



Cupar Development Trust

CUPAR TOWN INTERPRETIVE PLAN

A Community Heritage Development Plan

by CMC ASSOCIATES LTD.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Interpretive Plan has been commissioned by Cupar Development Trust to build upon their history of public consultation and development of Cupar's rich past. The two main aims of the plan are:

- to encourage and define practical steps which will help people engage with Cupar's rich heritage
- to map the strategic, longer-term goals of the community in ways that policymakers and funders can back.

The plan therefore seeks to strike a balance between identifying a co-ordinated, strategic approach while exploring the breadth of 'bottom up' group projects that will attract grass roots interest, ownership and enthusiasm.

As the planning process developed it became clear that this document would represent a departure from the traditional concept of the interpretive plan. The key 'why? who? what? and how?' elements of the interpretive planning process remain, (see diagram in section 2.1). These include an exploration of contextual information (current interpretive offer, community, tourism, commercial and conservation context), the identification of target audiences, of key messages and storylines, and of potential heritage projects. However, these are set within a broader

strategic framework (explored within sections 5-9 of the plan), with a focus on facilitating the delivery of the proposed recommendations within the community, by its members. Essentially, this is a practical, working document that can be actively used by Cupar's community to bring about change; creating a vibrant, sustainable place that is firmly rooted in its heritage, its people and its potential.

Cupar's community is at the heart of this document. The structure and contents of the Plan, including the proposed key messages and heritage projects, have developed from the many discussions and consultations that have taken place to date.

The plan aims to review how the community has engaged with its heritage, in its widest sense, in the past and how in the future it can mobilise its heritage to empower the town economically and socially going forward. The plan covers the heritage background of the town and the role of heritage going forward. It looks at the range of tools that may be developed to extend and enrich Cupar's engagement with its heritage. Specific topics for exploration and storytelling are introduced as are the options for interpretive signage and walking tours. How these initiatives may be grow over time and how capacity can be developed is looked at and above all how

community groups have and will engage with their heritage is considered.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction to Cupar

Cupar is a small, historic market burgh in north-east Fife with a growing population of approaching 10,000 people. The town is a commercial focus for north-east Fife, an attractive place to live and an easy place from which to commute.



Once a bustling market centre, this picturesque town has retained much of its medieval character, including its network of closes. The town boasts a number of fine historic buildings including the 17th-century Preston Lodge, Lord Chancellor's House, the

Corn Exchange, the Burgh Chambers, Old Castlehill School, the Old Parish Church and the Mercat Cross which dates from 1683. Cupar also offers pleasant green spaces, including Haugh Park, riverside walks and the Moat Hill, the original seat of justice where the Lords of Fife held their courts. The town centre is the commercial heart of the town and is surrounded by a large number of residential properties. The majority of the town centre is designated as a Conservation Area.

The town still functions as the main service, employment, education and public transport centre for a large rural hinterland in north-east Fife. There is local industry, much of which lies to the east of the town at the Prestonhall Business Park, with other businesses at the west, including animal feed and pet food producer ABN (Scotland) at Cupar Muir. Key employers include Fishers, a hotel laundry specialist, and Quaker Oats, which operates a major processing facility to the west of the town.

Cupar is a vibrant town with active shopping areas, cafes and restaurants. Indeed for its population the town punches well above its weight. Nevertheless there are signs of stress that residents and visitors are noticing – for instance the fabric of many of the older and more architecturally significant buildings is becoming an issue. No town can afford to stand still either socially or economically and if



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Cupar is to prosper it must find its place in the changing urban landscape.

One of Cupar's finest assets is its people. The town's active community is representative of a range of ages, interests and activities. In recent years, Cupar has been conducting a series of community-based discussions about the value and impact of heritage assets and activities. These consultation exercises have been well-attended, revealing significant cross-community interest in the appearance, substance and future of the town.



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.2 CARS CARS/THI initiatives

Established in 2014, the Cupar Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme and Townscape Heritage Initiative (CARS and THI) have been investing around £7M in Cupar's historic buildings. The five-year programme will end in 2019.



Building Repair Scheme Map



- Key
- Priority Area
 - Listed Buildings
 - Target Buildings

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.3 BEFS report

The Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS Cupar Report (July 2014) looked beyond the built environment and concluded that:

- There are signs of fragility and deterioration (e.g. Buildings at Risk Register)
- But there is good infrastructure, accessibility and resilience
- Community engagement is a force for sustainability that should be mobilised
- Ongoing maintenance and finding uses for vacant buildings always needs to be addressed
- In this changing world an inclusive town will be a successful townfuture of the town.

1.4 Founding of CDT in 2015

The Cupar Development Trust (CDT) was established in 2015. Its founding aim is to enable the community to shape an action plan for the regeneration of Cupar's town centre and to bring this plan into practical reality.

1.5 Charrette 2016

To fulfil its founding aims, the CDT secured funding to support the running of a town centre Charrette. Instigated and led by the community, the overarching theme of the Charrette was to make Cupar Town Centre the heart of a sustainable market town for the 21st century.

The Charrette was well attended and the final report, Cupar Could, identified the following themes as priorities for the town:

Access & wayfaring – improvements to signage, walking and cycling routes, and links with the wider town path network.

People friendly – prioritise pedestrian movement in town centre, improve pavements, introduce low speed environments and encourage public access to closes.

Distinctive market town – increase footfall and spending in town centre, encourage more independent and innovative enterprises (a spirit of entrepreneurship).

Culture & heritage – promote local culture and art, town centre heritage and uniqueness, providing opportunities for people of all ages.



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historic townscape – conserve, re-use and adapt historic buildings, regenerate derelict sites for housing, commerce and greening.

Closely linked to the above, the Charrette also identified the following fundamental principles that should underpin future proposals for the town:

Walking friendly – the town centre should provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for people of all ages and conditions to move around easily. Better disabled access, less street clutter, more public space and pedestrian priority.

Business friendly – the town centre should be welcoming to existing and new businesses, including marketing, branding, business support and coordination of construction on roads and pavements.

Family friendly – tapping into the family audience will help the town centre to thrive.

Youth friendly – desire from young people, schools and youth organisations to shape the town's future should be harnessed. Working to maximise youth opportunities should be a key element of any proposals for the town centre.

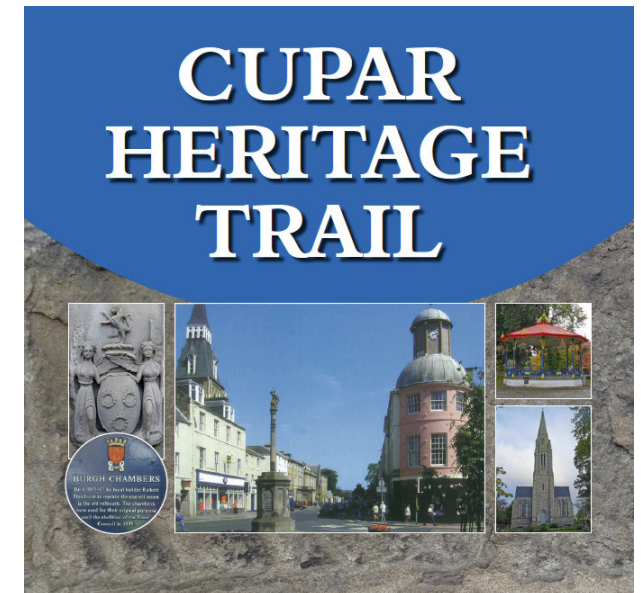
Visitor friendly – Cupar should encourage visitors and passers-by to stop and explore,

making it easy and obvious what there is and where to go.

1.6 Outcomes to date

The Charrette identified that town centre improvement requires different partners to come together, contributing their skills and resources to specific actions. Two key actions were identified, the reprinting of the Cupar Heritage Trail (completed in 2016 involving sponsorship by several local organisations) and the initiation of this Interpretive Plan, which has already involved extensive public consultation.

Cupar Heritage is the progressive independent heritage organisation that has developed Cupar's small but active heritage museum. Cupar Heritage partnered with CDT in a working group to bring forward the Interpretive Plan as the means to establish priorities and focus effort. The working group invited members of the community to a consultative forum to discuss progress to date. This meeting was well-attended and included a variety of representatives from the town, including Fife Council, the Community Council, the YWCA/ YMCA, the Town Twinning Committee, Fife Family History Society, Fife Historic Buildings Trust, Sustainable Cupar and Kilmarnon School and Cupar U3A.



2. INTRODUCTION TO CUPAR TOWN INTERPRETIVE PLAN

2.1 The interpretive planning process

Interpretive plans can take a variety of formats but all involve an exploration of aims and objectives together with contextual information. As demonstrated in the diagram opposite, these include current interpretive provision (why?), audiences (who?), themes and storylines (what?) and options for delivery (how?). The chief remit of most plans is to explore ways of improving the interpretive offer and to generate a sense of place by communicating stories linked to the heritage of a site, its collections or landscape. Increasingly, interpretive plans also need to consider these elements in the broader, pragmatic context of community mobilisation and commercial sustainability. This creates a deeper understanding of a place and how it may be positioned as both an attractive place to visit (improved visitor experience with consequent local economic benefits) and to live (social impact and improvement).



Interpretation is the process of communicating messages and stories about our cultural and natural heritage, providing the audience with enjoyment, inspiration and a wider understanding of our environment.

