

FRIENDS OF PORTENCROSS CASTLE

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
& ACCESS PLAN

Final Report

By

Jura Consultants

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents an audience development plan and access plan to support an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to consolidate and provide access to Portencross Castle, a Grade A listed Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Castle is currently under the ownership of the Friends of Portencross Castle (FOPC). The project will provide open public access to the building for the first time in its circa 650 year history. In developing the audience development plan, the following consultation has been undertaken:

- 106 questionnaires were completed by visitors to Portencross
- Head Teacher at Winton Primary School
- Head Teacher at West Kilbride Primary School
- Teacher at St. Marks School Irvine
- Teacher at Largs Primary
- Head of Learning at North Ayrshire Council
- Visit Scotland Ayrshire and Arran
- North Ayrshire Museums Service
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Historic Scotland
- West Kilbride Community Council
- 3 representatives from Dalry Community Council

The consultation has provided details of a number of issues which should be addressed by the project and also indicated particular projects and activities which could be delivered to encourage greater use of and visits to the Castle.

Consultation and audience development planning has been informed and affected by a need to balance the desire of existing visitors to the site and local residents to not over develop or encourage excessive use of the site, so as to maintain its unique character and the need to provide public benefit as a mechanism of securing public funding. The team's response has been to programme a series of activities and visitor experiences during set periods, so as to manage the flow and attraction of visitors, to maintain the ambience of the site whilst still providing benefits to the visiting public.

### **Interpretation**

The majority of visitors to the site would like the site to be interpreted so as to increase understanding of the site's importance. A historical review undertaken by iCosse reported that the following was of greatest significance:

- the history of the local area, including Hunterston and the deer park on Little Cumbrae
- the wider history of Ayrshire
- the history of the Boyds of Portencross
- the history of the development of Portencross Castle
- the importance of sea-power in medieval Scotland

- the Portencross cannon and the possible Armada wreck
- the Hunterston Brooch

The following interpretive methods will be used:

- a website
- an audio / a.v. of the site
- an interpretive leaflet
- on-site interpretive panels
- art installations
- a creative lighting strategy
- a family activity walking trail
- commissioning of a play

### **Barriers**

The following barriers to visiting Portencross Castle were reported:

- There may be insufficient material to justify a whole day trip to the Castle to see the heritage
- Charging to enter the Castle may put some people off, although a Feasibility Study carried out by the Friends of Portencross Castle suggests that this is a small minority at around 9%, based on a sample of 306. However charging to access the Castle may affect the likelihood of receiving repeat visits to a site which has limited capacity to refresh the visitor offer.
- The majority of visitors to the Castle are repeat visitors - efforts must be made to encourage repeat visits
- Residents and visitors wish to see a limited and sustained visitor level which does not mar the attraction of the village
- Access to the Castle from the car park is difficult, due to a section of rough grass of around 30 metres
- There is an interest in the Castle but there is a need to provide a stimulus for a visit
- There are a lot of Castles nearby and there is a need to illustrate what makes Portencross Castle unique
- The site is considered to be unsafe for certain user groups – in particular groups of children, due largely to its situation on a rocky section of coastline

### **Audience Development Activities**

The following audience development activities will be provided as part of the development project:

- Internal and external interpretation
- Website

- Education Activities including on-line and in-class activities
- Presentations and lectures
- Events programme
- Competitions
- Performances in the Grand Hall
- Programme of lectures
- Artist in residence
- Themed tours
- Training
- Marketing

In addition to the above, it is proposed that the viability of undertaking a series of community led archaeology projects is investigated.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This report presents an audience development plan for Portencross Castle, situated in the village of Portencross in North Ayrshire. Portencross lies on the coast, two miles from the village of West Kilbride, 6 miles north of Ardrossan. This audience development plan has been produced as part of a strategic development plan for the wider site which includes consideration of conservation and building development issues along with potential interpretation at the site.

### **1.2 Background**

Portencross Castle has proven history dating it to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, and linking it with the first Stewart Kings. Robert II in particular, clearly used the Castle, as it was a common place for his signing Royal Charters. An Iron-age fort stood on Auldhill just above Portencross (or Arneil as it was known until the 16<sup>th</sup> century) and then a 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century castle existed on the Auldhill site, prior to the building of the current castle.

A wing was added to the structure prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, giving the castle an L-shape, and adding rooms to the higher levels, providing additional space for accommodation.

Other historical interest at the site includes the presence of a cannon at Portencross that is said to have come from a ship of the Spanish Armada, the wreck of which may lie only just off the coastline.

The Friends of Portencross Castle (FOPC) was established in 1998, following British Nuclear Fuels' (BNFL) decision to sell the Castle on the open market. Following a local petition which gained political support, BNFL agreed not to sell the Castle and challenged FOPC to devise an alternative plan. FOPC, with help from the Architectural Heritage Fund, provided an options appraisal and subsequent to production of a business plan and negotiation with BNFL, the Castle was finally transferred to the ownership of FOPC on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2005. The options appraisal concluded that the Castle should be consolidated with a functional roof, rather than being consolidated as an interpreted ruin or fully restored for holiday letting. This was estimated to cost £578,000 (exclusive of VAT) when the study was carried out, in 2003.

### **1.3 The Study Brief**

A project team has been assembled to research and prepare a development strategy for Portencross Castle. This strategy is to consider the potential development of the site, how the Castle attracts and engages with audiences and the interpretation and general visitor offer available. Views of existing and potential visitors have been taken into account in the production of this report.

The consultation carried out in the production of the Audience Development Plan should

- Identify appropriate audience development opportunities and make recommendations on how to maximise access to the Castle by a broad range of audience groups
- Identify and make recommendations on appropriate additional interpretation and education opportunities both within the Castle site itself and the surrounding grounds
- Actively consider the current curriculum guidelines
- Carry out and report on a community consultation campaign

The audience development plan should take into account the client's overall plan, and should include:

- A description of the site
- The aims of the site
- Evidence of community consultation carried out
- An analysis of current audiences
- An analysis of barriers to involvement
- Objectives for audience development with priority audiences and measurable targets
- An action plan to achieve the objectives for each target audience

#### **1.4 Development Proposal**

The FOPC is committed to developing Portencross Castle as a consolidated ruin with a functional roof, with interpretation to encourage access to the site, and ensure that the ambience and setting of the Castle is not adversely affected. Historic Scotland has indicated that consolidation of the Castle is the only appropriate solution to the development of the Castle. This report has been researched and prepared on that basis to consider how audiences can be encouraged to use the site and to address any barriers to involvement which will be encountered.

#### **1.5 Report Structure**

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Section 2</b>  | Friends of Portencross Castle                 |
| <b>Section 3</b>  | Strategic Context                             |
| <b>Section 4</b>  | The National Environment                      |
| <b>Section 5.</b> | Historical Research and Interpretive Planning |
| <b>Section 6</b>  | Visitor Market Research                       |

<b>Section 7</b>	Focus Group Research
<b>Section 8</b>	Education Consultation
<b>Section 9</b>	The Visitor / User Offer
<b>Section 10</b>	Access Considerations
<b>Section 11</b>	Audience Development Context
<b>Section 12</b>	Conclusions and Recommendations



## 2.0 FRIENDS OF PORTENCROSS CASTLE

### 2.1 Introduction

This section provides further information on the Friends of Portencross Castle, their current activities, and the current use of the castle.

### 2.2 Friends of Portencross Castle

Friends of Portencross Castle (FOPC) was established in 1998 with the following aims; aims it still holds today, albeit with the first of these having been partially achieved.

- To purchase and retain Portencross Castle and the surrounding land for public benefit within a form of public ownership by way of a trust administered by a board of trustees
- To maintain the Castle as a stable ruin or permit its restoration provided there is benefit to the community as a whole
- To ensure that there continues to be free public access to the foreshore and land around the Castle
- To permit public access within the Castle for educational purposes.

FOPC currently own not only the Castle itself, but also the surrounding land on the waterfront, as well as a similar sized section of land to the east, on the other side of the road through the village.

### 2.3 The Heritage Assets

#### **The Building**

Portencross Castle, a historically rich A listed scheduled ancient monument believed to date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century is located on a rocky headland in the hamlet of Portencross. The Castle, a conspicuous object from the sea and immediate approaches to the village, overlooks the Firth of Clyde, the islands of Arran, Ailsa Craig, Holy Isle, Little Cumbrae, Cumbrae and other landmasses extending from the Heads of Ayr in the south to the Kyles of Bute in the north.

Portencross Castle is unique in that it can be presented as a medieval castle which has undergone relatively little change since the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and is small enough to be understood as a residence, at times occupied by the Scottish King.

The Castle is an unusual L-plan castle, inasmuch as the leg returns from the east gable and comprises a two to four storey structure with ruinous garret and gables over. Aligned east-west, the walls are predominantly constructed of random uncoursed local red sandstone with plain dressed red and buff sandstone quoins and surrounds. A corbelled parapet wallwalk with saddle and trough slabbing and projecting sprouts extends to all elevations. Surviving gables are a mixture of plain and crowstep skewes.

MacGibbon and Ross state that the current castle is largely built in one phase, with only the wallhead of the east wing raised, and subsequent authorities including Cruden (Cruden 1963) have reached a similar conclusion. However, an alternative interpretation has been proposed more recently by Caldwell, Ewart and Triscott. This suggested four principal phases of development on the site:

- Phase 1: Mid to late 14<sup>th</sup> century – A simple two-storey hall house comprising the ground and unvaulted first floor of the current west wing
- Phase 2: Late 14<sup>th</sup> – early 15<sup>th</sup> century – The construction of the ground and first floor of the east wing, incorporating a new first floor entrance to the hall, together with vaulting of the grand hall
- Phase 3: Late 15<sup>th</sup> century – Raising of the west wing and the formation or rebuilding of attics and battlements to both wings
- Phase 4: Following abandonment as a lordly dwelling, the formation of various minor works including an additional ground floor doorway into the kitchen, alteration of the hall fireplace and enlargement of the windows.

## **2.4 Services and Facilities**

While the castle exterior can be appreciated by passers by, or by those coming to specifically look at the Castle, or the panoramic views that can be experienced there, access is not currently available to any of the castle's interior. No interpretation is currently available either inside or outside the Castle, resulting in the history of the Castle not being presented to the vast majority of the public.

## **2.5 The Local Environment**

Portencross is a small village, accessible by only one road, the B7048, which links the village to the main coastal road through Ayrshire, the A78. There are coastal paths stretching north and south from the village. Such a rural location clearly has significant advantages and disadvantages, which will be explored more fully throughout this document. The local environment is clearly also an important consideration when considering the potential for development of the site.

## **2.6 Transport Links**

Public transport links to and around Portencross Castle are very limited, due to its rural location, one and a half miles from West Kilbride. West Kilbride is served by both bus and rail links – the rail service to Glasgow operates on an hourly basis.

### **2.6.1 Car Parking**

There is a large car park situated a few hundred yards from the Castle, and is only really used by visitors to the village. The car park is more than adequate to accommodate visitors to the Castle, and it is difficult to imagine this not being the case in the near future.

### **2.6.2 Rail Links**

The closest railway station is West Kilbride, which lies on the Glasgow to Largs line, and is situated approximately two miles from the Castle. The journey from Glasgow takes around 45 minutes, and the station is supported by 23 car parking spaces, a taxi rank, and cycle racks with space for six cycles. Because of the distance between the Castle and station however, only those visitors who enjoy a pleasant walk or cycle ride to the Castle will travel by train. A local company (Cumbrae Voyages) is prepared to hire cycles from local railway stations to a group of at least six persons by prior arrangement.

### **2.6.3 Bus Links**

West Kilbride is served by a bus route (585 – operated by Stagecoach) linking it to a number of towns in Ayrshire and the surrounding area, including Ayr, Prestwick, Stevenston, Irvine, Saltcoats, Ardrossan, Largs and Greenock. The closest bus stop however, is little closer than the closest railway station, so again, visitors choosing to travel by bus will have to be prepared for a walk.



### **3.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section provides details of the strategic context within which Portencross Castle will be developed. Information is presented related to the development of West Kilbride, North Ayrshire and Scotland.

