns are: Arberfeldy, Dornoch, Duns, Grantown-on-Spey, Portree, Stromness and Thornhill
It differs from these towns in terms of the number of hospitals, children in secondary schools and public sector jobs. Moffat differs most from its group in the distance travelled to work, where it is more dependent on neighbouring settlements.

The USP model is currently being updated by STP and will provide more recent and also more detailed analysis on the town that can be used by the Community Council and other stakeholders to gain more detailed insight into the town.

Place Standard is another toolkit – [www.placestandard.scot](http://www.placestandard.scot) – this is a simple framework that gives a methodical way to consider both the physical and social elements of places, identify key assets and areas where improvements could be made.

The diagram opposite is provided as guidance to how the final analysis is presented. Through the current work to develop the Moffat and Beatock Community Action Plans, the research teams have used the Place Standard toolkit to guide conversations with local people and businesses, including interactive, in-street conversations to gather feedback from people that might not otherwise attend an organised group session – both residents and visitors.

The Your Town Audit (YTA) approach was developed by Scotland’s Towns Partnership to provide a framework to measure and monitor the performance of Scotland’s towns and town centres using a series of Key Performance Indicators. It provides a Framework to gather a range of KPI data against seven themes – Locality, Accessibility, Local Services, Activity/Events, Development Capacity, Tourism and Place-Quality Impressions.

Through the Action Plan process, the research team used the YTA Framework to gather data against five of these themes – this analysis has been provided to EKOS as supporting information to prepare this audit report, and we have supplemented with additional data on the two additional themes (Development Capacity and Place-Quality Impressions) to ensure coverage of each theme.
An Access Survey report was prepared for Moffat in June 2016 by an accredited Access Auditor (Centre for Accessible Environments) with 15 years’ experience. The purpose was to establish an independent view of current accessibility into and around Moffat, and provide observations/recommendations to improve access to facilities in the town centre and wider area.

Finally, we were provided with a report prepared by the Moffat Town Improvement Sub-Group of the Community Council, August 2015. This comprises a progress report prepared by the Group with feedback from public meetings and survey of local people. It identifies a series of key priorities and actions for the town to deliver future improvements.

Building on this evidence base, this report provides an independent analysis based on the standard Your Town Audit reporting format. The findings are based around the Scottish Government’s Town Centre Toolkit – an online resource available via http://www.scotlandstowns.org/town_centre_toolkit – providing advice, guidance and case studies across three thematic areas: Accessible, Active and Attractive.

The report is designed as an audit of existing assets – physical and social – and concludes with a set of key findings and issues that would improve the future performance of Moffat. The report is not intended as a detailed strategy or action plan – this work is being delivered through the Community Action Plan study, as referenced earlier.
3. **Accessible Town Centre**

Located in the south of Scotland, Moffat is located 1.5 miles from the M74 motorway and 20 miles north-east of the regional capital, Dumfries.

It has a large day visitor catchment, being within 60 miles distance of major centres of population including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Ayr, Keswick, Carlisle and Penrith.

The town has local and strategic **bus network**, connecting with:

- Glasgow/ Hamilton/ Dumfries (X74, up to 10 journeys per day);
- Edinburgh/ Abington/ Biggar/ Penicuik (101, up to 4 journeys per day); and
- Lockerbie/ Beattock (380, up to 10 journeys per day).

From Lockerbie, Moffat is connected to the West Coast Main Line rail service to Edinburgh, Glasgow and services south to London.

Moffat has a considerable amount of **car parking** within the town centre, and with both on- and off-street spaces free, parking is well-used. There are two large off-street car parks off the A701 on the main road into the town centre – opposite Station Park c. 100 car spaces with three accessible bays and two electric car charging points, and adjacent to the Co-Op with c. 20 coach spaces.

The double High Street provides central car parking – c. 70 marked parking bays – with further on-street marked (c. 50 bays) and unmarked car parking provision on High Street outside the shops. Further car parking is available for residents, visitors and employees on side streets, with the only restrictions being double-yellow lines and limited stay (maximum 20 minutes) on the narrow Well Street. Additional parking provision is provided as required for major events on agricultural land off the A701.
There is limited cycling infrastructure within the town centre with the only cycle racks (two) outside the Town Hall, despite being within two miles of National Cycle Route 74 Gretna to Glasgow (at Beattock) and having a bicycle hire/sales/repair outlet. Moffat is a major destination for a wide range of visitors (see Chapter 4, Active Town Centre) including being the first Walkers are Welcome Town in Scotland – as an increasingly popular activity there may be benefits in improving the cycling infrastructure to attract more day visitors, and encourage healthy lifestyle options for residents and staying visitors.