ASSOCIATION FOR HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

2. INTRODUCTION TO CUPAR TOWN INTERPRETIVE PLAN

2.2 Exploring new ideas

The earlier Charrette identified a desire to improve orientation around Cupar, to increase footfall to the town, and to promote the culture and heritage. One major function of this Interpretive Plan is therefore to encourage and define practical steps which will help people engage with Cupar's rich heritage. The Interpretive Plan must also, however, map the strategic, longer-term goals of the community in ways that policymakers and funders can back. Cupar's Interpretive Plan therefore needs to strike a balance between identifying a coordinated direction of travel while exploring the breadth of 'bottom up' group projects that will attract grass roots interest, ownership and enthusiasm.

Essentially there is a need to re-invent the concept of the Interpretive Plan for 21st-century communities, including Cupar. Today, the plan needs to deliver both traditional and contemporary elements, setting themes and storylines within a broader strategic framework. In this way, interpretive plans can represent practical, working documents that can be actively used by a community to bring about change; creating vibrant, sustainable places that are firmly rooted in their heritage, their people and their potential.

The effect of this new approach is two-fold. The traditional elements (bottom up) bring about an improved visitor experience and sense of place, while the broader strategic framework (top down) has a strong social impact, mobilising a community to become active in effecting change. Essentially the plan encourages a community to use its heritage to strengthen its engagement with the town, generating a new dynamic, a personal meaning, a sense of ownership and inclusion and a sense of pride.



3. CUPAR TODAY

3.1 Cupar's demographic profile

The 2011 census revealed that Cupar's population comprised 9,339 residents broken down into the following age brackets:

- 0-15 (16.8% - compared to 17.4% for Scotland)
- 16-24 (11%, 11.9% for Scotland)
- 25-64 (50.8%, 53.7% for Scotland)
- 65+ (21.7%, 17% for Scotland).

It is therefore broadly similar to Scotland's national average but with more residents aged 65+. Cupar has a higher than average number of pensioners and a lower than average number of working families. 67% of the population live in owned accommodation, which is higher than the national average of 62%.

Data from 2011 showed that the most important employment sectors in Cupar were public administration, education and health/social work - 38% of the total, which is higher than the average in Scotland of 27.3%. However, there were proportionately fewer people employed in skilled trades (10.9% compared to 12.6% for Scotland) and in process/plant operative jobs (7.2% compared to 10% for Scotland). Not all employment is found locally and Cupar's geographic location has resulted in its becoming a commuter town.

Figures from 2012 show that while a proportion of the population of Cupar receive a low income (9.3%) or are unemployed (8.8%) it has above average employment opportunities (compared to figures of 13.4% and 12.8% respectively for Scotland as a whole).

The role of the town centre in the community and its local economy has been affected by developments in recent years. The town centre remains at the historic, and continuing, conjunction of transport routes. It also remains the traditional location of retail services, but this is under-going structural change with the advent of supermarkets on the edge of the town centre. Once the established location of health and educational facilities, these are now also located at edge of town sites. Banks, professional and public services, once core provisions in the town centre, are contracting on account of mergers, a centralisation of activity and a move towards digital operations, such as digital banking and online trading. These economic changes are diminishing the traditional functions of the town centre. It is important that redundant shop and office properties are put to new contemporary uses in order to re-establish the town centre as a central place, the hub of the community. This need to promote the town centre in new economic directions, especially tourism-based, is a key motive for preparing an Interpretive Plan for Cupar.



3. CUPAR TODAY

3.2 Community context

Cupar Development Trust has already shown itself to have a proactive role in facilitating change in the community. Other community-led groups and organisations in the town include:

- Local public services, including Fife Council, Fife Cultural Trust (the Duncan Institute public library and the Corn Exchange public hall), the Community Council, Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Adamson Community Hospital and Stratheden Community Hospital
- Heritage and local history groups, including Cupar Heritage, Cupar and North Fife Preservation Society, Fife Family History Society
- Environment groups, including Sustainable Cupar
- Arts and cultural organisations, including Cupar Arts, Cupar U3A, Cupar Art Club, Cupar in Bloom, Cupar Quilters and the Cupar Camera Club. The Fife branch of DFAS (Decorative and Fine Arts Society) meets monthly in Cupar's Corn Exchange. Craft groups and book clubs also meet regularly, and the town has a vibrant music scene with its choral society, amateur musical society and a range of artists

and bands performing gigs at venues across the town. The Cupar Model Railway Club additionally attracts visitors to the town with its annual exhibition, held at the Corn Exchange

- Community focused organisations, including its YMCA/YWCA and Cupar's churches, which represent an active faith group and a strong ecumenical community. The town also has Scout and Guide groups and the uniformed youth organisations (ACF & ATC) which help at community events
- Sports clubs – Cupar Sports Centre, located in the centre of Duffus Park/Elmwood College, is a well-used venue. Various clubs are active in the town and many have a strong youth element. A range of venues are open to the public, including the premises of the Howe of Fife Rugby Club. The town also has a golf club, which is the oldest nine-hole golf club in Scotland
- Education establishments – Bell Baxter High School, Castlehill Primary School, St Columba's RC Primary School, Kilmaron School and Elmwood College, a part of the SRUC network. Fife College also has a presence at Elmwood
- Business networks, including ABCD, Cupar and North East Fife Local Tourist Association and Cupar Business Network.



3. CUPAR TODAY

A programme of events is held throughout the year, including the biannual Cupar Arts Festival and the annual Cupar Summer Fayre, Cupar Highland Games and Cupar at Christmas events. Cupar in Bloom launch their event annually in April, but their main and vast contribution is their prize-winning, annual decoration of the town.

This represents a solid, active community, but there is potential for much greater rejuvenation and invigoration of this modern historic town. The community should be mobilised to take a collaborative, place-based approach to heritage, moving from an individual to an increasingly collective effort.

The Charrette was well-attended by members of the community, revealing an active concern for the appearance and future of the town. Issues raised through the Charrette included a need for improvements to access, including pavements, signage and a reduction of street clutter.

The RSA Index reveals that in recent years Fife has received a relatively low level of grant funding from bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Cupar Heritage and Cupar Development Trust have emerged as lead organisations through the Charrette and interpretive planning processes. They are in a strong position to harness this existing desire

for improvement and change and to take the lead on developing strong local partnerships which can lead Cupar into a bright, new future.

3.3 Tourism in Cupar

Overview of tourism in Fife

'By 2024 Fife will be a sustainable, leading tourist destination, with a year round economy, where businesses are growing and visitors return year after year.'

'Fife's Tourism Vision', Fife Tourism Strategy 2014–2024, Fife Council and Fife Tourism Partnership.

Visit Scotland's statistics reveal that Fife hosted 661,000 overnight visits in 2015. Of this figure, 78% (513,000) were visiting from within Scotland and England, and 22% (148,000) from overseas. This figure represents a 19% increase from the statistics published 3 years previously. It is similar to the statistics for Scotland as a whole (75% UK visitors: 25% overseas). The recorded visits to Fife in 2015 represent a combined tourist spend of £227million.

The visits recorded in 2015 show seasonal highs occurring in May, July, September and October. The average stay in the area is 1-3 nights and the chief motivation for a visit is to

A Visitor Guide

Cupar & North Fife



3. CUPAR TODAY

holiday in the area, with highest scoring draws being listed as scenery and landscape (50%) and history and culture (33%).

The published statistics do not include a breakdown of the areas visited but a document produced by the St Andrews Partnership, entitled *St Andrews: Key facts and figures* – a reference guide for businesses, reports that St Andrews attracts 666,300 visitors per annum. Although this figure clearly includes day visits, it indicates that the majority of visitors to the area are drawn to visit St Andrews, and its strong associations with golf, which is identified as a significant draw to the area. St Andrews is 10 miles from Cupar and, if the majority of visitors recorded by Visit Scotland are staying for an average of 1-3 nights in the area, there is a strong potential to draw a proportion of those visitors to the town. The arrival of V&A Dundee in 2018 will provide a similar opportunity. However, it is important to note here that Cupar currently lacks tourist accommodation. With only a few furnished rental flats and cottages, one B&B and the modestly-sized Craigsanquhar Hotel (located a few miles out of town), Cupar is currently only able to promote itself as a destination for day-trippers. Some locals have expressed the opinion that the town centre has failed to recover from the closure of the old Royal Hotel in the 1980s. Nearby Kinross is a much smaller town but in a much healthier position in this respect.

During 2010, Fife, along with Angus, Aberdeenshire, and Aberdeen Councils was awarded almost £1m of European Regional Development Funding to develop the key sectors of Golf, Outdoor Tourism, and Food and Drink. In Fife this resulted in three themed groups being set up – Fife Golf Partnership, Fife Food Network, and the Outdoor Fife Group. The former two are now companies in their own right. The success of the project was recognised by the Scottish Government when it awarded the project 'best collaborative project' at their 2013 European Structural Funds Awards Ceremony.

Cupar's traditional hinterland and regional identity

Cupar's story through the centuries has been built on its role as a centre of justice and trade, strategically located on an important travel route. Once the administrative burgh of the surrounding hinterland, the town retains a strong connection to the agricultural landscape, industry and community. Location of the first performance of *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* in 1552 by one of its famous sons, Sir David Lindsay (c1490–1555), the town also has a strong and continuing connection with arts and culture.

As a result of its well-documented historic, cultural and mercantile past, Cupar has a



Artist's impression of the new V&A, Dundee



The Scores at St Andrews

3. CUPAR TODAY

rich collection of heritage sites and stories to share. The town's location on the A91, the main road to nearby St Andrews, and the A914 from Edinburgh off the Regional Road (A92), makes it geographically well positioned. With 75% of visitors to Fife travelling by car, this further strengthens Cupar's position as a destination for tourists to the area.