#### **3.2 North Ayrshire Local Plan**

The North Ayrshire local plan seeks to provide a pattern of land use providing adequate services and employment opportunities within walking distance of most homes in the area. The remainder of the plan's objectives can be summarised as follows:

- Improving transport infrastructure, whilst minimising environmental impact, and linking any development projects to existing transport corridors
- Attracting employment to North Ayrshire, particularly in the service sector, to tackle the “unacceptable” levels of unemployment
- Responding to the changing housing needs of the area, as population dynamics alter, whilst minimising the development of Greenfield sites
- Ensuring that any further development of shopping facilities are targeted at existing centres
- Encourage the use of natural resources in the area
- Supporting the development of tourism
- Conserving the built heritage, and balancing this with the promotion of development

The local plan is designed to facilitate the Council's role in promoting interaction between various agencies, and in co-ordinating public and private expenditure programmes within the area.

#### **3.3 West Kilbride Craft Town**

West Kilbride Community Initiative Ltd is a community business, registered as a charity and managed by a volunteer board of directors, having been established in 1998. Two years later, in 2000, the Scottish Parliament formally endorsed West Kilbride as Scotland's Craft and Design Town. The aims of the Community Initiative are as follows:

- Cultural Development
- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Enhancement of the Built Environment

The town is presently home to five studios and a contemporary gallery, showcasing work by both local and national artists, and the organisation is based at the Initiative Centre on the town's Main Street. The Initiative Centre not only displays a range of craft and giftware, but also provides information on various activities offered locally. The studios include both workshop and display space; opportunities for visitors to purchase the works on show are also provided. The availability of affordable studio space for designers/makers in the town centre is a key underpinning concept of the craft town, which not only provides a focal point for the craft initiative, but also assists with the regeneration of the main street.

The disciplines currently forming part of the initiative vary somewhat, and currently include basket-making, ceramics, furniture and wood, glass, jewellery and metalwork lettering, musical instruments, paper and textiles.

The successful continuing development of the West Kilbride Craft and Design Town Initiative will result in the expansion of the day trip and tourist markets visiting West Kilbride. Effective linkages between the Craft Town and the development of the Castle will be important if greatest benefit is to be achieved.

#### **3.4 West Kilbride Community Centre Development Project**

The West Kilbride Community Association is currently advancing a project to develop the existing West Kilbride Community Centre in a Community and Social Enterprise Centre. At present the Centre provides a range of facilities for young families including a nursery and youth club, alongside facilities for hire to a range of clubs and groups from across West Kilbride and the wider North Ayrshire area. The centre also accommodates an adult education centre which is delivered in partnership with and funded by North Ayrshire Council. The development proposal will deliver start-up business units, additional artist studio accommodation, community health facilities and dramatically improved accommodation for the Village Nursery, Age Concern and other regular users of the Centre.

#### **3.5 Visit Scotland Ayrshire & Arran**

An interview was held with the Business Relationship Manager at VisitScotland Ayrshire & Arran to identify the future direction of the tourism product in the area and to identify how the development of Portencross Castle could assist in achieving this vision.

It was reported that the visitor attraction market is very tough at present, particularly the historic segments. Further, there are a number of castles in the area, somewhat larger than Portencross. Given the constraints of the Castle, it would be difficult to make it an attraction that would be able to compete effectively in this market.

The main tourist market for Ayrshire at present is the 45-65 age group, with many of the current market either touring or taking relatively short breaks. A recent strategy implemented in the area, and one which will be brought more to the front line in the coming months is

advertising the eating and drinking facilities the area has to offer. It is felt that there is particular quality in this field in Ayrshire.

A visitor attraction association exists in the area, and it was felt that if the project was successful, the Friends should seek to join this group to compliment the area's current visitor offer, and add something new.

The idea of Portencross Castle forming part of a coastal trail in North Ayrshire was floated by Jura Consultants, but it was felt that in reality, there was little else to form a trail with, although a new organisation exists called the Clyde Coast Way through which there may be opportunities to explore potential partnerships. The harbour at Portencross would probably require some work were boats going to dock there.

The main attractions in North Ayrshire are in the towns, not within walking distance of the Castle really, while the Castle also lies off the main road, and is not visible from it. Visitors are only likely to go to the Castle therefore, if they are walking past it, or go looking specifically for it.

Outdoor theatre productions were also discussed here, although marketing is a key element of such events, so a substantial budget would have to be raised. It was felt however, that any success in attracting visitors to Portencross was likely to be achieved through events, given the nature of the Castle and its location.



## 4.0 THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1 Introduction

This section considers the environment in which Portencross Castle operates.

### 4.2 Visitor Attraction Overview

#### Scottish Visitor Attraction Monitor 2005

The Scottish Visitor Attraction Monitor provides information on the number of visits to individual tourist attractions, as well as an assortment of other statistics such as average customer spends while on site, for example. The information in the Monitor is obtained through a survey of attractions, and one of the questions asked is which factor respondents feel are important in positively affecting visitor numbers. Answers vary from year to year, but the answers given to the question in 2005 are summarised below.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Popular exhibitions / events	24%
Promotion / marketing	16%
Weather	15%
New addition / refurbishment	9%
Extended season / opening hours	4%
Increased profile	4%
The attraction itself	4%
More tourists	4%
Location	3%
School / education	3%
Word of mouth recommendations	3%
Increase in international visitors	3%
Free admission	3%
Local support	3%
<b>Source: Scottish Visitor Attraction Monitor 2005</b>	

Clearly, some of the factors mentioned are out-with the control of those operating visitor attractions. However, it is noticeable that many of the most popular answers are manageable.

#### Further Statistics

Overall, the number of people visiting Ayrshire and Arran fell by 2.8% between 2004 and 2005, to 1,181,180. This was approximately in line with many other VisitScotland regions, although total visits to attractions were in fact up by almost 3%, due largely to significant increases in Greater Glasgow and the Clyde Valley, and the Scottish Borders. The most popular individual attraction in Ayrshire and Arran was the Burns National Heritage Park in Ayr, which attracted an estimated 264,247 people. Other popular attractions included Dean Castle and Country Park (257,857), Culzean Castle and Country Park (195,433), and Dick Institute Museum in Kilmarnock (101,127).

Attractions in the more immediate vicinity of Portencross Castle include West Kilbride Museum (1,635) and Kelburn Castle and Country Centre in Fairlie (75,995).

Throughout Scotland, castles and forts suffered a decline in popularity during 2005, with attendance at such attractions down 4.6% on the previous year. The vast majority of the castles and forts included in the sample (62 out of 65), were paid admission attractions.

#### 4.2.1 Population Profile

The population breakdown for North Ayrshire as recorded at the last census in 2001, is shown below, and compared with Scotland's national population breakdown.

% of Population		
Age Group	North Ayrshire	Scotland
0-4	5.38%	5.47%
5-15	14.66%	13.73%
16-29	15.89%	17.46%
30-44	22.18%	22.97%
45-59	20.20%	19.29%
60-74	14.67%	13.98%
75+	7.02%	7.09%
Total	135,817	5,062,011
Source: www.scrol.gov.uk		

Table 4.2 illustrates that the age structure of North Ayrshire's population is broadly similar to that of Scotland. The percentage of the population between the ages of 16-29 is slightly below the average, but this is likely to be caused by young people living away from home whilst studying at college or university, and perhaps not returning upon graduation.

#### 4.2.2 Employment

Economic activity in North Ayrshire in 2001 did not quite mirror that of Scotland as a whole quite as closely as age distribution. Only 37% of the population (aged 16-74) were in full time employment, as opposed to over 40% in Scotland. The percentage in part-time employment was marginally lower than average, at just under 11%, as was the percentage that are self-employed, at just under 6%. Unemployment was almost two percentage points higher in North Ayrshire than Scotland as whole, at 5.75%. With the exception of students, the percentage of people who were economically inactive in all categories (retired, looking after family, permanently disabled etc) was slightly higher in North Ayrshire than in the whole of Scotland.

The main industries in the area in terms of the percentage of the workforce they employ are manufacturing (20.1%), wholesale, retail and repairs (12.6%), and health and social work (12.2%). This is not too dissimilar to the Scottish average.

#### 4.2.3 Education

At the time of the census, there were 6,013 full-time students in North Ayrshire, representing 6.07% of the population, which was approximately one percentage point below the Scottish average of 7.14%. This figure includes those aged 16-17 still in full-time education, whom total 2,477. Around 37% of North Ayrshire's population (aged 16-74) have no formal qualifications, which is more than 3.5% more than the Scottish average, while the percentage of the population possessing a degree or professional qualification is almost 5% lower than the average of 19.5% at 14.6%.

#### 4.2.4 Social Grade

Table 4.3 shows a breakdown of the populations of North Ayrshire and Scotland by approximated social grade, again, based on the census of 2001.

Social Grade	North Ayrshire	Scotland
AB – Higher and intermediate managerial / administrative / professional	15.7%	18.6%
C1 – Supervisory / clerical / junior managerial / administrative / professional	24.0%	26.6%
C2 – Skilled manual workers	15.8%	14.6%
D – Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	19.5%	17.5%
E – On state benefit / unemployed / lowest grade workers	25.1%	22.4%
All People	107,321	4,007,466

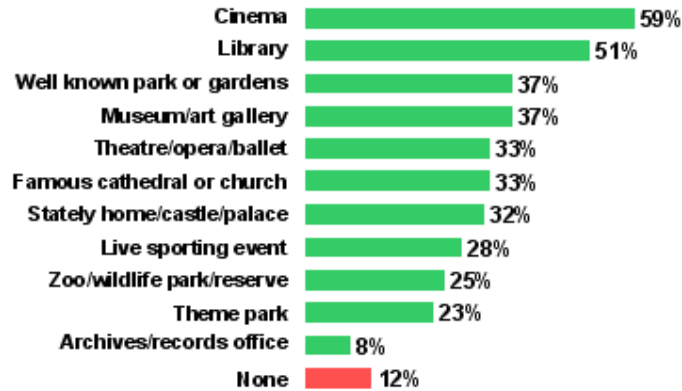
Table 4.4 suggests that the population of North Ayrshire is weighted slightly more towards the "lower" end of the spectrum than the Scottish average. That is to say that there is a lower percentage of ABC1's than the average, but a higher percentage of C2DE's.

#### Contextual Information

MORI (Market and Opinion Research International) published a paper in October 2004 which considered the popularity of museums and galleries and posed two fundamental questions which asked respondents to indicate if they had visited a number and range of types of leisure destination, and within the context of a museum, what types of topic or theme were of most interest. The results of these two questions are considered below.

## Leisure Activities

**Q1** *In the last 12 months, which, if any, of the places or events on this card have you been to in the UK?*



Base: All GB residents (4,039)

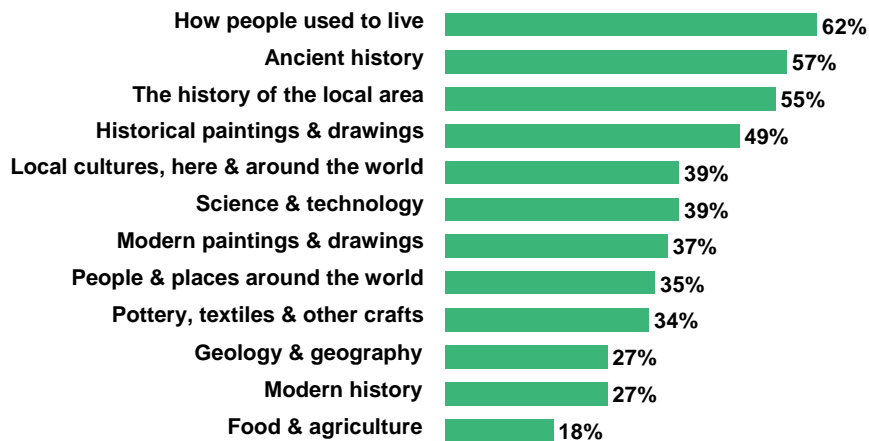
Source: MORI

Visiting museums / art galleries was the fourth most common response, with 37% of respondents indicating that they have visited one of these attractions in the last 12 months.