While Moffat has good road access and parking provision, there are clear issues with the standard of roadways and pavements at points throughout the town centre which causes difficulties particularly for older and less physically able people, and creates a negative impression of lack of care amongst visitors.

There are also issues with the width of pavements and stepped access to a significant number of business premises that cause access difficulties.
The only pedestrian crossing in Moffat is located on the A701 at Station Park about 300m to the south of the town centre. The Access Audit describes Moffat town centre as “unsafe” in many places for pedestrians, elderly people, wheelchair users, people with visual/ mobility impairments and people with young children. It identifies an urgent need to improve the quality of roads/pavements and install new crossing point(s) in the town centre.

In relation to digital infrastructure, the BT Coverage Checker describes Moffat as having ‘very good’ 2G / 3G mobile phone coverage and ‘good’ 4G outdoor superfast mobile. Fibre optic broadband is available throughout Moffat, and while individual businesses offer customer access to their WiFi, there is no single free service covering the whole town centre.

Overall Moffat has good physical and digital access, but the quality of the roads, pavements and physical access to town centre premises creates significant difficulties and a sense of neglect. Feedback gathered by the Community Council shows that is a key issue for local people and businesses, with the physical fabric of roads/ pavements having deteriorated significantly over recent years. This will constrain the Community Council’s aspirations to attract a greater share of the Purple Pound to Moffat – relating to the spending power of disabled people – but will also influence the impression that day visitors and tourists have of the town.
4. **Active Town Centre**

4.1 **Population and Housing**

Moffat had a population of c. 2,600 residents in 2014, a slight increase of 3% over the previous ten years. In total, 57% of the town’s population are of working age (compared to a Scottish average of 63%) and while the total number of working age adults has increased over the past decade, so too has the number of people that are categorised as Income Deprived and Employment Deprived in contrast to the Scottish average position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>2573</td>
<td>2496</td>
<td>+ 3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working age population</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>1369</td>
<td>+ 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% W/A population = income deprived</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4% points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% W/A population = employment deprived</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2% points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SIMD, Datazones = S01001080, S01001082, S01001084

The analysis shows that Moffat has almost double the proportion of older residents than the Scottish average – 33% of residents in the town centre are aged 65 or over, compared with a Scottish average of 17%. With a correlation between age and disability, the data shows that Moffat has a higher proportion of residents with a physical disability (7.8% for the town centre, compared with a Scottish average of 6.7%) and lower proportion of residents with no conditions (60% for the town centre, compared with a Scottish average of 70%).

As a compact town centre with large amount of residential accommodation above commercial premises, 16% of the town’s residents live within the town centre area and over one third (36%) within or adjacent to the town centre. This is a very high proportion and reflects the scale and nature of the town. It brings a range of benefits including ready customers, high levels of footfall (and therefore perceptions of safety), and a sense of bustling activity that is attractive to visitors.

The town centre itself had a population of around 400 people at the 2011 Census. Data definitions have changed recently, but adopting a best-fit approach there appears to have been an increase of c. 50 residents since 2004. It is not clear whether this is due to more residential properties being occupied, or more people living within the same number of properties. Either way, an increase in the total population, and in particular the town centre population is positive as it creates a ready customer base for the retail and other service businesses.
While the town centre population has increased over recent years (3.1%), the level of increase would appear to be low in comparison with other towns where we have completed YTA reviews – the average over 14 towns where we have obtained comparable data suggests an average increase of 9.4% within a range of -2% to +25%. Given the general trend toward more town centre living, there may therefore be an opportunity to promote further residential development opportunities, although there are limited town centre development sites/buildings.

Of the 1333 residential properties in Moffat a large proportion (42%, 564) are within or adjacent to the town centre, of which 65% are owned and 31% are rented with the remaining 3% being second or holiday homes. The ownership structure is fairly typical of other towns that we have reviewed (based on 17 comparable YTA datasets) albeit with higher levels of ownership and lower renting in Moffat. However, the data shows higher levels of vacant units in Moffat than other towns – at 7% this is the third highest (or 17 YTAs) slightly below Wanlockhead and Kilmarnock (8.3% and 7.8% respectively) but double the average of 3.5%.