There is significant room for growth in Cupar's presence in Fife's tourism market. An exploration of Trip Advisor highlights the dominance of St Andrews. Cupar and its surrounding attractions are not featured on the popular website's 'Top 10 Things to Do in Fife' (N.B. Attractions in St Andrews make up 50% of the top 10). Cupar's three most popular visitor attractions, The Scottish Deer Centre, Cairnie Fruit Farm and Mega Maze and Hill of Tarvit, score 14th, 27th and 34th respectively in the full list of 211 attractions. All three attractions are located on the outskirts of the town. Cupar itself does not feature on the list of 211 'things to do' in Fife. A search of 'things to do in Cupar' produces 17 recommendations.

A visit to the town centre is not listed, although Haugh Park makes the list at No. 8. (N.B. Haugh Park also features in a search of 'Nature and Parks' in Fife, in 48th position in a list of 54.)

A Google search of 'Tourism in Fife' supplies St Andrews, Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and

Glenrothes as the most popular destinations. An additional click and scroll reveals Cupar as 8th on the full list, underneath Anstruther, Crail, Elie and Earlsferry. The search terms listed under the town's profile are 'churches, safari parks, pottery and tennis'. There is a need to alter these search terms, and the town's Wikipedia profile, to develop a broader, more accurate reflection of the town's offer.

Trends 2017 published by Visit Scotland's Insight Department (2016) identifies 'digital' as being one of the trends which will have the greatest impact on the Scottish tourism industry. Tourist attractions and destinations must build their digital capacity and profile to be visible with the increasingly dominant market of smartphone and tablet users. The report recommends effective digital marketing as the best opportunity for tourism businesses to differentiate themselves from competitors. This, in turn, would allow Cupar to ensure a higher presence on sites such as Trip Advisor, and develop more accurate search terms for the town.

If Cupar is to realise its potential as a tourism destination, it must build its digital profile to ensure its presence on the most commonly used travel websites and search engines.



Crail harbour

3. CUPAR TODAY

3.4 Re-positioning Cupar as a 21st century destination

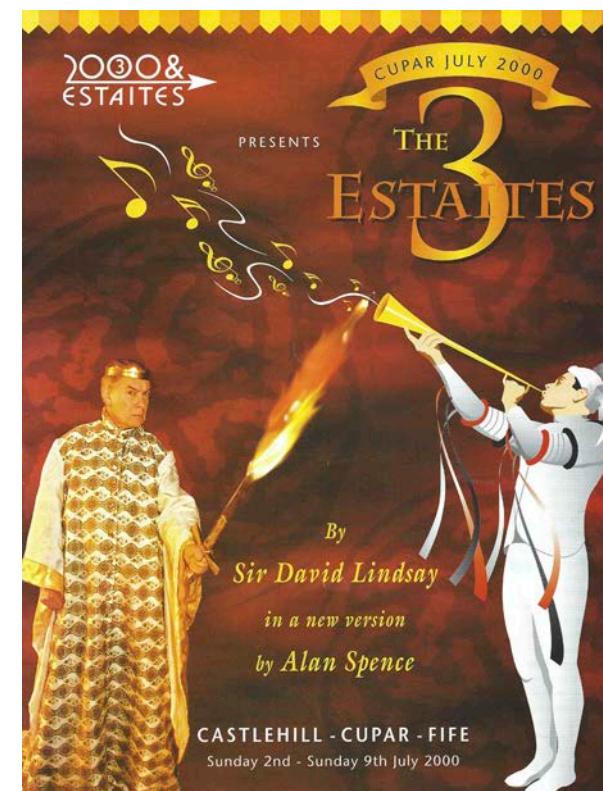
In order to build its digital profile, Cupar needs to look at its own profile, in terms of its brand. If it is to compete as a tourist destination and a place to live, Cupar needs to build the visibility of its town centre, to re-position it, revitalise it and rebrand it for the 21st century, integrating its heritage in its place marketing. The above analysis of Cupar's position in the context of tourism in Fife, also suggests that overnight accommodation is an issue that should be considered if the town is to develop as a tourist destination. The volume of traffic in the town centre is also a significant disincentive to visitors. For example, walking in the narrow part of the Bonnygate can currently be a hazardous experience.

The town's Charrette and subsequent Cupar Could report identified the following potential straplines for the town to provide an overall guiding vision:

- A sustainable market town for the 21st century
- The creative commercial heart of North East Fife

- A good place to grow up and put down roots.

Cupar's brand should also identify the role of heritage in the local economy; the inter-relationship between the town centre and the surrounding rural hinterland. It should draw upon other unique aspects of its story and location. These might include quotes from David Lindsay's 'Thrie Estaitis' which received its first performance on Cupar's Castle Hill, a reference to the fact all roads lead to and from Cupar, or its position as a hub for crafts and independent businesses.



4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

4.1 Current interpretive offer

The current interpretive offer may be summarised as follows:

- Cupar Heritage Trail – this leaflet, recently reprinted, provides a map and a comprehensive overview of the town's historic significance and places of interest
- Orientation panels – originally situated in three of the arrival points into Cupar – Cupar Station, Bonnygate Car Park and Fluthers Car Park. The former two remain in place. The panel that used to be displayed in the Fluthers Car Park has since been removed, but the fixing posts remain. An orientation panel with an earlier design located at the road entrance to the Bonnygate Car Park is also still in place but is now very faded
- Interpretive panels – There are currently interpretive panels in the former Walton's garage site (developed and installed by Cupar Community Council and the Cupar and North Fife Preservation Society [CNFPS] with local sponsorship as part of the temporary landscaped site on St. Catherine Street. They are maintained by the community council.) Panels may also be found in Haugh Park (an exploration of its history) and along the riverside, Orchard

Walk (developed by Sustainable Cupar). These panels, and the orientation panels included above, all represent different approaches and design styles

- Blue plaques – a system of blue plaques around the town centre interpret the significance of its historic buildings
- Cupar Heritage Centre – run by Cupar Heritage, this small visitor centre contains artefacts and displays interpreting the history of the town. Displays are refreshed each season to explore different themes relating to the town. There is also a reference room in the Duncan Institute Public Library, where the Fife Family History Society is based

Additional information points in the town centre include:

- Signage – a range of types and styles, including brown heritage signs, road signs and directional signs. As in the case of the current orientation and interpretation panels, the directional/information signs found through the town centre and along the riverside path vary in terms of design style and approach.



4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

- Notice boards/information displays – a large notice board located in Ferguson Square contains extensive information about local clubs, societies and events. Posters and flyers may also be found in the local library and in windows of some of Cupar's key buildings. In addition to these, a variety of leaflets on local attractions and events are available in the public toilet building (formerly also a staffed Tourist Information point) and the waiting room at Cupar station.

To summarise the above, the main interpretive offer in Cupar's public spaces comprises orientation panels, themed interpretive panels and signs. These include a range of different formats and design styles that collectively present a fragmented approach. A standardised style of content development and design would result in a more professional and unified suite of interventions. Together, the town's interpretation and signage would offer a holistic, recognisable approach, a cohesive narrative structure and, as a result, a more accessible and engaging visitor experience.

4.2 Competitor analysis and partnership opportunities

An assessment of nearby attractions, tourism offers and events/festivals helps to place

Cupar's current offer and potential as a tourist destination in context. It also helps to avoid duplication of effort in the development of any new projects and interpretation, and identifies potential future partnerships.

4.3 Historic towns

Like nearby St Andrews and the picturesque villages in the East Neuk of Fife, Cupar offers a pleasant day's exploration of its historic streets and places of interest, independent destination shops and eateries and attractive walks. It also has a unique offer and a unique history, which includes its role as administrative burgh and centre for trade and law, its literary heritage (David Lindsay and the local printing press) and its close proximity to the Pilgrims Way route. It offers a varied events programme and, importantly, is easily accessed via public transport or car and offers ample free parking. In short it has much to offer but, as identified above in section 3.3, it is largely absent in the results of tourism web searches.

Cupar needs to increase its visibility if it is to compete in the local tourism market. The town has more than enough to make it a popular destination in its own right. It should address some of the issues raised in the Charrette, notably improvements to signage and a reduction of street clutter, including the



4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

large number of A-boards on main pedestrian routes, and the continued maintenance of its historic buildings in order to improve the appearance and condition of the town. However, as the Trends 2017 document advises, developing its digital profile is of key importance if Cupar is to increase its visibility in the tourism market, which is increasingly dominated by online presence.

4.4 Visitor attractions in and around Cupar

As the map opposite illustrates, Cupar is surrounded by a variety of popular visitor attractions offering plenty to see and do in the area. This adds to the town's appeal as a tourist destination. Nearby attractions include, The Scottish Deer Centre, one of Fife's biggest visitor attractions, Fife Folk Museum in Ceres, Muddy Boots Kids Adventure Playground, Fife Zoo and Cairnie Fruit Farm and Mega Maze. The National Trust for Scotland's portfolio is also represented in the area with nearby Hill of Tarvit Mansion house and gardens, and Kellie Castle and Falkland Palace, both of which are also within easy reach of the town. Cupar is also home to the Cupar Heritage Centre, and the Wee Kingdom, an award-winning soft play & café. In addition to these, St Andrews offers a variety of attractions including its cathedral and castle, its aquarium, its legendary golf

Cupar and North Fife



4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

courses and British Golf Museum, the Museum of the University of St Andrews and the Eden Mill Brewery and Distillery. Additionally, from 2018 V&A Dundee will be 20 minutes away by train. With the Old Course and the Golf Museum in St Andrews already only 20 mins away by bus, both make Cupar a sensible lodging stop for tourists.