The research also found that almost everyone who has visited a museum in the past year said that they would go to the same venue again in future (92%). Eight in ten people feel it is important that their local city or town has its own museum or art gallery.

## Topics of Interest

**Q6** *Which, if any, of these topics most interest you when you visit a museum or gallery?*



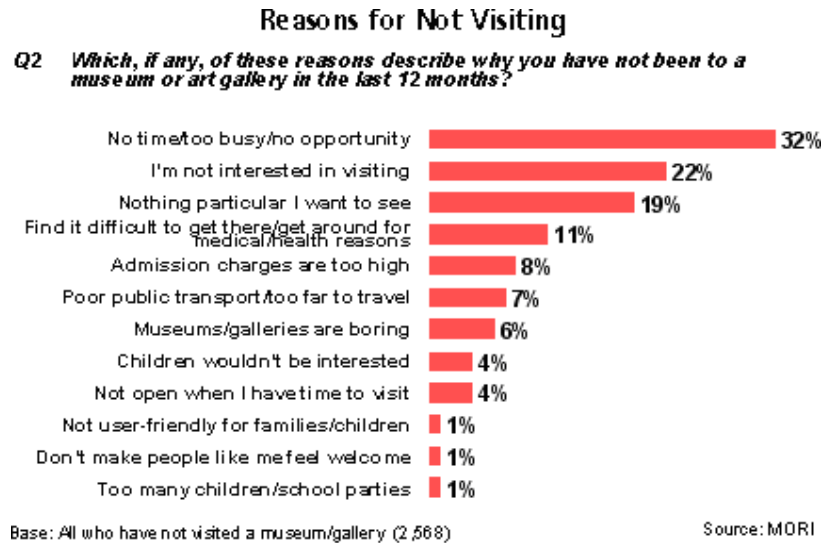
Base: All who have visited a museum/gallery (1,471)

Source: MORI

The research sheds new light on what people find most interesting from their museum and/or art gallery visits. Ancient history, how people used to live, and local history are of most interest to more than half of all respondents. Of interest to fewer people are geology and geography, modern history, and food and agriculture displays. The preceding analysis is interesting as it

indicates that ancient history is one of the main areas of interest for visitors to museums and cultural attractions. This indicates that there will be a considerable level of interest in the Portencross Castle project if presented in an appropriate way.

The following chart illustrates the main reasons why people do not visit museums and art galleries.



Source: 'Visitors to Museums and Galleries for MLA'

The main reasons for not visiting museums and galleries are that people do not have the time or the opportunity, they are not interested in visiting due to the subject matter, or that they find it difficult to get there. Through our experience, we have found that in many instances, people who live close to museums and cultural attractions intend to visit at some point however they lack the stimulus to encourage them to visit now. All cultural attractions must identify methods of triggering interest and then ensuring people have a reason / purpose to visit in the very short-term.

### 4.3 Visitor Markets

This section considers the current market, under the following headings:

- Local Market
- Day Visitor Market
- Domestic Tourist Market
- International Tourist Market
- Education Market

#### 4.3.1 Local Market

The local market is considered to consist of people living in settlements within 30 minutes drive of the attraction. Portencross Castle's local market therefore, consists of all of North Ayrshire, and small sections of South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and Inverclyde. The table below provides some more specific detail of the population considered to form the local area.

Area	Under 16	16 and Over	Total
North Ayrshire (all)	8,260	99,061	107,321
East Ayrshire (1 of 32 wards)	659	2,759	3,418
South Ayrshire (5 of 30 wards)	3,514	15,151	18,665
Inverclyde (1 of 20 wards)	1,169	3,613	4,782
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,602</b>	<b>120,584</b>	<b>134,186</b>
Source: Scotland's Census Record On-Line			

The local market therefore, is relatively small, comprising just 134,186 people, due to the Castle's relatively rural location. The vast majority of these live in North Ayrshire, with small numbers in each of the neighbouring local authority areas.

#### 4.3.2 Day Visitor Market

The following table summarises the size of the day visitor market which is considered to be the population within a 60 minute drive-time area.

Area	Under 16	16 and Over	Total
Local Market	13,602	120,584	134,186
East Ayrshire (remaining 31 wards)	23,283	93,534	116,817
South Ayrshire (remaining 25 wards)	20,290	73,952	94,242
Inverclyde (remaining 19 wards)	15,198	64,223	79,421
Falkirk (all)	28,384	116,807	145,191
North Lanarkshire (all)	65,594	255,473	321,067
Glasgow City (all)	106,501	471,368	577,869
East Dunbartonshire (all)	22,038	86,205	108,243
West Dunbartonshire (all)	18,619	74,759	93,378
East Renfrewshire (all)	19,193	70,119	89,311
Renfrewshire (all)	33,553	139,314	172,867
South Lanarkshire (62 of 66 wards)	56,408	228,551	284,959
Dumfries and Galloway (2 of 47 wards)	1,065	4,208	5,273
Stirling (5 of 22 wards)	4,621	16,482	21,103
West Lothian (5 of 32 wards)	4,857	19,305	24,162
Argyle and Bute (10 of 36 wards)	4,972	20,489	25,461
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>438,178</b>	<b>1,855,373</b>	<b>2,293,551</b>
Source: Scotland's Census Record On-Line & Neighbourhood Statistics			

The day visitor market therefore comprises 2,293,551 people, stretching to Dumfries and Galloway in the South, West Lothian in the East, and Argyle and Bute to the North, whilst encompassing the more densely populated areas of Lanarkshire and Glasgow City. Due to the nature and size of Portencross Castle, visitors travelling from the day visitor market areas are likely to be attracted by a number of activities or attractions, and not solely Portencross Castle. How effective other attractions in the area are at attracting visitors from slightly further afield, coupled with Portencross Castle's ability to link with other attractions therefore, is likely to have an impact on the overall number of visits to Portencross Castle.

The numbers of people identified in the markets above are relatively large, and at first glance, it would appear that only a tiny proportion of these visitors would have to be attracted in order to run a successful visitor attraction. While this is true, it is important to consider the number of day trips people in the identified markets are likely to make, and the type of activities people typically undertake on day trips, in order to better understand the number of people that more realistically comprise Portencross Castle's target market.

Activity	% of day visits
Eat and/or drink out	18%
Walk, hill walk or ramble	15%
Visit friends or relatives	14%
Take part in sport	9%
Entertainment, e.g. cinema, theatre or club	5%
Visit leisure attraction or place of interest	3%
Visit garden or park	3%

Given that the average number of trips per person amongst adults (aged 16 or over) was 4.3 in two weeks and that 3% of all day trips undertaken were to places of interest such as castles or museums, the size of the market Portencross Castle is competing for becomes somewhat clearer (assuming that numbers visiting places of interest generally remains roughly constant). The survey would suggest that in any two week period, 9,862,269 day trips are undertaken within Portencross Castle's day visitor area, and that approximately 295,868 of these are made to leisure attractions or other places of interest, including museums – that equates to 147,934 visits per week.

#### 4.3.3 Residential Domestic Tourist Market

There were 14.9 million domestic tourist trips made to Scotland during 2005, for which Ayrshire & Arran accounted for 0.94 million. Of the domestic visits to Ayrshire and Arran, 49% were made by people living in Scotland, 39% by people from England, 11% from Northern Ireland, and 1% from Wales. Expenditure in the area differs somewhat from these percentages however, with visitors from England responsible for 45% of tourism expenditure, those from Scotland accounting for 38%, and Northern Ireland for 15%. This likely reflects the higher proportion of visitors from outside Scotland that will use accommodation in the area, while some of the visitors from Scotland are likely to be on a day, or shorter residential, visit.

#### 4.3.4 International Tourism

International tourists made around 170,000 visits to Ayrshire and Arran in 2005, out of the 2.4 million visits made to Scotland as a whole during that year. While, as would be expected, significant percentages of these visitors come from countries such as the USA, Canada, Ireland and Germany, as is the case with Scotland as a whole, interestingly, the most common origin of international visitors to the area is Sweden, which accounts for over a fifth of the 170,000 visits, as is illustrated in the table below. This is likely to be largely down to direct flights from both Stockholm and Gothenburg to Glasgow Prestwick Airport, and the marketing of golf tourism in the country.

Country	Visits	Expenditure
Sweden	21%	16%
USA	11%	11%
Ireland	11%	7%
Canada	10%	14%
Germany	8%	3%
Australia	5%	11%
France	5%	4%
Italy	5%	3%
Spain	5%	2%
Netherlands	3%	2%

#### 4.4 Education Audiences

##### Schools

This section considers the size of potential education audiences, in both the primary and secondary sectors. The schools census carried out by the Scottish Executive in September 2005 provides figures on the number of children at each type of school within the local area. The figures for North Ayrshire almost exactly match those for schools within a 30 minute drive time, so the North Ayrshire figures have been used.

In total, there were 20,416 pupils in publicly funded schools in North Ayrshire in 2005, 11,046 of whom attended primary schools, 9,203 secondary schools, and the remaining 167, special schools. Additionally, 92 pupils attend independent special schools in North Ayrshire.

##### Tertiary Education

The Kilwinning Campus of James Watt College is the sole provider of tertiary education in North Ayrshire, with other providers in the surrounding area being Kilmarnock College, James Watt College (Greenock) and Ayr College.

#### 4.5 Competitor Analysis

This section provides details of other attractions in Ayrshire and Arran who will compete with Portencross Castle for visitor's time.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007 Entry
Burns National Heritage Park	270,634	251,460	278,944	274,024E	264,247E	£4/£2.50
Dean Castle & Country Park	258,000E	273,000	308,833E	283,360E	257,857E	Free
Culzean Castle & Country Park	186,553	208,326	207,300	188,747	195,433	Various
Dick Institute Museum, Kilmarnock	120,178	114,437E	116,522	98,474E	101,127E	Free
Kelburn Castle & Country Centre	62,635	66,135	66,330	72,638E	75,995	
Heads of Ayr Farm Park	29,387	53,589	71,216	71,292E	71,292E	
Brodick Country Park	22,970	51,453	55,232	53,585	53,104	
Brodick Castle	37,260	36,681	42,439	36,610	36,753	£10/£7
MacLaurin Galleries, Ayr				25,008	27,272	Free
Scottish Maritime Museum				21,964	21,964	£3/£2
Vikingar		24,611	22,553	23,817	21,491	
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Cornalees Centre			13,148E	16,469E		
Museum of Ayrshire Country Life & Costume		18,000	18,000E	20,000E	15,000E	Free
Rozelle House, Ayr				15,696	13,459	Free
North Ayrshire Museum, Saltcoats			6,414	6,666		Free
Dundonald Castle	7,000	6,775	7,220	7,018	6,584E	£2.50/£1.25
Vennel Gallery, Irvine			5,106	5,169	4,080	Free
Largs Museum			4,875	4,584		
Burns House Museum, Mauchline				3,766	3,860	Free
Crossraguel Abbey, Maybole	2,961	2,963	2,907	3,994	3,196	£3.50/£1.75
Blairquhan Castle		3,400	2,563E	2,500E		Various
University Marine Biological Station, Cumbrae	2,715	3,044E	2,973	3,886E	2,380E	
Souter Johnnies Cottage, Kirkoswald	2,946	2,970	2,360	2,170	1,842	£5/£4
Cathcartston Visitor Centre, Dalmellington	662		1,113	1,527	1,707	Free
West Kilbride Museum				1,096	1,635	Free
Bachelors Club, Tarbolton	1,195	1,099	1,068	926	902	£2.50