Housing is largely a mix of detached/semi-detached (54%) and terraced (23%), with only 9% flatted dwellings but 14% recorded as shared (incl. bedsits) or part of commercial premises.

**Moffat Housing Mix**

While the absolute number of vacant residential properties is small (39 units) it is double the number of second and holiday homes (19 units), securing re-use of these vacant units does present an opportunity to increase the permanent and/or visitor population for the town, and therefore spend in local businesses.
The data shows that 3% of all residential properties in Moffat are second or holiday homes – this equates to just under 40 units in the whole town / 19 in the town centre – in line with the average across other YTAs, but somewhat surprising given Moffat’s recognised status as an attractive tourist town. Of the YTAs completed where we have comparable data (17), the urban towns around cities show low levels of second/holiday home ownership (typically under 1%) with rural and seaside towns tending to have higher rates.

There are upsides and downsides from holiday homes, but it is likely that Moffat could sustain a slightly higher rate, albeit this is likely to require an increase total stock to ensure that local resident needs are satisfied.

The average purchase price of a residential dwelling in Moffat (town-wide) is £162k, marginally higher than the Scottish average of £159k.

4.2 Employment and Business Base

Over one-third of Moffat’s 1,100 jobs are in the town centre (c. 400), the majority of which will be in retail and other service activities with a number of large public sector employers on the outskirts (Primary/Academy School and Hospital).

We have identified around 100 businesses (public, private and social enterprises) operating within the town centre, half of which are within the retail sector.
Moffat has a broad mix of uses within the town centre and, in line with other audited towns, retail forms the largest single unit use, at 49% of all units, slightly higher than the 46% average across 16 YTA towns. Moffat does, however, have a very high proportion of ‘leisure’ uses – at 29% this is the joint highest proportion (with Eyemouth) of leisure activity across 17 YTA towns. Two-thirds of the 30 businesses operating in this sector are in the ‘food and drink’ category, again confirming the importance of the tourist and day visitor market.

4.3 The Retail Offer

The YTA analysis is based on the following retail definitions:

- **Convenience Retail**: primarily low cost goods that are typically bought out of habit or on impulse i.e. food, drink (alcohol and non-alcohol), news, tobacco, etc – 9 convenience retailers identified in Moffat;

- **Comparison Retail**: all other retail purchases comprising goods bought at infrequent intervals where consumers will compare and contrast products and prices – 29 comparison retailers identified in Moffat; and

- **Retail Services**: services that consumers would expect to find in a town centre including hairdresser, beauty salon, repair of goods, hire of specialist clothing, health clinics, post office, travel agent, etc – 12 retail service operators identified in Moffat.

Reviewing the retail base against the town’s permanent population shows that Moffat has 50 residents per retail business – this is the lowest rate across all of the YTA towns that we have gathered comparable data for (16 towns) and considerably lower than the average of 200 residents per retail business. This confirms the town’s position as a major tourist and day visitor attractor, with significant levels of retail spend being generated by non-residents.

- **51 residents per town centre retail outlet**
- **95 town centre retail units in use**
- **7 vacant town centre units**
Within Moffat we identified nine vacant premises in the town centre, of which four are retail premises on the High Street (premises formerly occupied by Moshulu Shoes, Macy’s Hair, Post Office and Flowers by Fiona), one retail unit at Well Road (formerly Mabbets), and four units at Church Gate (one retail, two former hotels and one licensed premises).

The overall vacancy rate is 9% of all town centre commercial premises, increasing slightly to 11% when non-relevant units are excluded (e.g. places of worship, Town Hall, upper premises, public services, etc). The retail vacancy rate is marginally lower than the YTA average of 12% (from 16 towns) and is set within a range of 5% in Clydebank and Musselburgh to 16% in Ayr and 19% in Alexandria.

Shops in Moffat operate standard opening hours of around 9am to 5.30pm, Monday to Saturday, with around half also open on Sunday. There is one small supermarket on the edge of the town centre (Co-Op) and another small convenience grocer (McGareys) both of which open seven days a week, from early till late.

**Moffat Town Centre Retail Mix**
Moffat has a very high proportion of independent retailers, creating a sense of uniqueness about the town’s retail offering. At 82% this is the third highest level of independent retailers of 17 YTA towns, behind only Eyemouth (94%) and Stornoway (83%), and significantly above the average of 69%.
5. **Attractive Town Centre**

5.1 **Overview**

As discussed at the Accessible chapter, while Moffat is an attractive town the quality of the public realm – roads, pavements and street furniture – has deteriorated in recent years. Without improvement, and continued deterioration, there is a risk that this will have a negative impact on the perception of the town, and therefore its future attractiveness as a visitor destination. Given the profile of Moffat’s business base, as discussed at Chapter 4, any decline in visitor numbers would significantly affect business turnover and performance.