Outdoor activities and green space attractions

Outdoor recreational destinations and activities are also in good supply. A variety of walking, cycling and hiking routes are available across North Fife's countryside and along its coastline, including 24 Kingdom of Fife Millennium Cycle Ways in the area, which are signposted from access points in Cupar. There are also off-road cycling routes in forestry land including Tentsmuir & Pitmedden forest. The North Fife stretch of the Fife Coastal Path along the south of the Tay Estuary, is one of the most diverse on the 150km route, and the newest addition to the area is the Fife Pilgrims Way. This route, running between Culross Abbey or North Queensferry and St Andrews, includes the nearby village of Ceres and passes the south end of the Moor Road track to Cupar.

Other outdoor destinations include the Lomond Hills Regional Park (25 sq miles of

moorland, lochs & farmland), and Falkland Estate (native woodlands, historic designed landscape, organic farm & countryside) which offers pleasant walks. The Centre for Stewardship which manages the estate runs volunteering programmes & learning opportunities around its key themes of wood, food and crafts.

Wildlife watchers can choose from red-squirrel watching in Ladybank Forest, bird watching at Birnie and Gaddon lochs, Collessie, the Eden estuary and the Tentsmuir NNR which offers an internationally recognised habitat for a variety of wildlife. Country sports, including quad biking, off-road driving, horse riding, shooting and fishing, and, of course, golf, are also widely available in the area.

Festivals and events

The above map also lists a selection of the many festivals and events that take place annually or biannually in and around Cupar. The town hosts a number of annual events, including Cupar Summer Fayre, Cupar Highland Games and the Cupar Flower Show. Arts Festivals are well-represented with the biannual Cupar Arts Festival and the annual Open Studios North Fife (April/May) and Pittenweem Arts Festival (August). Annual music festivals include the East Neuk festival (June/July), St Andrews Voices (October)



4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

and the Fife Jazz Festival (February/March). Literary festivals include Dundee Literary Festival (October) and StAnza poetry festival in St Andrews (March). Finally, the annual Crail Food Festival (June) and Fife Food festival held in St Andrews (January), add to the area's long-standing entrepreneurial association with locally produced food.

4.5 Summary

The above research reveals that Cupar's visitor offer is significant. Its town centre offers a heritage centre (and heritage trail in the form of the reprinted leaflet), a soft play and a variety of pleasant walks. More extensive visitor attractions, namely Hill of Tarvit, the Scottish Deer Centre and Cairnie Fruit Farm are on the doorstep. Trip Advisor's current 'Top 10 attractions in Fife' comprise 2 parks, 2 golf-related sites, 2 historic buildings, 1 beach, 1 harbour, 1 pioneering World Heritage Site bridge and 1 historic burgh. This implies that there is no individual type of attraction that is a chief draw in the area. It also shows that Cupar has plenty to offer in most of these categories. Newspaper/journal articles on best days out in Fife are currently dominated by St Andrews. By building Cupar's profile, highlighting its close proximity to St Andrews, its unique visitor offer and its enviable public transport links and free car parking, the town may achieve increased visibility and its own historic burgh may begin

to make an appearance on lists of key attractions in the area.

There are currently no craft festivals in the area. Looking on a national scale, there is the St Abb's Wool Festival, an annual celebration of wool crafts held in Eyemouth (April) and the annual Perth Festival of Yarn (September). A number of craft classes and workshops are advertised in the North East Fife area. The commercial context that immediately follows this section, reveals that Cupar has an active arts and craft scene. The town could therefore be well placed to host a craft fair/festival. This could be an exciting future initiative for the town.

4.6 Commercial context

Cupar has one of the few high streets left in Scotland with successful independent retailers. It is a vibrant, lively town with good destination shops. For example, people from across the country are drawn to the Poles Apart craft shop and Maisie & Mac gallery and contemporary craft shop for their range. Lady Wynd is also a good case in point. This once declining street has been revitalised by the introduction of a number of independent business that appear to be thriving.

Cupar continues its central role in the surrounding hinterland as a centre for agricultural produce. For example, Kettle



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Produce Ltd, which was established by two Fife farming families in 1985, now has over 50 farmers growing vegetables in partnership with the company. Soft fruit production is also a successful operation in the area, and the globally recognised Quaker Oats is based to the west of the town. Several local visitor attractions, including Muddy Boots Fruit Farm, Scottish Deer Centre & Cairnie Mega Maze, offer farm shops and/or food retail offers that specialise in local and organic produce. Cupar is billed in the visitor guide to Cupar and North Fife as offering a great selection of local produce, including Fisher & Donaldson's Bakery, Minicks butcher and Luvian's Bottle Shop, internationally known for its extensive range of malt whiskies.

The Fife Farmers Market (www.fifefarmersmarket.co.uk) is held in the Crossgate at Cupar on the third Saturday of every month. The franchise operates across Fife (including Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline and St Andrews), and includes a variety of stalls offering local produce. Although the town does not profit from the sale of produce, its being held in the Crossgate arguably results in an increase of footfall and dwell time in the town centre, which is good for local businesses. In the context of the above competitor analysis, a number of nearby local communities offer similar food markets, including Falkland, which has a food market

every Saturday morning (except on the last Saturday of the month) and the Pillars of Hercules, a well-established and award-winning farm shop and café.

Cupar's independent businesses, including its cafés and bakeries have in the past had a presence at events in the town, for example in the form of a pop-up café or shops. This should be maximised going ahead. Again, an improved digital profile for Cupar will lead to more visitors, which will lead to increased footfall and business for the town.

4.7 Conservation context

The conservation, repair and regeneration of the town's historic buildings is hugely important to ensuring that Cupar retains its heritage significance and charm as a viable tourist destination. It also provides functional spaces in which new businesses can thrive.

Effective partnerships are already in operation in Cupar. For example, Fife Historic Buildings Trust (FHBT) is working in partnership with Fife Council, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to establish and deliver the Cupar Conservation Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). The THI is a grants scheme towards external repair and conservation of privately owned properties.



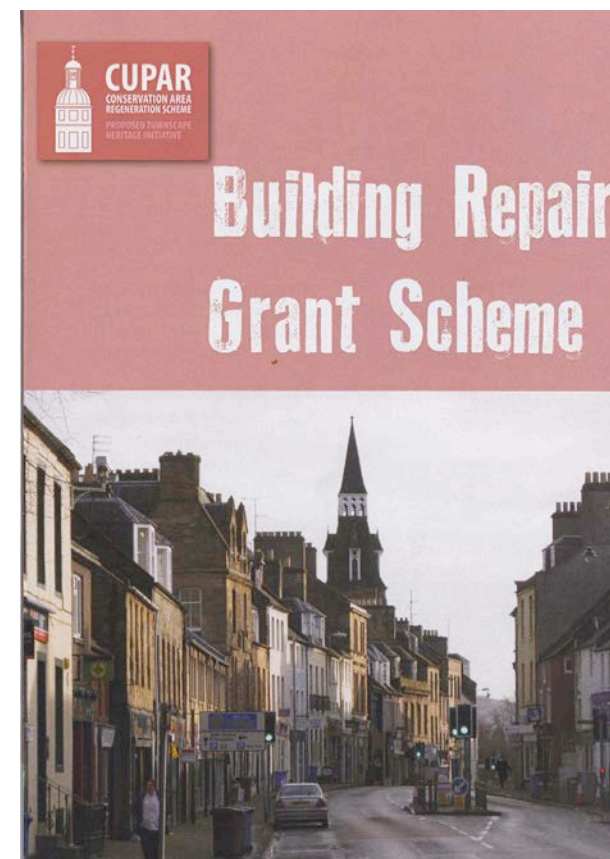
4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

Within the CARS initiative FHBT were consulted over the future use of the Burgh Chambers and with Fife Council are renovating this key building as part of the five-year programme to provide a two-bed high standard holiday apartment. Training and apprenticeships in traditional skills are also funded as part of the CARS programme. Improvements have also been made to roads, footpaths and spaces, including Crossgate and St Catherine's Street where benches and bike racks have been installed. Other conservation projects include the Bonnygate Gap Site, which is part of a proposed comprehensive redevelopment project initiated by CDT in partnership with Fife Council and Kingdom Housing Association. Three of Cupar's churches have also carried out major property conservation on their listed buildings. This included the renovation of a hall property belonging to the Old Parish Church and its re-use as a community centre.

However, issues regarding the maintenance of the town's historic buildings remain. FHBT recently commissioned the Scottish Lime Centre Trust (SLCT) to undertake a survey of the building stone and slate in Cupar. The report identified that a lack of maintenance is widespread throughout the town with overflowing, blocked, rusted, and failed rainwater goods with vegetation abundant above eaves and on walling. This is partly attributed to access difficulties

(a combination of busy roads and narrow paths) and multiple, sometimes absentee, ownership of properties. This makes agreeing and arranging repairs and maintenance time-consuming, and discourages tenants or landlords from taking things forward. The report advises solutions including informative guides and seminars, and educating the wider public in Cupar about the advantages of regular maintenance. FHBT has already taken an active role in raising awareness and encouraging action, most recently organising an expert-led walk-about inspection of the town centre's 19th-century and 1930s historic shop frontages. The issues are not yet resolved, but the publication of this report, the existence of a traditional skills workshop in Cupar, the availability of funding for homeowners and the proactive, anchoring role of FHBT, presents a proactive template for how a community can be mobilised into action to regenerate and improve the appearance of its town.