#### 4.6 Comparator Analysis

This section considers the performance in terms of visitor numbers at other ruin castles and buildings across Scotland. The table presents the visitor numbers for the last 5 years, details of whether admission is paid and the opening hours for the facility.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007 Entry
Floors Castle, Kelso		38,814	45,076			£6.50/£3.50
Brodick Castle	37,260	36,681	42,439	36,610	36,753	£10/£7
Lauriston Castle, Edinburgh	29,068			39,991	35,595E	£5/£3
Caerlaverock Castle, Dumfries	23,964	30,862	35,004	34,090	34,387	£5/£2.50
Duart Castle, Mull	23,000E	30,000E	35,000E	33,000	33,000	£4.50/£2.25
Dunstaffnage Castle, Oban	18,292	30,413	30,654	30,037	29,519	£3.50/£1.75
Doune Castle	20,111	22,337	26,367	31,472	27,408	£4/£2
Drum Castle				25,371	25,896	£8/£5
Queen Elizabeth Castle of Mey Trust, Thurso				22,900	23,400	£7.50/£3.00
Fyvie Castle, Turriff	23,350	34,492	27,034	20,641	22,889	£8/£5
Tantallon Castle, North Berwick	21,959	22,670	23,334	22,888	21,113	£4.50/£2.25
Castle Campbell, Dollar	15,503	18,973	26,637	20,136	19,317	£4.50/2.25
Brodie Castle, Forres	27,000	23,326	19,095	22,911	16,738	£8/£5
Castle Fraser, Inverurie	27,025	27,839	41,374	16,544	15,986	£8/£5
Dirleton Castle	19,632	18,187	18,330	16,027	14,945	£4.50/£2.25
Dumbarton Castle	14,887	13,727	13,308	15,367	12,785	£4/£2
Loch Leven Castle	12,457			14,456	12,592	£4.50/£2.25
Huntly Castle	13,865	13,887	14,295	15,187	12,574	£4.50/£2.25
Threave Castle	8,419	12,986	16,159	14,642	12,310	£4/£2
Blackness Castle, Linlithgow	12,434	12,106	13,343	11,860	11,732	£4/£2
Cragievar Castle, Alford	9,499	9,240	10,713	9,989	11,408	£10/£7
Castle of St John, Stranraer	3,947	3,763	9,978	11,945	11,407	Free
Braemar Castle	15,000E	13,461	14,227E	12,402E	10,806	Closed
Craigmillar Castle, Edinburgh	12,128	11,335	10,339	10,382	10,428	£4/£2
Kellie Castle, Pitenweem	12,893	13,260	11,666	9,205	10,021	£8/£5
Castle Menzies, Aberfeldy	9,736	8,477	9,460	10,658	9,777	
Rothesay Castle	11,401	10,245	11,774	11,835	9,093	£4/£2
Aberdour Castle	9,729	9,071	8,800	7,742	8,701	£4/£2
Kildrummy Castle, Alford	8,202	7,741	7,832	8,232	8,293	£3.50/£1.75
Edzell Castle, Brechin	7,707	6,857	7,119	8,362	7,406	£4.50/£2.25
Huntingtower Castle, Perth	9,124			7,493	6,748	£4/£2
MacLellans Castle, Kirkcudbright	6,662	6,600	6,899	6,279	6,736	£3.50/£1.75
Hermitage Castle, Newcastleton	1,752			6,394	6,590	£3.50/£1.75
Dundonald Castle	7,000	6,775	7,220	7,018	6,584E	£2.50/£1.25
Balvenie Castle, Keith	5,620	6,185	6,783	5,624	5,716	£3.50/£1.75
Cardoness Castle, Castle Douglas	4,708	4,909	5,609	5,519	5,716	£3.50/£1.75
Bothwell Castle, Uddingston	6,579	7,345	7,075	6,138	5,442	£3.50/£1.75
Craignethan Castle, Lesmahagow	3,564	3,875	4,659	5,041	5,332	£3.50/£1.75
Elcho Castle, Perth	5,572	5,842	6,243	5,385	4,757	£3/£1.50
Alloa Tower	7,874	7,033	5,716	5,112	4,757	£5/£4
Tolquhon Castle, Tarves		3,386	4,411	4,291	4,609	£3.50/£1.75
Newark Castle, Port Glasgow	3,114	2,867	3,322	2,516	4,046	£3.50/£1.75
Crichton Castle, Pathhead	3,960	3,971	4,019	3,736	3,916	£3.50/£1.75
Kisimul Castle, Castlebray				4,436	3,435	£4.50/£2.25
Neidpath Castle, Peebles	6,500E			4,212	3,379	£3/£1
Corgarff Castle, Strathdon	4,084	4,874	4,865	5,055	3,241	£4.50/£2.25
Muness Castle, Unst, Shetland		3,648E	3,864E	3,353E	3,216	
Blairquhan Castle	3,000E	3,400	2,563E	2,500E		Various
Balfour Castle, Shipinsay, Orkney	1,550E			1,140E	2,215	Various
Ayton Castle	2,000E	2,000E	2,000E	2,000E	1,500E	£3/Free
Hackness Battery & Martello Tower, Hoy				1,326	1,229	£4/£2

## **Summary**

This section has considered sector wide issues related to attracting visitors and audiences and summarised the potential size of the audience / market for Portencross Castle. Within the 30 minute drive time catchment areas there is a total market of 134,000 and within the 60 minute drive-time there is a population of 2.3 million people. This section has also provided a competitor and comparator analysis which considers the visitor numbers at other attractions which are local to Portencross Castle and similar attractions, i.e. Castles.

## 5.0 HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

### 5.1 Introduction

This section summarises historical research undertaken by iCosse Interpretative Planning to identify and consider the most important and unique aspects of Portencross Castle. The research undertaken is based on a review of existing documentation has been completed to inform the development of the interpretative offer at Portencross Castle.

### 5.2 Summary of Interpretative Themes

Research into the history of the site has highlighted the following potential interpretive themes:

1. **the history of the area** including
  - the history of the medieval kingdom of Strathclyde
  - the history of Cunninghame including the Baliol and the de Ros families
  - the importance of the Firth of Clyde as a transport route throughout history and its influence on the siting of castles and towns
  - the other castles in the area, e.g.
    - i. Hunterston - home for around 800 years of the Hunters, keepers of the Royal Forest on Little Cumbrae (present castle dates from the late-1400s), who trace their lineage back to pre-Conquest Normandy
    - ii. Little Cumbrae - current building ca.1525, built by the Earl of Eglinton to protect the island, the site of a Royal hunting ground – there was possibly an earlier building on the island some suggest a hunting lodge for the king and his entourage to stay in when they were there
    - iii. Crosbie Tower - originally C14 but present building probably C17, home of the Crawfurds, with familial and historic links to William Wallace
    - iv. Law Castle - now refurbished as holiday accommodation, but said to have been built ca.1468 by Thomas Boyd, for his bride, Mary, a daughter of King James II
2. **the wider history of Ayrshire** including
  - the history of Kyle and Carrick and the ports of Ayr and Irvine
  - the history of the Bruce family and their links with Dundonald and Seagate castles
3. **the history of the Boyds of Portencross** including
  - their relationship with the Boyds of Kilmarnock
4. **the history of the development of Portencross Castle** including
  - the Dark Age remains on the original site at Auldhill
  - the early-Norman developments on that site
  - the first building on the site of Portencross Castle (a hall house?)
  - the later additions and alterations
  - abandonment from the C18 onwards
  - removal to a modern new house at Auchenames

- parallels with Dundonald Castle
- 5. **the Portencross cannon and the possible Armada wreck** including
  - the story of the Armada and its flight around Scotland and Ireland in 1588-89
  - the consequent shipwrecks off the Scottish and Irish coasts
  - other wrecks in the vicinity, specifically the Lady Margaret, a tobacco ship bound for Virginia in 1770 wrecked at the same spot the 'Armada ship' is located
- 6. **the Hunterston Brooch**
  - one of the finest pieces of 7<sup>th</sup> century art in Britain, now in the NMS in Edinburgh but found at the base of Hawking Craigs between Portencross and Hunterston

All of these themes can be rated as locally/regionally significant, but elements of 1, 4, 5 and 6 are of national significance.

All of these stories could be told using a variety of interpretive media on site or by utilising other digital or printed media either alongside or instead of a site-based interpretive strategy.

Some of these stories are already being utilized at other heritage sites in Ayrshire such as Dundonald (Historic Scotland), Dean and Kelburn castles as elements of an offer which includes multi-media interpretation and full visitor facilities.

Intellectual and physical access, the interpretive strategy and the choice of media is substantially reliant on the overall conservation scheme developed for the site, but there is one element which can contribute significantly to the project whichever option is chosen – the archaeology.

### 5.3 Importance of Site Archaeology

The settlement at Portencross is not just multi-period, but also contains significant above-and below-ground archaeology that encompasses at least a millennium of human occupation in the area. An archaeological research project could potentially investigate all or some of the following:

- the relationship between the occupation evidence at Auld Hill (previously excavated by the National Museums of Scotland) and on the shoreline at Portencross
- the development of the complex at the castle, including the putative initial 'hall house' phase and any evidence for ancillary buildings or a barmkin wall around the tower itself
- the development of the village of Portencross, including the C17 'mansion house' complex on the site of Auchenames House

This project could provide data that would not only be useful for developing an understanding of the tower-house at Portencross and in developing strategies for its conservation, but could also contribute to the national debate on the development of the tower-house type building,

specifically in relation to the role of the 'hall house' form of building in the evolution of this important architectural form in Scotland.

To achieve this would require the implementation of a research strategy that would involve a combination of standing building survey and analysis of existing building fabric and would contribute on a nationally significant level to our knowledge of the construction and use of these buildings.

Such a research project, carried out in partnership with a university department and/or a field archaeology company, could also offer opportunities for educational partnerships with primary and secondary schools within the area and nationally, in addition to providing opportunities for interpretation.



