

The Bengairn Parishes with Castle Douglas

(Unrestricted Call)

Parish Profile

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"Let us build a house where love can dwell..."
at the heart of Galloway's green and pleasant land



"...all are welcome in this place."

**We aim to be a church which puts faith into action
by supporting individuals and groups within the church and
parish communities of all parts of our linkage**

Church Websites

www.castledouglasparish.org.uk

www.bengairnparishes.org.uk

Registered Charity Numbers

Castle Douglas SCO11037

The Bengairn Parishes SCO16850

Past History & Present Situation

The historical rural parishes of Auchencairn, Rerrick, Buittle and Kelton have seen changes, linkages and unions since 1977. The churches at Dundrennan (Rerrick) and Buittle have been closed and subsequently sold.



Castle Douglas Parish Church

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.

Rev. Malloch developed strong community relationships and introduced modern themes of worship as well as establishing ecumenical links with other local churches. In 2013 Rev. Malloch was called to a charge in the Central Belt. The vacancy was then filled by Rev. Ashley-Emery in 2014 who continued to foster community links and lead the worship life of the parishes until being called to a charge in Edinburgh in 2016.

The Vacancy

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

The local Presbytery Plan indicates providing unpaid ministerial support to this Charge through the help of an Ordained Local Minister or Reader. We currently have an OLM assisting in the charge.

The Parishes



Balcary Bay & Bengairn

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 south-west covering an area of approx. 200 square miles and a population of approximately 4,500 .

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.



Balcary Coastline

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

The Communities

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 Library

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.

The Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary in Dumfries, is a multi-speciality Regional facility and will be replaced with a new Infirmary in late 2017.



Market Hill, Castle Douglas

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, antiques businesses, and supermarkets.



King Street, Castle Douglas

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.



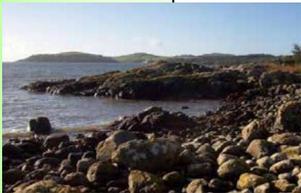
Castle Douglas Primary School

Community spirit is fostered by Community Councils, Rotary Clubs, and a Civic Week Committee to enhance the appeal for local residents and visitors alike.



Auchencairn

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. There are Community Councils in Dundrennan, Auchencairn, Kelton and Palnackie, a Community Choir in Auchencairn and 'Rural's' in Gelston and Rhonehouse.



*Torrs Point
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 & 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 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.

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 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.



*Service at
Castle Douglas Church*

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 available for the new minister is a modern detached house 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 Church has a Roll of 354, operating under the Unitary Constitution with a Kirk Session of 21 elders. The church has an organist, choir, house-group, young women's group (open to all ages and men too), Sunday School and Bible Quest. Castle Douglas Parish Church works ecumenically with other denominations in Christian Aid, Lenten study, Vine Trust, and Fair Trade. Recent developments include a Community café now being held weekly in the Church Hall and a Community Potato Project organised by the Kirk Session at Harvest time. Further community engagement is being fostered through annual events including the Festival of Christmas and Easter Blessings.

Bengairn

The Bengairn Parishes formally came into existence in October 2013, uniting the former linked charge of Auchencairn and Rerrick with Buittle and Kelton.



Auchencairn Church

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 has a superb Forster & Andrews Organ and both churches have excellent organists.

Kelton Church, built in 1807 has an adjoining Hall, encompassing function room (currently used by a playgroup/nursery), meeting 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.



Kelton Church

There is a modern four-bedroom Manse (built in 1993) situated behind the Church at Auchencairn - this is currently let unfurnished on a Short-term Tenancy Agreement.

The Bengairn Parishes has a Roll of 198, Model Constitution with 21 Elders & 5 Congregational Board members.

Services are held at Auchencairn and Kelton on alternate Sundays.

1st & 3rd Sundays at Kelton,

2nd & 4th Sundays at Auchencairn,

5th Sundays as announced.

Bengairn Parishes have a Guild, a Bible Study Group and a lively Parish Magazine. An annual ecumenical service is held at Dundrennan Abbey in August.

Ministry & Mission



*View from Castle Douglas
towards Bengair*

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, in order to combat the drift towards a secular society, especially amongst our younger generations.

Under the recent impetus of this Linkage, forged in October 2013, both congregations are looking forward to harnessing the potential for refreshing and reinvigorating



*Rough Firth looking towards
Bengair*

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 the Christian life of our parishes, we look forward to working in partnership with a new minister, to embrace new ideas and are open to further change in order to meet the needs of all our parishioners in the community in which we live.



*Carlingwark Loch
Castle Douglas*

Useful local 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



Scree & Bengairn