In terms of natural heritage, Sustainable Cupar (SC) is working on grant-funded initiatives to improve the Moor Road historic path to Ceres. The aim of the charitable organisation, which was established as a community group in 2009, is to help Cupar become a thriving, environmentally friendly town. As well as access improvements, the group works to raise awareness of government schemes that are available for homeowners to invest in



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renewables. (N.B. FHBT and Fife Council also actively promote energy conservation in the town centre's properties through the CARS scheme.) SC has an Active Travel group which has designated routes to become pedestrian and cyclist friendly. They are assembling funding and approvals to secure a route between the town centre and the Moor Road, via the riverside walk.

To summarise, work is ongoing and, once again, Cupar's community emerges as an active, positive force in achieving change. However more needs to be done to ensure the preservation of the town's buildings and thus increase the aesthetic appeal of the town. A town needs to look well-kept and valued if it is to be valued by its visitors.

4.8 Access

Cupar holds a strong position as a route centre for public transport, including express buses from and to Glasgow and Edinburgh airports plus both local and long-distance trains, and is extremely well provided with car parks. This makes it an ideal destination for a variety of age groups, including residents and visitors of retirement age, who make up a significant proportion of Cupar's population. The town Charrette identified that there are, however, a number of physical access issues in Cupar. These include the busy Primary Road

(A91) which runs through the town centre, the increasing volume of access traffic on the Station Road and South Road where the town's supermarkets are located, unsuitable thoroughfares for larger vehicles (including Lady Wynd), narrow pavements on prime pedestrian streets and a propensity for street clutter and a need for improved orientation.

Physical access is only one category that the town will need to address going forward. The following table provides a summary of the other areas that also need to be considered as part of any new developments, projects and initiatives.



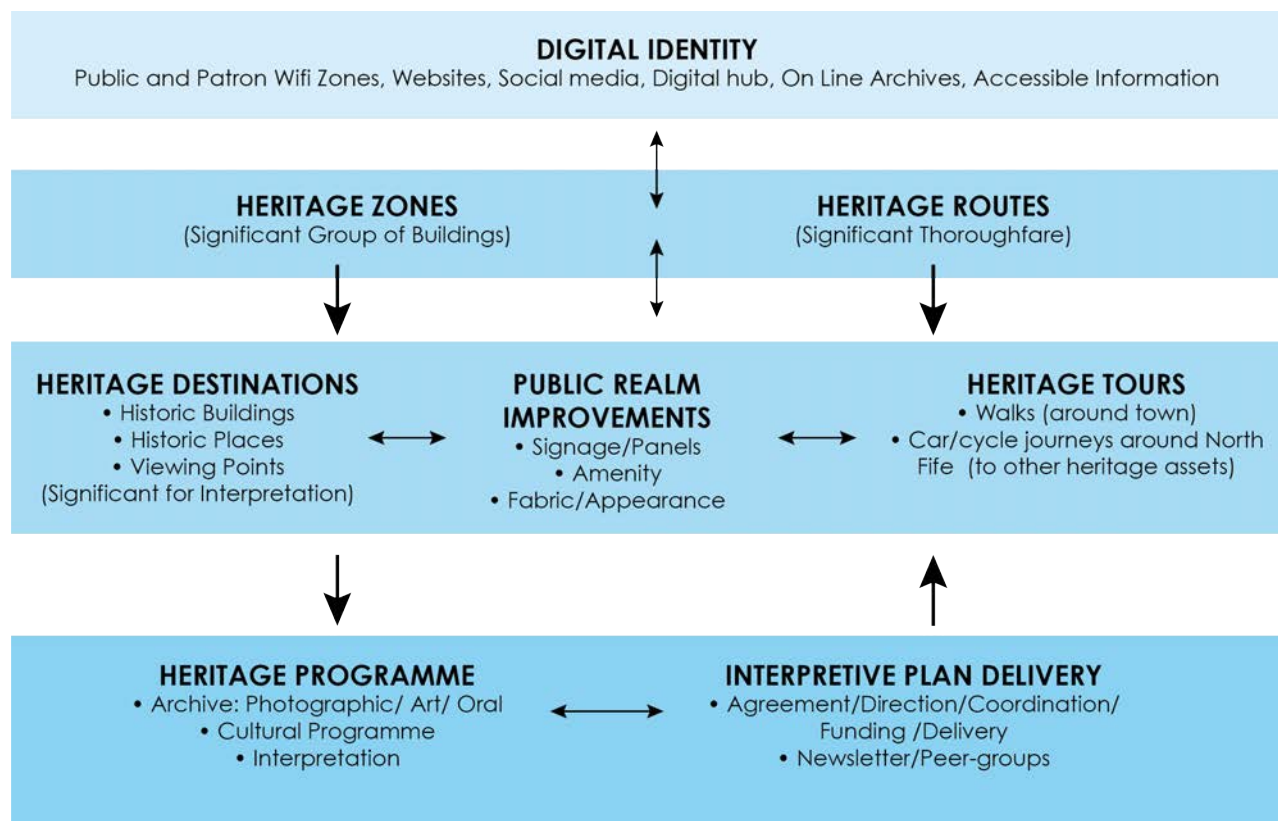
4. CUPAR IN CONTEXT

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	
Physical barriers	The Charrette identified that improvements should be made to improve access routes around the town for residents and visitors with particular consideration for those with mobility issues, including wheelchair users.
Sensory barriers	Any new interpretation or signage should consider the needs of visually and aurally impaired residents and visitors.
Intellectual barriers	In relating the stories of the town, care should be taken to avoid assuming knowledge or adopting an elitist or authoritative tone.
Emotional barriers	<p>It can be all too easy to present histories as strings of facts detached from human emotion. People connect to human stories and there is great potential to use a storytelling approach that engages the emotions.</p> <p>Interpretation and marketing should create a sense that this Cupar is somewhere welcoming, fun, and relevant today, not stuffy or prudish. A down to earth tone of voice that is open and welcoming should be used.</p>
Economic barriers	New products, initiatives, activities or events should take care to be inclusive of people's different financial circumstances where possible.
Social barriers	<p>Sharing the passion of the people who love the town, and sharing Cupar's stories in a way that will entertain is the best way to overcome social barriers.</p> <p>Where possible, the selected stories should represent a diverse range of voices so people see themselves and their own background interwoven as part of a dynamic and global heritage.</p>
Local community barriers	<p>Involving local communities in presenting the story of the town and developing its interpretation will create a sense of ownership and pride in the town.</p> <p>Cupar's community will be a vital, active force in the realisation of new projects, activities and events.</p>
Geographical barriers	The town is easily accessible via public transport. Trains to key destinations including Edinburgh and Dundee, and beyond, regularly stop at Cupar Station. The town is on a main road to St Andrews (A91) and there are a number of car parks in the town centre, including Fluthers Car Park – a free car park with a large number of spaces.

5. CREATING TOOLS TO REALISE STEP CHANGE

5.1 The conceptual structure behind the Interpretive Plan

Understanding of the Interpretive Plan has been aided during public meetings by explaining the conceptual structure that lies behind it. The diagram below illustrates this conceptual structure which emerged during workshops led by CMC with Cupar Development Trust and Cupar Heritage. The value of prioritising 'Digital Identity' as well as establishing 'Heritage Zones' and 'Heritage Routes' is discussed in this section (5) of the Interpretive Plan. In effect these have become conceptual tools that have helped members of the community engage with a range of initiatives within the Plan. However, the interplay of 'Heritage Destinations', 'Public Realm Improvements', 'Heritage Tours' and especially the 'Heritage Programme' are dealt with in the Plan as a whole. More practical capacity building and community-based procedures are noted under 'Interpretive Plan Delivery' and are discussed in section 7 of this Plan.