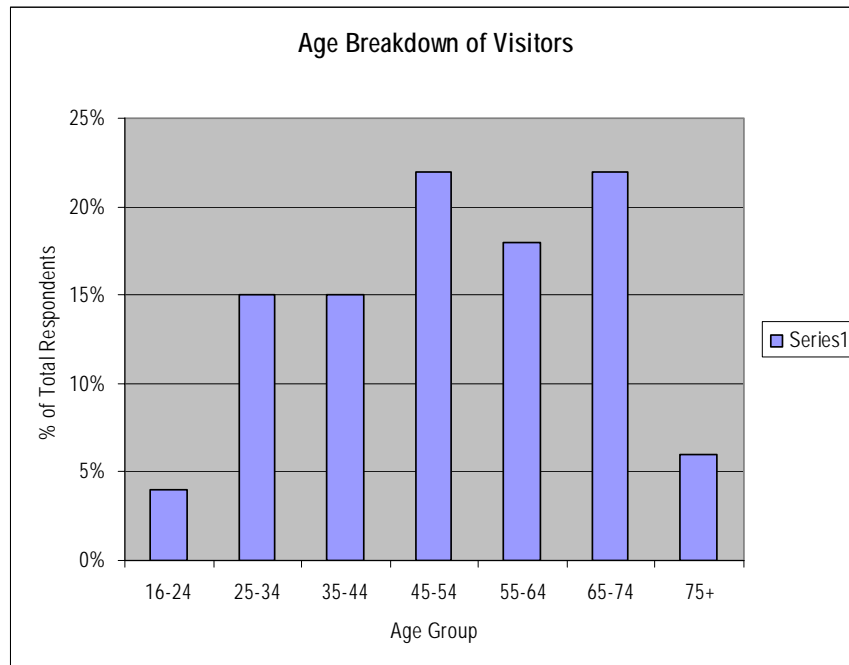
## 6.0 VISITOR MARKET RESEARCH

### 6.1 Introduction

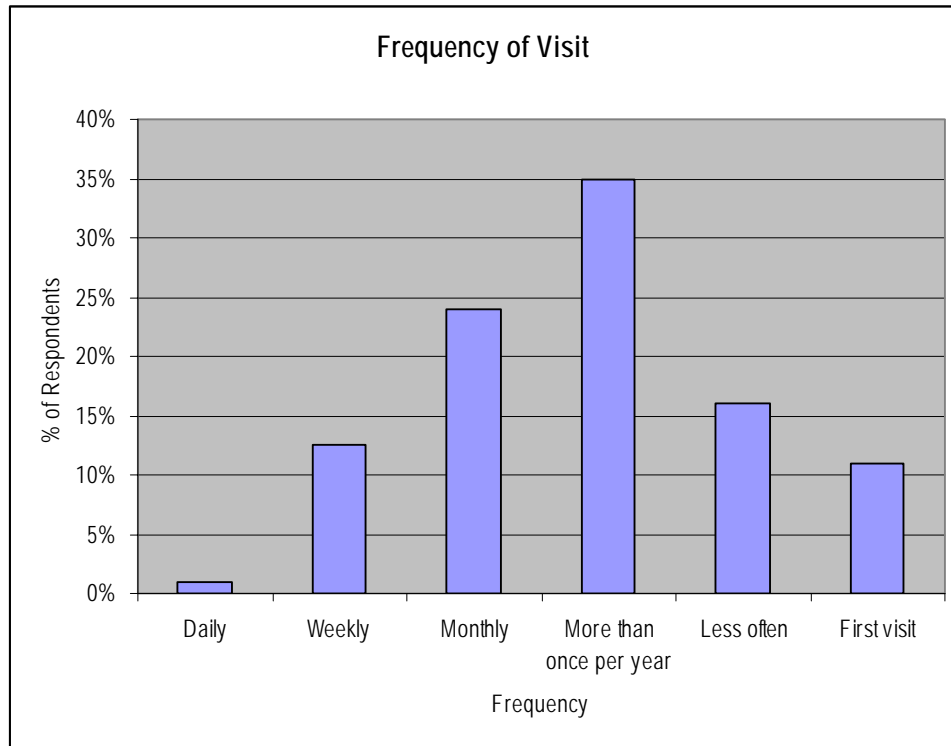
Understanding the current experiences of users of the Portencross Castle site and their aspirations and experiences is important in developing a project which will both enhance the experience of a visit and ensure that development work does not spoil the initial attraction of the place. To that end, a series of face-to-face interviews were undertaken over the last two weekends in September 2006 with visitors to Portencross. In total 106 interviews were undertaken with visitors to obtain information on why people currently come to the area, what they do and how they think the area could / should be enhanced. Research focused on how the Castle could be more effectively used and how this may enhance a visit to the area.

### 6.2 Demographic Information

The respondent sample was evenly divided with respect to gender with approximately 50% of participants being male and a further 50% female. Respondents were asked to indicate their age. Responses indicated that Portencross attracts a broad cross section of the population and there is no majority age group.



Approximately one third of visitors are aged under 44.



Portencross reports a high level of repeat visitation with approximately 90% of visits being categorised as repeat visits. Almost 25% of visitors indicated that they visit Portencross on a monthly basis whilst 12.5% of visitors visit the area on a weekly basis. This reflects the fact that the area is used by a number of local people for walking, dog walking and other leisure activities. The low proportion of first time visits may be reflective of the time of year during which the research was conducted, i.e. September. It is assumed that the fact that the research was completed out with the main tourism / summer season, will affect the number of first time visitors travelling to and through Ayrshire.

- 77% of respondents indicated that they spent more than 1 hour at Portencross. Again this may reflect the social and leisure use of the site and surrounding area for activities such as walking, cycling, fishing etc.
- Portencross is used almost equally by "local" residents and people undertaking day trips to the area (36% and 33% respectively). The remaining respondents indicated that they were either visiting friends and relatives (17%) on holiday (3%), or live in Portencross (<1%).
- 90% of respondents indicated that they travelled to Portencross by car
- 41% of respondents defined their visiting group as a 'couple'
- 43% of respondents defined their visiting group as a 'family'

### **6.3 Reasons for Visiting Portencross**

It is important to understand the behaviour and drivers of the current audience at Portencross to act as a baseline for future activity and to identify audiences which could be attracted in the future. Respondents were asked to indicate why they currently visit Portencross; the following was reported:

- 36% indicated that they visited to use the surrounding grounds
- 80% of visitors visited Portencross to view the wildlife / scenery
- 57% of respondents indicated that they visit Portencross to go walking
- 50% indicated that they visit Portencross as they have an interest in the heritage of the area
- 5% of visitors attended Portencross to fish

### **6.4 Visitor Routes and Destinations**

71% of respondents indicated that Portencross Castle was the destination for their day trip. Of those participants whose final destination was not Portencross the following destinations were reported:

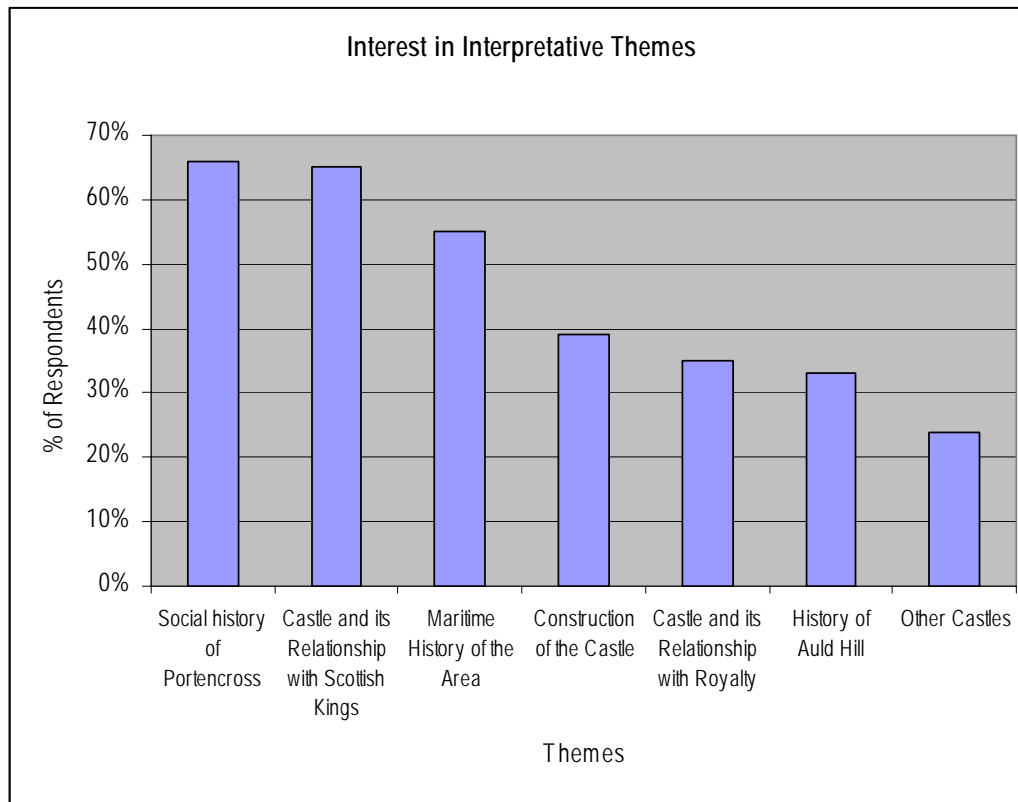
- Arran
- Dalry
- West Kilbride
- Largs
- Irvine
- Lochwinnoch

### **6.5 Future Enhancements**

Participants were asked to indicate their support for a range of new facilities which could be introduced to enhance visitors' experience of the site, Castle and surrounding area. The following considers the results of this question:

- 85% of respondents would support the introduction of internal interpretation at the Castle
- 90% of respondents would support the introduction of interpretation in the areas surrounding the Castle
- 92% of respondents would like access to the interior of the Castle
- 89% of respondents would like access to the roof of the Castle
- 64% indicated that they felt that the Castle should be made available for community use

Interpretation of the Castle and the area's history is clearly of some interest to the existing visiting public. Respondents were also asked to indicate what themes and topics would be of greatest interest. The following summarises the results



The topics of greatest interest are the social history of Portencross and the use of the Castle by Scottish Kings. The Maritime history of the area is also of considerable interest to the existing audience.

## 6.6 Comments made by Visitors

Visitors were asked to indicate what they thought would enhance a visit to the Castle and the surroundings. The following were mentioned.

- 3 people would like access to the Castle
- 7 people mentioned enhancements or improvements to the path network
- Adventure playground
- 42 people mentioned the need for toilets
- 21 people mentioned the need for a café or refreshment facility
- 9 people mentioned information provision and signage
- Better fishing and family activities
- Links to other activities including Viking Festival and other castles
- 4 people mentioned improved seating
- 2 people thought the Castle should remain as is
- Sailing regatta and boat tours
- Shelter for severe weather
- Activities for families
- 2 people wanted a shop

## 6.7 Summary

During the course of September 2006, 106 visitors to Portencross completed an on-site survey which aimed to identify their views of the potential development project. The following was reported:

- Almost 90% of visitors are categorised as repeat visitors
- 80% of visitors visited Portencross to view the wildlife / scenery
- 50% of visitors visited as they had an interest in the history of the area
- 85% of respondents would support the introduction of internal interpretation at the Castle
- 90% of respondents would support the introduction of interpretation in the areas surrounding the Castle
- 92% of respondents would like access to the interior of the Castle
- 89% of respondents would like access to the roof of the Castle
- 64% indicated that they felt that the Castle should be made available for community use

Social history, i.e. how people used to live was an area of particular interest.

Visitors stressed the need to maintain the character of the area and to ensure that development did not affect the appearance or feel of the area and to also ensure that the village and site was not overrun with visitors. The development of the project should seek to improve the offer for existing visitors and provide controlled access for new audiences.



## **7.0 FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Two focus group sessions were held with community councils in West Kilbride (3 miles from Portencross) and Dalry (9 miles from Portencross). The objective of these sessions was to identify the potential to encourage visits to Portencross to view the consolidated ruin and to engage with the heritage on-site. We were also interested in the barriers which would be experienced by potential visitors to the Castle. This would allow planning to be undertaken to address issues and encourage use / visits.

### **7.2 Dalry Community Council**

Discussions were arranged with the office bearers of Dalry Community Council to ascertain their views on the potential development project to be undertaken at Portencross Castle. Interviews were undertaken with a Community Councillor, the Chair and the Secretary of the Council. The results of these discussions are presented below.

#### **Community Councillor**

- Has visited Portencross Castle in the past, but not since he was a child
- Providing some historical information on the castle at the site would be of interest to local people, and if they are going to open the castle up, it should be done in the summer
- He believes that people would pay a small price, say a couple of pounds, to visit the castle, if they knew the money was going towards its upkeep
- Believes this is the sort of project that would interest local schools
- While an archaeological dig is not everyone's cup of tea, he believes it would be of interest to some people in the area

#### **Chair**

- Has visited Portencross Castle before as part of a day out
- Believes there's not much interest in it in Dalry,
- Believes it is important to try to safeguard the future of the castle, however this may be done
- Believes that some local people would be interested in the project and would go and see it, and would be willing to pay a small entry fee
- Thinks that an archaeological dig would be of interest

## **Secretary**

- Quite a lot of castles in the area already
- She would be interested and would probably go along, but doesn't know if others in the area would
- Lots of other nice walks in the area already, many of which are closer to Dalry than Portencross
- Some interpretation of the history of the site might be of interest
- Local people have shown an interest in protecting the heritage of the area in the past, but this doesn't necessarily mean that they'll go and visit the heritage in question, i.e. Portencross Castle
- Other attractions she's visited in the area include Lynn Glen and Vikingar
- Has an impression that most castles are free entry, and that it would therefore be difficult to charge people to get in and still expect people to turn up

### **7.3 West Kilbride Community Council**

Jura Consultants attended a meeting of the West Kilbride Community Council to discuss the proposed project and to identify any concerns or opportunities arising there from.

It quickly became clear that the group had a strong interest in the Castle and believed that it should be consolidated as a ruin. This view was taken as it was considered important that the development of the Castle did not affect the nature and character of the village of Portencross.

The group also indicated strongly that providing access to the Castle would be problematic due to the access path from the car park to the front door of the Castle being uneven and across unstable land. Formal visitor access would be difficult to provide and it was indicated that there was substantial health and safety issues which would be very difficult to address.

On the topic of interpretation, it was reported that there was no need or demand to interpret the interior of the castle as this would affect its character and indeed it was reported that there would be very little for visitors to see. Furthermore, the proposition of external interpretation was also discussed and it was reported that landownership and potential vandalism were two factors affecting the potential success of these proposals.

