

YOUR TOWN CENTRE NEEDS YOU!



'Pilot' Workshop for Owners and Leaseholders of Vacant Property in Dundalk Town Centre

Venue: Louth County Museum,
Jocelyn Street, Dundalk Town Centre

Thursday 5th December 2019

**Groupwork Feedback from Attendees – For Agreement
January 2020**



FEEDBACK FROM THE ONE WORD GAME/ICEBREAKER

**WHAT ONE WORD WOULD YOU USE
WHEN YOU THINK OF DUNDALK TOWN CENTRE?**

Loyalty

Potential

Transition

Resourceful

GROUP WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN FOCUSING ON THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

- 1. Incentives needed for town centre buildings in Dundalk.**
- 2. Policy needed for buildings.**
- 3. Technical advice needed for town centre buildings.**
- 4. Building Networks and Partnerships at national and international level.**



A SUMMARY OF THE GROUPWORK DISCUSSIONS, WHICH TOOK PLACE:

1. INCENTIVES NEEDED FOR TOWN CENTRE BUILDINGS IN DUNDALK

- Finance – so important – more options needed.
- Grants - what is available – more information and workshops needed.
- Repair costs of buildings – offset against tax.
- Rates – flexibility?
- Tax regime is important and needs to be reviewed for town centres.
- Free parking in town centre – transport connectivity.
- Cultural Events and attractions– music and cultural events, Christmas Markets, exhibitions, etc.
- Outdoor café/eating spaces – quality footpaths and public spaces.
- Retail Strategy for Town Centre needed – include incentives such as rates – reinvent Clanbrassil St for future, recent FDI – more people/different needs.
- Get people living in town centres again – focus on flats/ apartments/ houses.
- If it makes money it can work!



2. POLICY NEEDED FOR TOWN CENTRE BUILDINGS

- European Urban Policy needed to push agenda in Ireland.
- Town Centre First Policy in Ireland would help a lot – see Scotland, etc.
- Community Policy – How do we build sustainable communities? What is the best/good practice?
- Planning Policy and Regulations need to keep up with the issues – policy is no longer relevant in a lot of cases.
- Vacancy Policy needed asap along with a National Town Centre Regeneration Policy.
- BID policy and strategy needed for their future development in Ireland – e.g. only four BID companies in Ireland despite legislation being in place since 2006.
- Holistic policy needed across the board
 - town centres are more than just retail
 - need to be for communities



Note: Scotland has 40 no. BID companies

3. TECHNICAL ADVICE NEEDED FOR TOWN CENTRE BUILDINGS

- European Commission – Urban Directive?
- Town Centre Charter – to bring stakeholders together.
- Planning Regulations change – more flexible re. change of uses, etc.
- Technical advice – BIDs and LCC – Vision (for streets and evening time)– publication already there from 2004/2005 – still relevant.
- Property owners are key – bringing back homes and people to town centres – more creative options needed on reuse and car parking.
- Fiscal incentives – knowledge and process are key.
- Tax incentives on revenue – needs to be more balance with out of town development – examine this.
- Benefits for property owners are unclear?
- No holistic thinking on town centres in Ireland - rates and income – common sense to look at these – we need quick wins – someone has to lead on this - political leadership.
- DkIT and IDA – new population – tend to be transient/footloose.
- Infrastructure, cycle lanes, pedestrian – give these priority over cars.
- Incentives tied to public transport into and around town centres.
- Sectoral interests- car parking – multi storey, Market Street .
- Minister for Town Centres needed.

?????????

Solutions

4. BUILDING NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

(SEE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF BI-LATERAL REVIEW FOR IRELAND -SCOTLAND)

- All types of networks needed – formal, informal, national, cross-border, etc.
- One Stop Shop for Advice needed.
- Active engagement with the local authority – like this workshop.
- Council awareness and understanding of owners' issues and difficulties.
- Could CoCo/BID facilitate an informal network of building owners?
- BIDs/CoCo advises and represents local businesses.
- National Network of BIDS in Ireland?
- Tidy Towns as drivers of change – including residents' associations.
- Bank of Ireland Enterprising Towns competition in 2018 – brought people together.
- Common interest groupings – e.g. Border.
- Joint services - e.g. BIDs painting lots of buildings and cleaning their gutters was excellent.
- Minister for Networks needed.



LIST OF ATTENDEES



Kate Bernard
Property Owner,
Clanbrassil Street

Seamus Crosson
Property Owner

**Fiona
Cunningham**
Dundalk BID

Liam Duffner
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Clanbrassil Street

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Clanbrassil Street

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REA Gunne
Property, Dundalk

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Halpin
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Heritage Council
CTCHC Programme
Co-ordinator

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Kieran Lally
Lally Architects

Dermot Leavey
Leavy's Pharmacy

Brendan Marmion
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Lyndsey Marmion
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Martin Murphy
Property Owner,
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Colm Murray
Architectural
Officer,
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Commercial Manager,
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Ivor McElveen
Heritage Council
Board Member

Brendan McSherry
Heritage Officer,
Louth County
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Daniel Oakes
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Grow Music

Heather Oakes
Director, Grow
Music

Emer O'Callaghan
Senior Executive
Planner, Louth
County Council

Robert Page
Senior Assistant
Chief Fire Officer,
Louth County
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Gerard Quinn
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An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



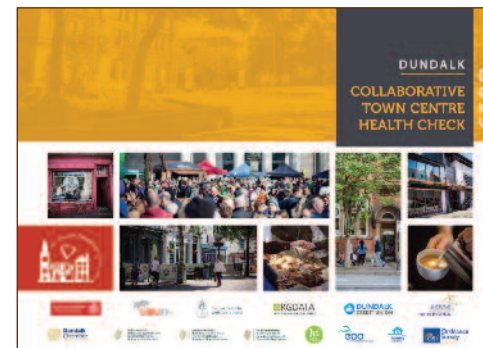
An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil
Department of Housing,
Planning and Local Government



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly



www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/town-centre-health-check-training-programme