5. CREATING TOOLS TO REALISE STEP CHANGE

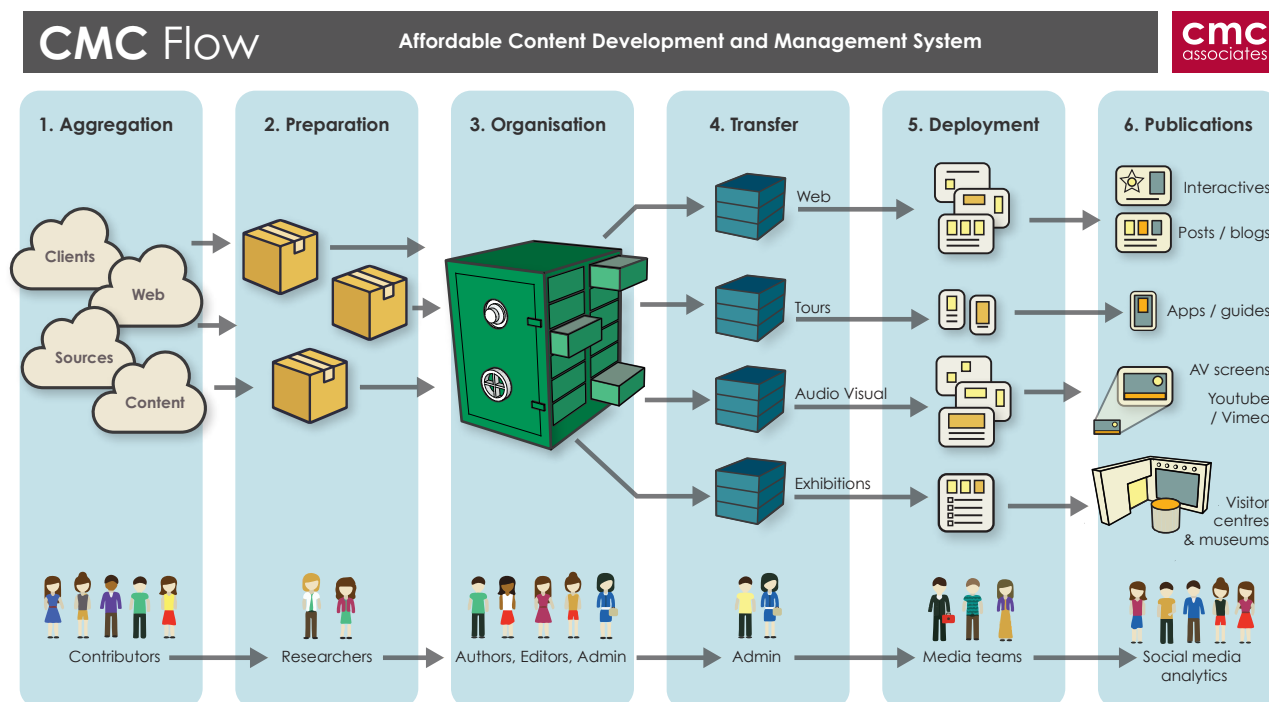
5.2 Cupar's digital identity

It became readily apparent during the workshops that, in heritage terms in particular, Cupar's digital identity was underdeveloped and that if this was not corrected it would have a negative effect on involving the community in delivering the Plan.

The concept of 'Digital Cupar' was therefore born – a community based online content development and management system for heritage resources used by all working to deliver the Interpretive Plan. Crucially the intended system will allow for volunteers and project teams to contribute records to Digital Cupar and for their uploaded content to be assessed and edited 'wikipedia style' within the Digital Cupar archive. Members of Cupar Heritage and others could play a lead role in developing the resulting archive while the records input can be linked to personal and group projects.

The asset management system and workflow illustrated here has already been deployed on heritage projects involving volunteers and professionals by CMC Associates. Such systems are becoming more and more affordable and are revolutionising how digital information is managed and deployed.

Digital Cupar workflow



5. CREATING TOOLS TO REALISE STEP CHANGE

Digital Cupar has been placed in an overarching position in the conceptual structure as it was apparent that if the rich history of Cupar became digitally available to local users and websites then it would help to create a positive digital profile that will reach out across the Worldwide Web. By encouraging project teams, as well as commercial and non-commercial players across the community, to contribute positively to Cupar's digital presence, Digital Cupar could, we believe, become a significant factor in the town's future commercial success and community engagement.

This will be particularly important for promoting Cupar's marketing and branding within tourist markets. Current work by Visit Scotland and Digital Scotland are both briefing for and encouraging strong online presence for tourist venues. The workflows within Digital Cupar are already designed to assist the production of Apps and dynamic websites with mobile technologies (smart phones and tablets in particular) being of increasing significance for day trip as well as longer break tourists. (Visit Scotland Trends 2017 produced by Insight Department).

The availability of public or customer wifi has been noted in recent interviews of tourists as being of particular importance. This will be something of special interest for the historic

centre of Cupar. Several venues already provide wifi and at the very least providing and publicising hotspots will be important. However, there is also the possibility of Fife Council supporting the roll out of public space wifi in the centre of Cupar.

5.3 Heritage zones and routes

The centre of Cupar is, as noted already, a Conservation Area and there are a significant number of Listed Buildings within the town. The importance of these designations is apparent from the CARS project and conservation and planning controls. However the reality is that over the coming years local and central government funding for public and supported works will be in short supply. To help individuals and groups access funds, and also to maximise the opportunity for local initiatives, there is perhaps a case for a finer 'granularity' in conservation initiatives - community based Heritage Zones and Routes.

A Heritage Zone might be a cluster of properties or frontages that might for instance work together on an 'as and when possible basis' to sensitively address improvements, for example, window or signage lighting. Or it may be a group of more dispersed properties wishing to tackle something as seemingly simple as buddleia growing from their roofs. By pulling together perhaps a cherry-picker

5. CREATING TOOLS TO REALISE STEP CHANGE

could be jointly hired or the Council might even be persuaded to consider supporting locally planned initiatives by providing access to relevant staff and equipment. It is surprising just how much additional progress can be made by giving a project status and a name. So Heritage Zones within the historic town are intended to encourage a project based collective approach amongst businesses, residents, property owners and roads management in order to address issues in the round (property maintenance issues, conserving shop-fronts, creating people-friendly streets, encouraging small businesses.)

A Heritage Route might be where a range of properties push for widespread benefits, for example, traffic calming or refreshing the town's blue plaques.

Other projects – for instance signage of closes to give them branded identity - may also be creatively defined to attract funding and or sponsorship. Many routes will also appear as part of smartphone guided Apps.

Successful collaborations exist within the town. Cupar in Bloom and Christmas in Cupar are outstanding in their collective work to provide both street enhancement and related events which contribute towards the town's positive vibes. However, the level of individual and collective engagement with Cupar's public



Bird's eye view of Cupar.

5. CREATING TOOLS TO REALISE STEP CHANGE

spaces and routes needs to be increased in order to achieve a widespread and longer term change. The Interpretive Plan hopes to help find new mechanisms to identify, agree and deliver 'bottom up' heritage interventions in the public realm. This is not going to be easy, but the alternative will be visible decline or perhaps worse the sweeping away of historic features because they are seen to be unloved or too expensive to retain.

A range of potential Heritage Zones and Routes are under discussion. It is hoped that an early Heritage Zone Project will be around Lady Wynd where discussions as part of the development of the Interpretive Plan have noted and encouraged a 'local street-community partnership' approach as a pilot.



Views of Lady Wynd and Bonnygate.

6. HERITAGE PROJECTS

The development and delivery of successful heritage projects requires the adoption of a logical and sound methodology. This may be found in the basic components of the interpretive planning process (see diagram in section 2.1). This section explores a tiered system of projects; key strategic 'top down' drivers, community-driven 'bottom up' initiatives and potential future 'bottom up' projects that have been put forward by the community, and which would require funding.

Each project listed, whether a high-profile, strategic vision, or a valuable, community-driven initiative, needs to identify and establish the key elements of this process: interpretive aims and objectives, target audiences, themes and storylines and finally, most appropriate forms of media.

6.1 The value of interpretive structure

A strong interpretive structure is essential for the development and delivery of high quality projects and experiences. An understanding of project aims and objectives, target audiences and an agreed list of themes and storylines allows for a focused approach and the development of a strong, cohesive narrative structure that binds the different components of a project together. These elements are essential to create a holistic feel to the story of a town, which invariably

will be told across various locations and using different media solutions.

Within each project, a palette of approaches should be developed to meet the needs and expectations of different audiences, catering for a range of ages, backgrounds, levels of interest and motivations for engagement.

6.2 Target audiences

Section 3 of the plan (above) explores the demographic profile of the town, but, as part of the interpretive structure, it is also important to identify target audiences for new developments, be they interpretive elements, activities or events.

6.2.1 Community-minded/curious Cuparians

This audience is made up of Cupar's residents who care about their town. The ages, interest levels and motivations of this group will vary, and the content and style of new developments should take this into account. Stories from both past and present should be explored, using both traditional and digital media. Members of this group are likely to be members or volunteers in local organisations and groups, or people attending events/services provided by

Colour schemes, smells, what's on the menu. The style of signage, leaflets, activities, passing conversations. The position of things, parking, paths, benches, even bins.

Every detail adds up to tell a [place's] story. So we all play a part in interpretation.

EVERYTHING SPEAKS, NATIONAL TRUST, 2013

6. HERITAGE PROJECTS

them. They should be involved in content development where possible to generate a sense of ownership and instil a local voice in the town's stories. However, the breadth of appeal should remain a chief consideration if the presentation of the town's stories is also to appeal to its visitors.

6.2.2 Drawn to Cupar: tourists and visitors

This group comprises people visiting Cupar, either for the first time or as repeat visitors, and includes friends and relatives of Cupar's residents. Some may be day-trippers, others may be staying in the area for a few days or longer. Some will arrive on public transport and others will be car users. Each will arrive with their own needs and expectations, but there will likely be commonalities between their motivations to visit. Many people in this group will know little about the town but may be curious to know more. Some will simply be visiting to explore its attractive streets, pleasant green spaces and/or shops and eateries. Whether visiting the town to learn, explore, shop, eat, socialise or soak up the atmosphere, a range of approaches should cater for these different motivations within this group.

6.2.3 Life-long learners – schools, colleges and vocational training

This group comprises school children, including primary and secondary age, college and further education students, and adult learners, including U3A. Students and their teachers may be searching for curriculum-focused topic ideas and projects, or for new connections and opportunities. Lead organisations within the town should maximise opportunities for engaging with this audience to encourage adding heritage into local education provision. This audience will also include groups who are unable to access heritage independently. Their needs and expectations will be different, but are also likely to centre round searching for opportunities for all-abilities engagement, stimulation and enjoyment. The Digital Cupar initiative will require residents of all ages to possess digital skills if they are to achieve meaningful engagement.

Finally Fife's lifelong learners form a key part of this audience. These could be school leavers in search of a trade, people in the labour market looking for employment or a change of direction. The historic burgh and its resident traditional skills workshop could be utilised to form a long-lasting and effective connection

6. HERITAGE PROJECTS

with this segment of the audience. This group is diverse, but at its core it is all about learning, engagement, fulfilment and purpose-driven activity.