In summary, the group was very supportive of the initial proposition to consolidate the castle as a ruin and only providing access by guided tour or under controlled conditions. The castle is valued as an important local landmark however the views of local people in maintaining the character of the village are important factors affecting the development of the Castle.

## **8.0 EDUCATION CONSULTATION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

Jura Consultants met with local teachers and officers from the local authority to consider the potential to offer education visits / activities to local schools in the area. We met with the Principal Teacher of Winton Primary School in Ardrossan and the Principal Teacher from West Kilbride Primary School. The following provides information regarding the outcome of these sessions.

### **8.2 West Kilbride Primary School**

#### **Barriers**

It was stated that a risk assessment would have to be carried out on the site before any schoolchildren could visit, and that a bus would be required to get to the site, even from West Kilbride (especially for the younger children), and the cost involved in obtaining these, in terms of time and money, would have to be justified by the trip. Toilets would also have to be provided, of which there are not any at present. Providing a first-aider on site is also preferable. The ratio of adults to children required is at least 8:1, although preferably higher for younger children.

It would also be preferable for the Castle to be made equally available to all children. Not planning a trip and asking parents to take their children along would result in unequal access for children. This would be difficult to accommodate at Portencross Castle due to difficulties accessing the basement and the Great Hall.

#### **Existing Destinations for School Trips**

Current destinations for day trips from the school include Culzean Castle, Dean Castle, Scotland Street, The Museum of Transport, Vikingar, York and Arran. A destination providing information on local history would be useful however.

#### **Use of Portencross Castle for Education Purposes**

An interactive website would be considered useful, providing that the information provided differentiated between the different age levels. Local history is currently covered with the younger classes in the school. It would also be useful if someone were able to come to the school to speak to the children about the Castle before any planned trips took place.

Overall however, a teaching resource would be welcome, provided it was delivered in the correct manner, with education packs and a website seen as perhaps being the best way forward.

### 8.3 Winton Primary School

The Principal Teacher felt that it would be useful to provide some local history for the children, especially those in the upper school. It was felt that local children would presently have little or no idea about the significance of the castle and the history surrounding it. There is a gap in education provision here that the Friends of Portencross Castle (FOPC) could fill.

The need for a full risk assessment to be carried out at any site open to schoolchildren was emphasised, as was the cost of transporting classes of children on buses. If something were to be provided at Portencross Castle therefore, it would need to be of significant educational benefit in order to justify the cost to the school and the time taken to complete a risk assessment (such an assessment would only have to be carried out once however).

Current destinations for school excursions include Glasgow Science Centre, Culzean Castle, Kelburne, Eglinton Park, the local Wind Farms and the pantomime. An opportunity for the children visiting to appreciate its surroundings is also important, and this is an area where Portencross Castle would score highly. It was also considered relevant to children of all ages in primary schools.

The potential to visit Portencross Castle en route to another attraction was discussed, given that there is unlikely to be sufficient provision at Portencross for a school group for a whole day. This was not ruled out, although the point was raised that the only attraction it is really on route to is Kelburne. Such a visit would also have to add value to the trip as a whole, and would be heavily dependent on the weather, given that there are no indoor facilities on site.

The location of the Castle was also considered to be somewhat dangerous for primary school children, given the proximity of the rocks and sea. A fence between the castle site and the sea would be preferred, although it was recognised that FOPC or Historic Scotland may feel that this would damage the site.

Quiz sheets or task cards to keep the children occupied during their visit, and ensure they engage with what there was there, would also be extremely useful, as would information packs for teachers. If somebody was available to talk to the children about the Castle before they attended, that would also be valuable, providing that it was someone who could relate to the children and present the information in an appropriate manner.

Given the difficulties involved in taking a group of schoolchildren to Portencross Castle, other educational tools relating to the Castle were discussed; in particular education packs and an interactive website. These could cover a number of subject areas, including history, art and science (as could any site visits, should they be made possible).

It was stated that interactive websites were very popular at the moment, especially with the children. Educationcity.com was held up as being a model of good practice, although North

Ayrshire also have an interactive education site that is useful. The latter might be something that Portencross Castle could be included on.

The Principal Teacher was happy to be contacted by FOPC in the future, should they require her input into developing the project further.

#### **8.4 North Ayrshire Council – Education Advisor**

Reference was made to the possibility of including some interactive web pages on Portencross Castle on the North Ayrshire education website, which already hosts a number of interactive activities for children. The Education Advisor stated that Portencross would be welcome to develop pages and then either host them on the North Ayrshire site, or have links provided to and from the North Ayrshire site. The Council would be happy to host the pages on Portencross Castle, should this be deemed desirable, as well as make their IT Department's expertise available. It was considered likely that should the Friends of Portencross Castle develop some online education facilities, that these would be hosted by North Ayrshire Council. This would make them more easily updatable, and given the resources of both parties, was considered a more favourable option.

It was stated that a new 3-18 curriculum was currently being developed in the area, and it was perfectly possible that Portencross Castle could have a prominent role in North Ayrshire. The fact that schools like to use local and convenient facilities for their day trips, combined with there being relatively few castles in the area meant that there was definitely potential for Portencross to play a useful role in education in North Ayrshire.

Portencross however, is unlikely ever to be an attraction of such substance that a whole day could be spent there. It would therefore be important to find other attractions in the vicinity where schools could spend at least half a day, and could perhaps be combined with a visit to Portencross Castle in a school trip. The only attraction local to Portencross Castle considered to be a likely half-day attraction is Vikingar in Largs. Partnerships with this attraction should perhaps be considered.

It was felt unfeasible to charge entry to Portencross Castle if they wished to attract school visits, or many other visits for that matter.

Schools were often encouraging young people to volunteer, in order to improve various skills, and the Education Advisor was interested in whether such opportunities might be offered by Portencross Castle.

Finally, the Education Advisor asked about the possibility of including Portencross Castle on a cycling trail in the area. Cumbrae in particular, is famous for cycling.

## **8.5 Telephone Interviews**

Further telephone interviews were conducted with head teachers at St. Mark's Primary School in Irvine and Brisbane Primary School in Largs. Summaries of these consultations are presented below.

### **8.5.1 St Mark's Primary School, Irvine**

- P4/5 sometimes do projects on castles
- At the moment, castle-based school trips are to Eglinton Castle, as it's close-by, there's lots to do, and guides show them round the castle and surrounding grounds, which are extensive
- There is not enough at Portencross to justify a school trip there at the moment
- Trips to Portencross would only really be considered if there were other attractions nearby that would take up the rest of the day – attractions in Kelburne and Largs might be a possibility on this front
- Safety concerns highlighted by other teachers we've spoken to were also mentioned, i.e. close proximity of water, the condition of the interior and general uneven ground leading from the car park to the Castle.
- While the school is only approximately half an hour from the castle, this was still considered quite a long distance to travel given the scale of the attraction

### **8.5.2 Brisbane Primary School, Largs**

- The respondent had been to Portencross, and was aware of the Castle's existence, but did not know anything about its history
- Considers it important to the Portencross and West Kilbride communities, but not really to Largs – does not consider it of real significance on a North Ayrshire scale
- If schools were to visit, there would have to be plenty for them to do for a couple of hours minimum, but ideally half a day
- Some year groups do projects on castles, which Portencross could tie into, along with various art classes
- Information packs for teachers on the Castle's history would be useful, regardless of whether the teachers were planning to take their classes there or not
- There would really have to be something going on at the castle at the time of the visit to make it of interest to children, and someone providing information about the "gory details" of the Castle's history
- A fence would have to be provided between the access route to the Castle and the sea to make the site safe for children

## 8.6 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the education consultation undertaken:

- Portencross is unlikely to be a destination for school day trips due to health and safety issues and the fact that there is unlikely to be sufficient content to justify a whole day trip
- There is however interest in using resources related to the history of the Castle in delivering the curriculum
- An education website and in-class resources would be the most effective method of engaging with schools
- Particular areas of interest are local history, art and design and 'knowing your environment'



## 9.0 THE VISITOR / USER OFFER

### 9.1 Introduction

*Interpretation is the art of communicating the themes and stories of Portencross Castle and its significance, to the local community and visitors in a range of stimulating, involving, informative and entertaining ways so that they appreciate why its built and cultural heritage is so special and that they leave with a real sense of place.*

This project is focussed on the conservation and management of a nationally significant historic asset and making it more accessible to local people and visitors to ensure that everyone can have access to, learn about and enjoy their heritage. The provision of innovative interpretation using a range of interpretive media can bring the site alive to visitors of all ages and interests. By integrating an Education Strategy which supports formal curriculum related activities, as well as informal lifelong learning, the site will also become a learning resource for schools, universities and local groups.

The site is sensitive both archaeologically and as a living village, and interpretation must reflect these sensitivities. Decisions will have to be made as to the suitability of certain forms of interpretation (e.g. graphic panels) and the choice of location both inside and outside the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

### 9.2 Interpretative Themes

The principal interpretive themes are:

- the history of the local area, including Hunterston Castle and the deer park on Little Cumbrae
- the wider history of Ayrshire
- the history of the Boyds of Portencross
- the history of the development of Portencross Castle
- the importance of sea-power in medieval Scotland
- the Portencross cannon and the possible Armada wreck
- the Hunterston Brooch

### 9.3 Location of Interpretation

Potential interpretive locations include:

- Off-site/pre-visit:
  - website
  - interpretive/introductory leaflet
  - craft locations within West Kilbride

- On-site/visit:
  - directional white-on-brown signage (on A78 and in West Kilbride)
  - car park orientation board
  - outside the castle
  - inside the castle
  - on the activity walk

#### **9.4 Interpretive Media**

Potential interpretive media include:

- a website, including sections on
  - the history of the Castle/Portencross/the wider area (i.e. summarises the historical context and what makes Portencross Castle so special)
  - events
  - education
  - the archaeological research (Community Archaeology Project)
  - the Friends of Portencross Castle
  - an interactive webcam to allow visitors to investigate the different spaces within the castle and to see the view from the roof across the Firth of Clyde and to the islands
- an audio tour of the site available as a podcast to be downloaded from the website
- an interpretive leaflet for use as both a marketing device and on-site for interpretation
- interpretive panels - these could be in the car park, outside or inside the castle and would include a graphic showing the castle's development and a representation of it in its medieval heyday
- art installations, e.g.
  - representation of a birlinn (possibly doubling as an external seating area)
  - a tapestry for the ground floor area showing hunting scenes (possibly developed as an education project)
  - a central interpretive pod within the ground floor space which could operate as a combination of art, interpretation, seating and light source
  - a 'storytelling throne' for teachers to use to tell the castle's stories
- a creative lighting strategy, powered by renewable energy sources, including lighting for the ground floor interpretive space, etc.
- a family walking activity trail, with 'rubbing' plaques on way-marking for children to collect, e.g. a birlinn, castle, hawk, brooch, knight, Clyde steamer – this could be created as a stand-alone feature by FoPC or in partnership with another agency, e.g. the Clyde Coast Way
- commissioning a play to be performed by professional re-enactors on event days or by local schoolchildren at end of term events (possibly sponsored)

## 9.5 Refreshment and re-installation

It is important to ensure that all aspects of the site are well maintained and continue to be visitor relevant. Elements may need to be refreshed to reflect changing customer preferences and keeping up with visitor preference may require visitor surveys. Apart from regular observation and maintenance, it is recommended that the visitor offer is reviewed within an agreed timescale, e.g. bi-annually. In making a capital commitment to any Interpretation and Education Strategies it is important that future revenue support is also identified to ensure the initial investment is well maintained.

The same care and attention that is given to the design and implementation of any interpretative strategy should be given to its subsequent maintenance and management. Whatever media is used there is a need to care for, and constantly refresh, the initial investment:

- **On-site signage, visitor orientation and interpretive panels** need to be regularly inspected, cleaned, repaired and renewed not least from vandalism but also through fading and general wear and tear. Interpretation needs to be seen to be cared for. If it is not repaired/renewed immediately then the lack of care and respect leads to further damage.
- **Printed items** not only need to reach the recipient but also need to be reviewed and kept up to date factually, reprinted and effectively distributed to sales/distribution outlets so they are always accessible to the visitor/user.
- **Guided walks programmes, talks, events and activities** all demand professional attention to detail to conceptualise, plan, manage and market. The best ideas in the world can fail if they are not properly thought out or the potential user cannot find out about them because the marketing is ineffective
- **The web site and individual web pages** need to be constantly reviewed and refreshed as information changes or new initiatives evolve. A web site is only as good as the quality of information inputted and this represents an important element of the maintenance and management of the interpretive package.



