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.
4. Building Networks and Partnerships at national and international level.
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.
- 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
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Mandy Fee
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Michael Gunne
REA Gunne Property, Dundalk

Ronan Halpin
Halpin Construction/Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Ali Harvey
Heritage Council CTCHC Programme Co-ordinator

Gavin Hearty
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Pat Kerley
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Kieran Lally
Lally Architects

Dermot Leavey
Leavy’s Pharmacy

Brendan Marmion
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Lyndsey Marmion
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Martin Murphy
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Colm Murray
Architectural Officer, Heritage Council

Shane McBride
Property Owner, Clanbrassil Street

Martin McElligott
Town Centre Commercial Manager, Dundalk BID

Ivor McElveen
Heritage Council Board Member

Brendan McSherry
Heritage Officer, Louth County Council

Daniel Oakes
Business Manager, 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 Council

Gerard Quinn
Property Owner, Bridge Street

Mary Reilly
Louth County Council, Housing Section

Noel Treanor
Louth County Council, Housing Section

Contact:
Ali Harvey, Co-ordinator, CTCHC Programme E. aharvey@heritagecouncil.ie

Martin McElligott, Town Centre Commercial Manager, Dundalk BID E. Manager@dundalkbids.com
www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/town-centre-health-check-training-programme