6.3 Identifying potential: Cupar's rich heritage stories

Cupar's history is well-documented and reveals a rich stream of potential themes and storylines. The following themes have been presented by the heritage community, via the consultation process, as the key messages for the town.

The Tale of a Town

Cupar's rich built heritage is well documented in maps and other sources. The town's historic buildings have fascinating stories which together help to convey Cupar's distinctive story and point to the people who lived here. The town's historic closes are intriguing spaces that tell us much about life in past and present Cupar.

Crime and Punishment

Cupar's role as a centre of justice for 800 years is a primary theme in any exploration of the town's heritage. Moat Hill, the original seat of justice, the Sheriff Court, former prison buildings and the Fluthers, once site of public hangings all link with this theme. Many related

stories exist, including that of the last public hanging in Cupar, and of the women who attempted to flee prosecution for witchcraft in the 17th century.

Sons and Daughters of Cupar

Many people with connections to the town have made their mark on history. These include David Lindsay (c1490–1555), courtier of King James V and Makar, Alexander Berry, Australia's first millionaire, who was educated in Cupar, and Alexander Wilson who was one of the signatories on the US Declaration of Independence.

Keeping Shop

Cupar has a long-standing tradition as a centre for trade amidst rich agricultural land. Over the centuries the commercial activity in the town centre has changed from its origins as a medieval market town and site of the area's corn exchange to a bustling high street with shops and shop keepers, to more modern day developments of supermarkets and online shopping.

Roads, rivers and railways

The history of transport and the town's regional/geographic significance. The town sits at the hub of a network of turnpike roads, and has two tollhouses. A range of industrial processes, including milling, brewing, malting, dyeing, flax spinning and linen weaving arose



David Lyndsay c1490–1555. One of Cupar's famous sons.

6. HERITAGE PROJECTS

due to its location and its river, and generated wealth for the town. The coming of the railway in 1847 provided an essential link not just for passengers but for the transport of goods and livestock. Today Cupar links in with long distance paths including Pilgrim's Way (links to Cupar and the Kirk).

Cupar and the Kirk

Many of the key moments in the story of Scotland's religious past played out here in Cupar. John Knox preached here during the turbulent days preceding the Reformation, the battle that never was in the mist on Cupar Muir was a key moment in the power struggle between Mary of Guise and the Lords of the Congregation. The murder of Archbishop Sharp took place nearby, and the hand of one of his assassins is buried in Cupar Kirkyard alongside the heads of two other Covenanters.

A life source

The River Eden and its tributaries link to several different themes in Cupar's story: The rich heritage of the waterways, powering mills and supplying water, points back to past industrial activity within the town; the use of the river for trade, with Cupar's merchants operating from the estuary at Guardbridge; and today the river offers pleasant walks and a habitat for a variety of wildlife.

Taking Centre Stage

This theme covers past and present cultural activities from the first performance of David Lindsay's *Thrie Estaitis* on the Castlehill in Cupar to cultural activities today including Open Studios, Cupar Arts Festival, concerts held by Cupar's various musical groups and the annual Cupar Opera Show.

The local press

Robert Tullis (1775–1831), printer, bookseller and publisher, is a leading figure in the story of Scottish publishing and is an accessible entry point to Cupar's role in this trade. This links to the Fife Herald and the Burnside Works, as well as the Tullis Russell biomass plant at Auchmuty.

Cupar's kids

What was the experience of children growing up in Cupar over the centuries? Education is one theme, from the development of the various schools and changing nature of schooling, to the experience of the children evacuated from Edinburgh to Cupar during the Second World War. Other children worked in the fields or in industry.

Cupar at War

The stories of the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry and the Black Watch regiment reach down to the present day. The impact of war upon the town of Cupar, including the South African War, and the two World Wars, relates to the built



Cupar Old Parish Church.



The murder of Archbishop Sharp, 1697.

6. HERITAGE PROJECTS

heritage, for example, the town War Memorial and the memorial wing of the Adamson Hospital.

Through these stories, the community is sharing its own perceptions of what gives the town its uniqueness and sense of place. This demonstrates the importance of 'bottom up', community-generated components in the interpretive process.

Projects benefit from the inside knowledge, the community gains a sense of ownership and the people's voice instils a human dimension which, in turn, encourages a deeper level of engagement between the town's visitors and its stories.

6.4 Development of heritage projects

The Cupar Digital Archive

There are rich sources of stories and memories living within the community and a range of skills and knowledge that could be used to create material for the community. Much of this information can be developed within Cupar's Digital Archive. This could then be used for the enjoyment of the town's visitors and residents, as well as providing an important resource for research projects and the development of interpretation and exhibitions on a local, national and international scale.

The table below notes the proposed initial set of four Heritage Projects.

PROJECT	DETAILS
Talk of the Town	Oral History project – an opportunity to interview residents of Cupar (& potentially its sons & daughters who have moved away)
Capturing Cupar	Photography project to bring Cupar's image archive up to date (most recent photographs taken around 20 years ago) and digitise the collection
Who lived in my house?	Local 'house histories' project, using archive research (including census returns) to discover the history of Cupar's houses and their past residents. (NB This could be extended to explore what the land was used for before more modern housing developments were built)
Who worked in my shop?	As above but using the perspective of Cupar's long-standing associations with commerce in its main streets

7. SIGNAGE STRATEGY, MAPS AND WALKING TOURS

The Charrette identified that signage and orientation are an issue in Cupar that needs to be addressed. An ad-hoc approach to design and installation and a variation in terms of quality results in a lack of cohesion to the presentation and narrative structure of Cupar's stories. It also adds to the sense of poor physical accessibility and street clutter that is lamented in Cupar Could.

As in the case of the Community Digital Archive above, this project will comprise two main elements. A strategic, top down initial project of providing new orientation panels and a suite of new signage across the town centre, and a secondary, community-driven wave of orientation and interpretation tools, namely blue plaques and an app-based walking tour.

The first wave project will require adherence to a project management structure, again with its key components drawn from the interpretive process. The project will ensure the provision of well-planned, accessible signage that conforms to a standardised approach which will improve access and orientation, and increase the aesthetic appeal of the town centre.

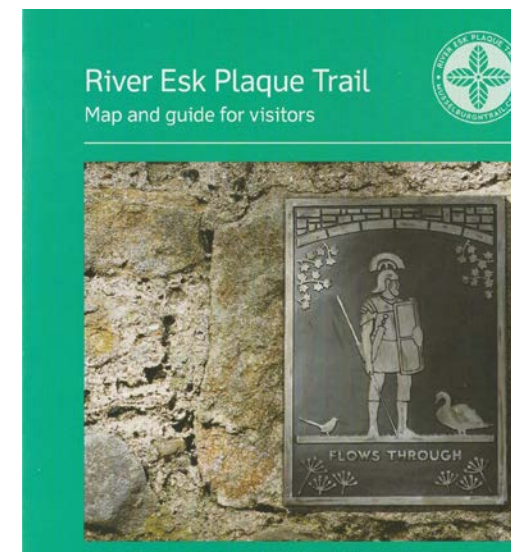
The second element of the project will be driven by the community and the overarching concept of Heritage Routes, as explored

above in section 5.3. This will include a refresh, and potential additions to the town's blue plaques, and smart phone app-based walking tours.

This second wave project could also consider the option of developing an A3 map for visitors to replace one that used to be available. This could include space for local businesses to advertise. Together, the top down and bottom up phases of the signage strategy will result in an improved visitor experience and a pleasant environment in which to live.



Trails can take a variety of forms in terms of content and media.



Dalkeith's red plaques add a community-focused element to the town's interpretation.

8. POTENTIAL FUTURE AND MAJOR PROJECTS

As has already been identified in section 3.2, the performing and visual arts have a strong presence in Cupar. Although some key organisations are small or new in structure, with a longer lead-in time, Cupar could greatly benefit from their skills and creative vision. The following projects represent larger scale, 'big ticket' items. They do not have the same structural underpinning as the strategic projects listed above, and are therefore arguably less pressing by comparison. However, these ideas have been suggested and supported by the community as part of the same consultation exercise. They are therefore worth exploring and developing further, should funding become available.

The development and delivery of these projects could also be facilitated more easily as a result of, or in partnership with, the strategic projects listed above, including Digital Cupar and the town's Digital Archive.

8.1 Community art projects/links with Cupar Arts

Led by Cupar Arts and with potential links to their biannual festival, community art initiatives could be developed. These could include artistic exploration of Cupar's closes ('Close Encounters') or a trail along the town's river walks developed with groups within the Fife-

long learners audience, including primary schools or local youth, and uniformed youth groups (e.g. Scouts and Guides).

Trails can take a variety of forms. For example, a trail developed for the River Esk in East Lothian (<http://www.musselburghtrail.co.uk/>) combines an interpretation of the river's role in the history and industry of the area with the opportunity to explore the area and discover a series of plaques, from which rubbings may be taken. A trail that works, in this way, on a number of levels may also be an appropriate development for Cupar. Other trails include more artistic, often sculptural elements that are rich with meaning as well as an attractive and fun discovery.

Potential themes:

- The Tale of a Town
- A Life Source.

8.2 New performance of the Thrie Estaitis

David Lindsay's epic work was performed in 2000 on Castle Hill, where it was originally performed in the 16th century. Drawing on the active performing arts circles in the town centre, a new performance of the play could



8. POTENTIAL FUTURE MAJOR PROJECTS

be developed for performance in 2022 to commemorate the 470th anniversary of its first performance on Castle Hill in 1552.