## 10.0 ACCESS PLAN

### 10.1 Introduction

This section presents an access plan for the development of Portencross Castle. The plan considers physical access – via an Access Audit, undertaken by the ADAPT Trust and consideration of operational policies which should be implemented by FOPC.

### 10.2 Access Audit

The Access Audit, which is provided at Appendix B concludes:

“Portencross Castle is a unique site and presents a challenge to the creation of disabled access. It must be accepted that a site of this type will never be fully accessible but all avenues must be explored before saying that ‘access for all’ cannot be achieved. There are many ways that reasonable access can be created for people with a range of disabilities and we believe that the recommendations in this report will help to achieve this goal.”

The following recommendations are made:

#### **Approach and Parking**

- There should be at least one sign in West Kilbride to the Castle (D)
- A sign at the entrance / exit to the car park giving the walking distance to the Castle would allow disabled people to make an informed choice as to whether they should drive nearer to the castle or leave their vehicle in the car park (D)
- Future publicity should include travel and parking information (D / M)
- The final stretch of road to the site should be upgraded to give a firmer and level surface; this will benefit not only disabled and older people but also all visitors (D)
- Toilets, including an accessible (disabled) one, should be provided at the car park (D)

#### **Site Circulation**

- The approach path should be surfaced in a material which will give a ‘hard’ and even surface leading to the entrance e.g. rolled grit and should be a minimum 850mm wide (E)
- N.B. stick and chair users find thick gravel difficult to use.
- It may be possible to create a partial extension to the immediate approach path to the side of the Castle but we feel it is reasonable to leave this area as it stands. (D)
- N.B. there may be a health and safety issue for any user of this area.
- If public access to the roof is achieved then the stairs will need to have a) handrails, preferably round with a diameter of 40-50mm to give a firm grip and b) nosings on each step to clearly mark the edges (E)

- A CCTV camera mounted on the roof and linked to a monitor at ground level would allow visitors who cannot reach that level to 'see' the views from the roof (D)

### **Intellectual / Sensory Access**

- Any interpretative material including signage should follow the guidelines included in the RNIB guide 'See it Right'. This gives information on text and visual interpretation e.g. font selection and point size (E)
- Any audio-visual presentations e.g. on conservation work should incorporate either a) subtitles or b) induction loop or c) a transcript of the narrative to assist deaf and hard of hearing people (E)
- If a website is provided then it needs to be accessible e.g. a text only version. The web designer needs to follow guidelines for an accessible website (see [www.w3c.org/WAI](http://www.w3c.org/WAI)) (E / M)
- Printed information should be offered on request in other formats e.g. large print; tape; Braille (not widely used but if requested the RNIB can provide a service). (D / M)

In the preceding text, the following key is used:

E – Essential

D – Desirable

M – Management issue

## **10.3 Policy and Procedures**

### **10.3.1 Equal Opportunities**

For its users, the Friends of Portencross Castle aim to:

- Provide equality of access to all sections of the visiting public, paying particular attention to those who are physically, mentally or economically disadvantaged
- Consult local groups to establish whether their interests in Portencross Castle are being adequately catered for
- Cater for those who are not from the local area, or Scotland, and for those whose first language is not English
- Invite comments and complaints on all aspects of service, ensuring that there is a satisfactory procedure in place for dealing with them and taking necessary action

If appropriate, as an employer, FOPC is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in its employment practices. FOPC will endeavour to:

- Ensure that there is no discrimination in employment, recruitment, training, promotion or disciplinary procedures, or industrial relations. In particular, FOPC aims to ensure that no potential or actual employee receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, disability,

sexuality, religious belief, political belief, trade union activity, responsibility for dependents or employment status

- Ensure that all members of staff understand the organisation's correct procedures in reporting complaints of harassment or unequal treatment. It is the duty of all employees to accept their personal responsibility for the practical application of the policy, but at the same time the organisation acknowledges that specific responsibilities fall upon management, supervisory staff and individuals professional involved in recruitment and employee administration.
- Ensure that there is adequate provision for members of staff to submit their suggestions for improvements in procedures

### 10.3.2 Access & Social Justice

FOPC recognises that it is important to give full consideration to the needs of all individuals and groups within society, particularly those who find themselves marginalised or even excluded from social, cultural and economic life by physical, mental, educational or economic disadvantage.

For its users, the FOPC will:

- Consult local groups to establish whether their interests in the Castle are being adequately catered for
- Cater for those who are not from the local area, or Scotland, and for those whose first language is not English
- Invite comments and complaints on all aspects of the organisations service in terms of access, ensuring that there is a satisfactory procedure in place for dealing with them and taking necessary action
- Ensure that its marketing and publicity services recognises the importance of targeting sections of the population that may be under-represented in the general museum-visiting public

If appropriate, as an employer, the organisation is committed to a policy of equality of access in its employment practices, and will:

- Ensure that there is adequate provision for members of staff to submit their suggestions for improvements in museum procedures
- All new developments, or upgrading of areas of the current premises, are made accessible to all visitors, as far as is practically possible
- Clear information about physical access is readily available
- All displays and guided tours are planned and delivered with an awareness of the needs of people with all types of physical impairment, e.g. hearing and sight impairment as well as mobility difficulties

**With regard to intellectual access**, the organisation recognises that it has an important role to play in lifelong education, and in informing local people about the history of their own communities. The Trust will ensure that:

- All printed material is clear, and that in both formal education and informal learning services are available for visitors with a variety of needs and learning styles
- Staff are aware of, and seek to address as far as possible, the intellectual difficulties of some of its users

#### **Principal practical implications for staff and users**

- Maintain procedures for
  - consideration of, and action following, comments and complaints
  - consideration of, and action following, staff suggestions
- Undertake an access audit on a regular planned basis

#### **10.4 Contacting the Castle**

An important aspect of access planning is identifying any impediments to contacting the organisation for information about a visit or to obtain information. FOPC has a website at [www.portencrosscastle.org.uk](http://www.portencrosscastle.org.uk) which provides background information to the organisation and in the future will contain activities. Consideration of access requirements to online resources will be important.

An important future addition to ensure maximum opportunity to engage with the organisation is the introduction of a text-phone which would assist hearing impaired visitors in contacting the organisation. The text-phone service should be introduced and promoted on all marketing materials.

## **11.0 AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT**

### **11.1 Introduction**

This section provides details of the context for audience development at the site of Portencross Castle. The fundamental principle underpinning the development of this project is the need to balance the desire of FOPC to allow access to the Castle to the first time, with the concerns of residents of the village that they do not want excessive visitors to the Castle which would ruin the character of the place. Indeed, by extension, existing visitors to the site have indicated that they do not want the character of the site affected by development, either through building / landscaping or through the site being overrun by people.

Audience development activities must therefore provide access and enjoyment of the site through managed activities which both deliver benefits but not at the cost of what makes the site special in the first instance.

The following sections identify aims and objectives for the development of the project with respect to audience development and set out a series of activities which could be undertaken by FOPC to deliver public benefit.

### **11.2 Aim and Objectives**

#### **Aim**

To educate the public about the importance of Portencross Castle through controlled access and interpretive presentations which engage with and inspire users of the site

#### **Objectives**

In order to achieve the aim, the following objectives will be pursued:

- To promote the Castle and its visitor offer to a range of local and day trip markets
- To provide a formal and informal educational resource to inform and inspire audiences
- To provide a changing product offer which will encourage repeat visits to the Castle and its surroundings
- To present to the audience what is unique about the Castle and its history

### **11.3 Audience Development Activities**

The following activities could be undertaken by FOPC to encourage new and existing audiences to visit and re-visit Portencross Castle.

### 11.3.1 Interpretation inside the Castle

Interpretation of several key themes / episodes should be provided within the Castle. Research completed by iCosse has identified a number of nationally significant themes which could be presented throughout the Castle. These are:

- The history of the medieval kingdom of Strathclyde
- History of Cunninghame including the Baliol and de Ros families
- The importance of the Firth of Clyde as a transport route
- Other Castles in the area
- History of the development of Portencross Castle
- The Portencross cannon and the possible Armada wreck

### 11.3.2 Interpretation outside the Castle

External interpretation would need to be set in appropriate locations and would need to address difficulties caused by the weather, the Castles' location, and potential vandalism. The benefit of external interpretation is that it would provide a low cost offer for people at all times, even when the Castle was closed to the public.

Issues of land ownership would have to be addressed if this were to be deliverable. The land surrounding the Castle is in the ownership of FOPC. Consideration should be given to placing some interpretation in the car park of the Castle.

### 11.3.3 Website

The existing FOPC website should be extended as part of the project to include:

- Detailed history of the Castle
- Details of its significance and importance
- Images and videos from its history
- Oral history recordings of its most recent users
- Videos of work in progress on its consolidation – posted on the website, youtube and bebo to include explanation of the process, activity, findings and programme of work
- Links to other sites which have affected or been affected by the construction of Portencross Castle

The **video content** is of greatest interest to academic and professional audiences however there is great scope to use this as a teaching tool for local schools, and other organisations. Local schools could become involved in the process by watching the progress of the works and there may be scope for a question and answer forum from week to week.

The professional audience for this activity is potentially huge from academics and conservation specialists across the country.

Furthermore, the content captured will act as a time capsule which can be viewed at any point in time from the point of its creation.

Weekly web logs could be produced which would be made widely available. Links could be established with local projects who undertake video recording activity such as the Caley Centre in Ardeer, 8 miles from Portencross which provides a range of video recording courses for young people. This would clearly benefit both the Portencross project and the participants from the Caley Centre. This would require careful co-ordination to ensure that the video team was on-site when important work was being undertaken.

It is anticipated that the back of house infrastructure and initial extended content of the website would be delivered during the capital phase of the project and funds should be requested from the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver the website infrastructure. FOPC will cover the cost of ongoing maintenance and hosting of the website in the long-term and will seek to enhance and extend the content of the website regularly as new information becomes available. FOPC should take a strategic approach to the development of online resources to reflect current topics of educational interest and general interest from the public. Funds should be generated by FOPC and sourced from grant-giving bodies to fund additions to the website in terms of content and areas interest. FOPC has indicated its interest in using the Castle as the hub of information provision with many strands of interest emanating there from. This would potentially consider the archaeological importance of Auldhill, Portencross Castle and the surrounding area.

#### **11.4 Education Activities**

These would be made available online through the North Ayrshire Council web portal and would present the importance of Portencross Castle drawing on the nationally and regionally significant themes identified by iCosse. Models such as that used by Educationcity.com should be considered as these are exceptionally successful with school children. The benefit of web based activities is that they overcome the physical barriers to using the Castle as a destination for a school trip and also address the fact that the Castle has limited appeal for a full day or half day excursion.

Guided trips could be arranged as a secondary activity to support in-class teaching. Health and safety issues would need to be addressed if this were to occur.

#### **11.5 Links to Local Schools – Presentations / Lectures by Friends**

There is also the opportunity to undertake a series of presentations in schools to explain the importance and significance of the Castle to the local area. This would require training to be undertaken by a number of volunteers and appropriate disclosure checks would need to be undertaken.

## 11.6 Events programme

Many attractions offer a range of events which serve to stimulate and encourage people to re-visit historic sites. The ability of FOPC to undertake this activity is limited due to access issues, lack of physical indoor space and facilities to cope with an influx of people over a short period of time. FOPC does however have in its ownership a relatively large field which could be used for activities.

Events clearly also require resources for their planning, management and delivery. The business case for each event must be carefully assessed.