The town’s Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and covers the whole of the town centre, together with the older residential property area to the north and west of the centre. This status gives some protection to the buildings and other physical assets and helps to ensure that no inappropriate development happens that would affect the character of the town.

Conservation Area status is a key requirement (albeit not the only one) to unlocking funds for building and public realm repairs/improvements. The Historic Environment Scotland (HES) website records 99 listed buildings in the parish of Moffat, of which three at Category A listed – Moffat House Hotel, St Andrew’s Parish Church and Sidmount Cottage (Sidmount Avenue to the west of the town).

HES delivers a range of grant funding including the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) – a key sources of funding to delivery Conservation Area (frequently town centre) improvements. This is a highly competitive fund that awards a small number of grants (over a five year programme) and while community groups can apply for CARS it is typically awarded to Local Authorities who have (or can procure) the capacity, skills and experience to deliver the quality of results that HES require.

CARS is often typically delivered against a wider public realm investment programme, usually led by the Local Authority, and co-ordinated to minimise disruption and achieve maximum value for residents, businesses and visitors.
Even without CARS – and it is unclear whether there is a need for repairs to the town’s listed buildings – Moffat would benefit from improvements to the public realm (roads, pavements and street furniture) to address the obvious issues and ensure that the physical fabric of the town does not deteriorate further.

As demonstrated in the Active chapter, the business base in Moffat relies heavily on the attractiveness of the town to day visitors and tourists. Using the STP Funding Finder, MDCC should therefore work with Dumfries & Galloway Council to identify opportunities to fund improvements to the public realm in the town centre. As well as major items of building and roads/pavements, this could also include improvements to directional signage, finger post signage, seats, bins, etc.

5.2 Leisure Mix

The leisure mix in Moffat is dominated by ‘evening economy’ uses – these businesses are typically open during the day as well as evening.

The YTA street audit identified seven hotels and two B&Bs within the town centre – plus numerous others and a large caravan site located elsewhere in town and surrounding area. This further reinforces the dominance of the visitor economy to the town, and therefore the need to maintain the attractiveness of the town, both its physical appearance and the delivery of activities and events.

Other food & drink uses in Moffat include bars, coffee shops, restaurants and hot food take-away, accounting for 12 businesses, although six of the seven hotels also have public bars and restaurants.

The leisure mix also includes Rugby Club, Tennis Club and Golf Club, plus the Proudfoot Institute Social Club and the indoor Beechgrove Leisure Centre.

5.3 Attractions and Heritage

There is an excellent programme of activities and events in Moffat over the calendar year including major events at Gala Week, Sheep Races, Christmas and New Year. These events are attended by both local people and visitors, and most of the businesses participate through themed window displays. Most of the customer-facing businesses also raise funds for events through on-the-counter collection boxes.
There is a monthly farmers market at the Town Hall, regular plays/performances and film screenings at the Old Well Theatre. The Moffat Museum gives the history and heritage of the town, and the Tourist Point at Uncle Roy’s shop provides information for visitors.

Moffat also has a number of walking trails in and around the town, and promotes the ‘Walkers are Welcome’ branding. In February 2016, and after three years of work, the town secured Europe’s first Dark Sky town status, linking with the nearby Galloway Forest Park International Dark Sky Park. Securing this status from the International Dark Sky Association followed investment by Scottish Government to convert street lighting to become ‘dark sky friendly’ which reduces light pollution and makes it easier for people to see the stars.

Station Park, located to the immediate south of the town centre, is an attractive small landscaped park with boating pond (pedaloes and canoes available for hire in the summer months), pitch and put course, kids play area, the ‘Moffatasia’ splash park, and war memorial. There have, however, been major incidences of water logging and flooding after heavy rainfall.

On a former quarry site just off the A701 into Moffat there is a Community Nature Reserve with loch, bird hides, walks, talks and events that give year-round access to wildlife and nature. There is also a series of marked walks in and around the town, including the Gallow Hill, which has recently been acquired by the community from Forestry Commission Scotland.
6. YTA Summary and Key Points

The following are offered as final comments on the Your Town Audit of Moffat, within the framework of the Scottish Government’s Town Centre Toolkit.