This year also marks the 225th anniversary of printer Robert Tullis moving to Cupar, in 1797. The performance could therefore provide the climax to a town-wide celebration of Cupar's literary heritage, (including an exploration of its past and present literary sons and daughters). Links with Cupar library, including its connection with local authors and government-funded initiatives such as Book Bugs for babies and children, and local literary festivals (detailed in section 3.2) could be key partners in the initiative.

Digital Cupar could provide a contemporary angle on how the written word is accessed today through various platforms, including Kindles, podcasts etc. The visual arts could also be represented with digital works based on this theme, perhaps as part of the Cupar Arts Festival.

Themes:

- Taking Centre Stage
- Cupar's Sons and Daughters



A performance of David Lindsay's work in Linlithgow Palace Gardens in June 2013. It is time for the play to return home to where it was first performed.

9. A FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY – CONSULTATION, GOVERNANCE AND CAPACITY

9.1 Consultation structures

Community consultations need to be open and inevitably involve a range of group and personal dynamics. Building consensus always takes time and requires a degree of flexibility. One of the great advantages for the Interpretive Plan is that consensus around the importance of Cupar's Heritage has been building now for a number of years. This has been particularly true of the last few years with the funding of CARS in 2014, the formation of the Cupar Development Trust in 2015, the consultative Charrette in 2016 and now the Interpretive Plan in 2017. The desire to use Cupar's heritage to benefit the whole community has developed considerable momentum. In particular the 2016 Charrette and this Interpretive Plan have been consciously 'bottom up' in their thinking. The community was directly involved in determining the recommendations of Cupar Could in 2016 and the Interpretive Plan has deliberately been opened to the range of projects that individuals and groups wish to undertake.

Cupar Development Trust has taken the initiative in securing funding for the preparation of the Interpretive Plan and, through the guidance provided by a steering group of Trust and Cupar Heritage trustees, has brought forward the Interpretive Plan

proposals. The number of individuals and organisations involved in creating and reviewing the Interpretive Plan has, however, been considerable including: community groups, local government, heritage and local history groups, environmental groups, arts and cultural organisations, church and youth groups, sports, education, business and entrepreneurs (see section 3.2 Above). Critical to the 'bottom up' approach especially for potential heritage projects has been engagement with individuals and groups who are interested in participating in particular topics and activities. This is an ongoing process and the present project leads are detailed in Section 6.8 Above.

In addition to discussions about specific projects, progress on the Interpretive Plan has been presented during open evening meetings in Cupar of what has become known as the 'Interpretive Plan Consultative Forum'. Typically twenty-five to thirty members of the community have attended each meeting of the Consultative Forum and discussions have been fruitful and positive with the Interpretive Plan being updated afterwards as required.

9.2 Governance now and in the future

For the present it is proposed that Cupar Development Trust should, as the current

lead body, continue to act as the 'voice of the consortium' with external agencies. This might become an on-going role, but much will depend upon community decisions, funding requirements and the range and level of activities undertaken. It is also suggested that the current steering group continues as the body most aware of and committed to implementing the Interpretive Plan, although it is to be expected that membership of the steering group may change slightly as time goes on.

There is, then, clearly every opportunity to build upon current community based governance and to maintain and extend the involvement of Cupar Heritage and other groups in implementing the Interpretive Plan. Looking to the future it is important that this developing organic structure can be formalised to allow larger scale activities to be funded and undertaken. This is inevitably something of a balancing act. We don't want to put off low cost/no cost community volunteer activity with reporting paperwork while at the same time we have to recognise that if significant funding is needed for other activities then a higher level of accountability is going to be needed.

The current governance is therefore likely to be suitable now and into the immediate future for the significant number of low

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cost community based research and documentation projects noted in the Interpretive Plan. However, it is highly likely that as work around key structural elements of the Interpretive Plan such as Digital Cupar, the Heritage Zones and Signage gather momentum, there is going to be a need for a not-for-profit lead organisation to bid for funds, manage projects and report to funders upon progress. There is then going to be a real need to build capacity as the intended social and economic impact of the Interpretive Plan gathers momentum. Digital and traditional skillsets will need to be enriched with knowledge of Cupar's heritage. Business, marketing and tourism sectors will all need support to maximise the impact of multiple heritage projects across the town. Engaging with multiple local organisations to develop skills, including digital and community engagement, will of itself need human and infrastructure resources.

At some point in the potentially near future (depending upon funding) it is likely that a physical and online support 'hub' will become a key requirement for facilitating projects and also ensuring efficient stewardship of project funds – much of which will come from grant or sponsorship sources. This 'hub' will almost automatically become the natural point of contact within the consortium and for sub-contractors. It makes sense therefore that the

ground-work is laid now for the formulation and governance of a not-for-profit 'Cupar Hub' which in due course will help deliver the diverse activities of the Interpretive Plan and can manage funding, reportage and contracts as the needs for this emerge. Until that point Cupar Development Trust will continue to act as the official voice of the Interpretive Plan so that initial funding applications can be made.

9.3 Potential funding sources now and in the future

Different elements of the Interpretive Plan require significantly different levels of funding – from minimal to relatively significant. This means that some aspects of the Plan can proceed quite quickly, while others will need to await funding. This, importantly, is not a Plan that needs to be fully funded before it can be initiated. Moreover – given the breadth of activities that it is hoped will become enhanced by Cupar's heritage, funding sources will also be diverse and vary over time.

As some sources of grant funding expect matching funding in cash and/or in kind it will become important to put into place accounting models that track different funding sources and provide accounting records sufficient to satisfy potential donors

(including private trusts) and OSCR if charitable status is sought.

The initial funding for the Interpretive Plan came from Central Government and given the intended economic impact of the Plan it is important to maintain those links and develop links with Scottish Enterprise, Digital Tourism and Digital Scotland. This is much more than an Arts and Heritage initiative.

Funding and support from Fife Council may also be easier to access once the economic case for the Interpretive Plan is made to them. Also they may be able to assist projects where a match-funding application meets their own objectives too.

Given the economic rationale that helps underpin the Interpretive Plan it will be important to build relations with local businesses and to recognise their needs and interests. For instance paper and online newsletters may lead to local advertising and sponsorship. But the package being presented needs to be professional and to deliver real advantage to local business. Some events organised by consortium members may also be ticketed and again the revenue needs to be noted for matching funding purposes. The potential commercial development of this project is quite significant and particularly

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in establishing the 'Cupar Hub' it will be important to be prepared for this.

Grant applications will undoubtedly be one of the priority areas in the search for funding. This of itself is a significant effort for those involved and may even require professional support. More importantly it will require relationship building with the main granting bodies. The Interpretive Plan is designed to be a significant tool in this process. It will also provide large parts of the thinking behind the inevitable grant applications.

Currently we would expect applications to be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (Scotland), particularly to their call for proposals under the Great Places Scheme, N.B. Registration of interest by 8th of June 2017. Other rolling date opportunities also exist.

Applications could also be made to the Big Lottery Fund under their Community Assets Call and Grants for Community led Activity. There are also a number of smaller grants available from various Trusts and Foundation Scotland helps coordinate applications within the arts sector. For these applications individual activities within the Interpretive Plan would be funded separately. Currently the clearest and most significant application target would be HLF's Great Places Scheme.

9.4 Building capacity

Much of what the Interpretive Plan relies upon is the capacity of Cupar's residents to undertake heritage-led activities, including basic research and documentation, interpretive projects or marketing and events. In each area there will inevitably be skills development and transfer. This will be one of the fundamentals of building a vibrant and sustainable Cupar and it will also be one of the areas where funding and support will be potentially accessed.

More specifically discussions should be opened up for student placements once the Cupar Hub becomes established. These may be heritage sector, including museum management from the University of St Andrews, but just as importantly business and marketing.

Likewise it would be important to look at encouraging skill based qualifications in digital business and indeed traditional skills.

The capacity to deliver the Interpretive Plan and to build upon all of the heritage activity being proposed also depends upon building the infrastructure within Cupar and Fife in general. Working with and giving a focus to companies in the Creative Sector will be

important, encouraging them to locate in or have remote workers in Cupar. Improving local band width and wifi networks within the town are as noted critical to both tourism and creative industries.

Last but by no means least is the case for improving the bed-night accommodation and making full use of Cupar's existing transport network. This is not a direct objective of the Interpretive Plan but it will be one of the medium term means by which its success may be measured.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Cupar Development Trust promoted the preparation of the Cupar Town Interpretive Plan for the benefit of the community of the Royal Burgh of Cupar and District.

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Local organisations participating in meetings of the Consultative Forum

Fife Council, Fife Historic Buildings Trust, Cupar Community Council, Fife Family History Society, Cupar & North East Fife Tourist Association, ABCD (Cupar Business Association),

Cupar Arts, Cupar in Bloom, Cupar & Howe of Fife Twinning Association, Cupar Y, Cupar U3A, Sustainable Cupar, Cupar & North Fife Preservation Society, Kilmoran School.

The Interpretive Plan is both community-based and strategic in its purpose. It provides the community of Cupar with a plan of action which developed collaboratively will make Cupar a distinctive and successful 21st Century Destination.

David Kirk
Chairman, Cupar Development Trust
June 2017

For further information about interpretation projects and initiatives in Cupar browse:

<http://www.cupardevtrust.org.uk>

<http://www.cuparheritage.org.uk>