6.1 Accessible Town Centre

- Moffat is highly accessible to visitors arriving by car (one mile from the M74 Motorway) and by bus (with direct links from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dumfries);
- with the bus connection to Lockerbie, Moffat is also connected to the West Coast Main Line rail services with links both north and south;
- the town centre is located in the middle of Moffat and therefore its retail, personal and other services are highly accessible and within easy walking distance for most residents;
- the town has considerable levels of off-street car parking, both in a large car park adjacent to Station Park and in the central parking bays on High Street – parking is well used and free with no restrictions on maximum stay. It is important that the existing levels of parking are maintained to sustain and enhance its position as a day visitor and tourist town;
- there are major issues relating to the condition of pavements and roads in Moffat, particularly in the town centre which needs to present an attractive setting to maintain its position as a visitor destination, but also to ensure that residents and visitors have safe access – anecdotal feedback shows that there is increasing concern about the condition of pavements and roads;
- related to this, consideration should be given to the need for a pedestrian crossing point in the town centre, and also examination of accessibility for older and less physically able people – many properties have stepped access and many pavements are very narrow;
- while the town has good levels of digital connectivity with both 3/4G mobile signal and good broadband speeds it does not have a central free WiFi – provision of this would enhance digital access for visitors; and
- given the focus on walking and outdoor activities, cycling infrastructure in Moffat could be improved – sitting alongside enhanced marketing, better cycle parking/storage could attract more cyclists using Route 74 which passes within two miles of the town at Beattock.
6.2 Active Town Centre

- Moffat is a very busy and thriving town with a mix of uses that meet the needs of residents and visitors – there is, however, a need to consolidate and enhance the town’s position as a major visitor destination through improvements to the deteriorating physical fabric of its roads/ pavements;

- the town has a high level of activity in the leisure sector with 30 businesses operating in the Food & Drink industry – this underlies its reliance of the visitor economy;

- there is also very high levels of retail and service activity for a small town – our analysis found that there are 50 permanent residents for every retail business, four times more than the YTA average of 200, further underlying its reliance on the visitor economy;

- the town’s retail vacancy is 11%, made up of six retail units and three other premises (former Mercury Hotel, Black Bull Hotel and Railway Tavern) – the Mercury Hotel is very prominent and has been vacant for almost 20 years, therefore continued pressure should be brought on the owners, Edinburgh Woollen Mill;

- other vacant sites and premises could be developed to increase activity via both residential and business premises – these have been considered through various projects in the past and would increase the overall activity and footfall for local businesses;

- the town has a very active calendar of activities and events over the year that brings in significant numbers of visitors – this supports the significant number of businesses that operate in the service sector (food and drink), accommodation sector (hotels, B&Bs and self-catering) and the niche independent retailers. It is important that the quality and appearance of the town is maintained to support the business base; and

- with 7% of residential premises in the town centre recorded as vacant and increasing trends to town centre living, there is an opportunity to restore and attract more permanent residents – it is also likely that the town could sustain more second/ holiday homes, although this would need to be carefully managed to ensure that local people are not displaced.
6.3 Attractive Town Centre

- Moffat has very levels of independent traders which add to its unique sense of place – it is important that these businesses are nurtured and supported to maintain the town’s attractiveness for visitors;

- while the town has an attractive public realm and key buildings are of high quality – protected by its Conservation Area status – the issues identified under the accessibility theme will need to be addressed to maintain its profile as a visitor destination;

- securing investment to improve the public realm could be delivered alongside a number of smaller projects that would add to the sense of place and attractiveness e.g. new seating, waste bins, finger post signage, etc – this could include new public art to update and modernise the town’s image and thereby promote to a wider/ different audience base i.e. similar to the sheep in Lockerbie;

- significant levels of activity are delivered by a small group of people in the Community Council and other voluntary local groups which attract large volumes of visitors – it is important that these groups are supported to maintain this activity, and also to build capacity and resilience for the future;

- the attractiveness of the town is enhanced with the support of local businesses who help to fund events and also dress their window displays to co-ordinate with key events – there may, however, be an opportunity to gain more buy-in from businesses as an active lobbying group to secure investment in the town centre and maintain its attractiveness; and

- there is potential to work up some key projects that could respond any new funding opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of the town – this should be co-ordinated with any money that is available via the Wind Farm Fund.