The history of the area could be presented through a series of **living history days** with the Castle as the backdrop / set for activities. This may include:

- Sailing of dead kings – ceremonial set
- Stories of the Baliol and de Ros families
- Royal Charters etc

The financial viability of all events should be considered carefully by FOPC. It will take time to build the profile of the Castle from a perception that very little happens on site to one which appreciates that there are occasional events and activities. As FOPC will operate on a limited budget it is important that all events and activities support the overall activity and continuing sustainability of the organisation and the Castle. In the short-term, events may be modest in scale to avoid undue financial pressure on FOPC however this must be increased in the longer-term to encourage access and engagement at the site.

## 11.7 Competitions

Wider engagement could be encouraged through a series of art / design competitions with a resulting exhibition of art projects based on the Castle presented inside the Castle. This could be run in conjunction with schools, art societies etc.

FOPC has recently been involved in offering a prize at the Mackintosh School of architecture and has a relationship with the local primary school. FOPC already runs an annual art exhibition – local artists, across a weekend – which is pretty well established and successful, attracts a good number of visitors, and made just over £2,000 in 2006. This is hard work but additional volunteer labour is available from some of the exhibiting artists. Suggestions have been made that an additional exhibition shortly before Christmas would be popular.

## 11.8 Performances in the Grand Hall

A programme of mid-summer performances could be offered in the Grand Hall. This could take in a number of performance types including drama, chamber music etc. This would require that

the building was wind and watertight but no more. Attendees at these events would have to accept that there are limited facilities, e.g. toilet and refreshments. However, this may add to the ambience, in particular for period pieces. Appropriate access and emergency evacuation would be required.

Furniture etc could be hired - at low cost - from the West Kilbride Community Centre to provide appropriate facilities. This would minimise the need for storage space within the Castle itself.

#### **11.9 Programme of lectures in the Grand Hall**

As above, the Grand Hall could be used for a series of talks on relevant issues, such as:

- History of the building
- History of Cunninghame
- Conservation issues
- History and heritage of the area

As above in 12.8, furniture and other facilities would be sourced from the local community centre.

#### **11.10 Artist in Residence – Traditional Craft**

A link could be developed with the West Kilbride Craft Town Initiative. This may include providing a space for a traditional crafter to work from Portencross for a defined period during the year. This would build on the existing success of the West Kilbride Craft Town Initiative and would provide an additional benefit for FOPC. Low maintenance and low intervention crafts would be preferred as this would minimise any alterations to the building. Funding may be available from SAC to support this activity and furthermore, the artist could be encouraged to do some community outreach activity as part of the project.

For instance, Heron Corn Mill in Beetham, Cumbria is a Grade B\* listed Mill. The Trust uses the Mill and adjacent Barn as base for art activity. The Trust receives Arts Council England funding for an art co-ordinator to undertake community art activity related to the Mill.

The main benefit to the crafter would be in presenting their work to a captive and fairly large audience. The space within the Castle would become a traditional craft work space but could also be used as a retail space for the sale of small items. Therefore, the crafter can demonstrate their skills and potentially generate some income.

#### **11.11 Different themed tours every 2 months**

Providing an interesting and informative visitor experience will be critical. The Castle itself is constrained in terms of physical space and as such it will be interesting how FOPC can deliver

interpretation and a visitor experience through interaction with visitors. One way of doing this would be through a programme of tours which may change month-to-month.

For example:

- Tour 1: March – The Boyds of Portencross
- Tour 2: May – The Armada Wreck
- Tour 3: July – Periods of development of the Castle

The existing audience is characterised by a large number of repeat visits. This would encourage a number of the existing audience to undertake regular visits to the Castle whilst visiting Portencross and would also encourage new visits to Portencross. The tours would include some orientation activity in the Castle and where appropriate guided walks across the land surrounding the Castle itself. These tours would be developed and delivered by FOPC and marketed across Ayrshire. These may run on defined weekends, e.g. weekends 1 and 3 of each month or may run at all times during which the Castle is open.

This approach would also provide additional training and engagement opportunities. Local historians and people generally interested in the Castle could be encouraged to volunteer, and with training deliver tours. Further and continuing research would be required from the Friends and new volunteers which would allow the interrogation of new information.

#### **11.12 Use of the field for events to support the Castle**

The field currently under the ownership of FOPC could be used to develop a series of events which would encourage use of the site and potentially increase income generating opportunities. This should be linked closely to the operation of the Castle and its history.

#### **11.13 Training Issues**

Training opportunities is an important element of audience development and project planning. The following training opportunities would be reported by the project.

##### **11.13.1 Conservation Skills**

An agreement could be reached with the contractor to provide apprenticeships / work experience for university / college students or for skill seekers. This may increase the cost of the contract as many contractors will increase insurance and programme allowances to cover the use of less experienced individuals.

##### **11.13.2 Visitor Management and Interpretation**

As indicated above, using people to deliver interpretation will address the issues associated with the site, building and content. With appropriate training, FOPC could recruit and train new volunteers to deliver guided tours and research new interpretative themes. As each volunteer

will have their own unique area of dedicated interest, this will lead to a voluntary work force which has a range of their own stories in addition to that provided as the core visit.

#### **11.14 Archaeology Projects**

The site is very interesting and potentially holds a number of individual areas which could form the basis of archaeology projects. This would provide the opportunity to undertake a series of projects to offer training opportunities for students and the community. AOC Archaeology is a company which undertakes a number of projects which deliver benefits to the local community. This could be undertaken at Portencross which would excavate new artefacts and identify new content for presentation in the Castle or in other locations.

These projects could be undertaken during the main capital project or following on from the completion of the project.

#### **11.15 Marketing Plan**

It is likely that the business plan for the operation of Portencross Castle will be very lean and as such there will be limited resources for marketing staff /activity. One response would be to work with a marketing post graduate to develop a marketing plan for the Castle which would address the identified issues but would also ensure that activity targets were met. Links to Universities and Colleges in Glasgow with emphasis on heritage tourism, heritage and conservation would be advantageous and would provide people with skills development opportunities and the FOPC with relatively cheap / free assistance.

Irrespective of who develops and delivers the marketing plan, the following should be considered:

- Visit Scotland marketing channels
- Marketed through Historic Scotland as a 'partner site'
- Press releases
- Links to other attractions and destinations
- Trail of Castles

#### **11.16 FOPC Training**

If the inter-personal approach to interpretation is to be considered, it would be beneficial if FOPC had training in delivering presentations etc.

#### **11.17 Local Links**

The new Museum of the Cumbraes, in Millport will be an important local museum, as will the Museum of North Ayrshire in Saltcoats. The Museum of the Cumbraes is currently being constructed and interpretation plan completed. Links to the content of the new Museum should be considered when it opens. A display of interesting facts and content about Portencross and

its relationship to other sites in North Ayrshire may increase awareness of the history of the Castle and people's willingness to visit.

#### West Kilbride Museum

As above, links could be made with the West Kilbride Museum to encourage visits.

#### West Kilbride Craft Town

The West Kilbride Craft Town encourages a number of visits to the village from a diverse catchment area. Links to craft town activity would be useful in addressing the opportunities presented by wider co-ordination of initiatives and activities in the area.

#### Seamill Hydro Hotel

Seamill Hydro is located just over 2 miles from Portencross and is one of the premier wedding facilities in North Ayrshire. At present, couples using the Hydro for wedding ceremonies or receptions often use the site of Portencross Castle as a venue for wedding photographs. This arrangement could be formalised if the Castle were to be consolidated and safe access was provided to the interior of the Castle. This could provide an income for FOPC and an additional benefit for families and couples using the Castle for wedding photography.

### 11.18 Resources and Frequency of Activity

The following table summarises the activities identified above and provides an indication of costs / resources.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Frequency and Beneficiaries</b>
Interpretation	Provided as part of capital project	Refreshed every 5 years
Website	Up to £5,000 per annum depending upon additional information and availability of resources	Refreshed as appropriate
Education Activities	Provided as part of capital project	Refreshed as new information becomes available and funds allow
Presentations and Lectures	Travel and material production	6 presentations to schools / groups per annum
Events Programme	Up to £4,000 per annum in the long-term depending upon events held	2 events per annum
Competitions	£200	2 per annum
Performances in the Grand Hall	£600	3 per annum
Programme of Lectures	£600	3 per annum
Artist in Residence	None	1 per annum
Themed Tours	Research time and cost	4 tours per annum
Training	Costs included in overall project cost	As appropriate
Marketing	Up to £3,000 depending upon the events programme and other activity	As part of a structured plan
Local links	None	As part of a structured plan

The following table provides an action plan which identifies the barriers to visiting which were identified during the research and the study team's response to these issues.

TABLE 11.2 ACTION PLAN					
AUDIENCE	BARRIERS AND ISSUES	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	TIMED QUANTITATIVE TARGET	RESOURCES REQUIRED
<b>ACCESS</b>					
General Visitors	High percentage of repeat visits	To provide a reason for repeat visitors to Portencross to re-visit the Castle	Themed tours Events Artist in residence Performances Lectures	Deliver 4 themed tours per annum 2 events per annum 1 artist in residence per annum 3 performances 3 lectures	Research time and cost Volunteer labour Events – Up to £4,000 per annum £1,200 for programme of lectures and performances
	Local people – no urgency to visit	To provide a stimulus to encourage local people to choose to visit Portencross Castle due to the visitor offer and activities developed therefrom	Themed tours Events Artist in residence Performances Lectures	Deliver 4 themed tours per annum 3 events per annum 1 artist in residence per annum 3 performances 3 lectures	As above
	Visitors to the site want access to the Castle	To provide meaningful access to the Castle through the delivery of this project	Allow access to the Castle and interpret its history, setting and importance	Deliver interpretation as part of capital project	Included in capital budget
	Visitors to the site want access to the roof of the Castle	To provide access to the roof on a controlled basis	To consider access to the roof as part of the project	Provided as part of the capital project	Included in capital budget
	At present there are a lot of Castles for visitors to choose from	To provide a series of reasons to visit Portencross and to illustrate its unique features	Develop a marketing campaign to illustrate the unique features of the Castle and the activities delivered there	Deliver marketing campaign during construction programme	Included in capital budget

	If admission is charged may act as disincentive to visit	To decide if entry charge is appropriate	Justify cost with high quality product. Important to demonstrate quality of visit especially as the Castle will be perceived as a small attraction	Not applicable	None
	Maintaining the character of the area	To control access to the site to maintain the character of the area	Deliver a programme of events which serve to control access and flow of visitors to the Castle and site	See Table	See Table
	Physical access from the car park	To provide appropriate access to the Castle and site from the car park	Deliver as part of capital project  Consider intellectual and off-site access through the internet	Deliver access improvements as part of project	Included in capital budget
Education					
	Risk assessments are time consuming	To minimise the risks of a visit to Portencross Castle	Provide standardised risk assessment for teachers	Develop during capital project	None
	Physical access is difficult and would affect the ability of schools to	To provide alternative means of delivering educational activities	Provide a range of educational activities which can be delivered online or in	Online resources developed as part of project Loan boxes developed as part of project	£5,000 for educational resources Up to £6,000 for 6

	guarantee equality of access				
	Close proximity to open water	To provide alternative means of delivering educational activities	Provide a range of educational activities which can be delivered online or in	Online resources developed as part of project Loan boxes developed as part of project	£5,000 for educational resources £6,000 for 6
	Limited offer of a visit to Castle	To provide alternative means of delivering educational activities	Provide a range of educational activities which can be delivered online or in-class	Online resources developed as part of project Loan boxes developed as part of project	£5,000 for educational resources £6,000 for 6
	Competition from other attractions / resources		Provide a range of educational activities which can be delivered online or in-class  Differentiate the product	Online resources developed as part of project Loan boxes developed as part of project	£5,000 for educational resources £6,000 for 6
Historic buildings enthusiasts	Maximising the reach and coverage of the project	To reach as wide an audience as possible with the capital project	Develop online video web log which explains the process. Presented through bebo, youtube and other similar sites	Video logs produced at appropriate points in the capital project	Cost of videography included in project costs  Online hosting minimal

## 12.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section considers the likely number of people who would be willing to visit interpretation within or related to Portencross Castle. The visitor market estimate is one indicator of public benefit which will be a key issue in attracting financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Penetration rate analysis identifies the extent to which an attraction / activity will attract visitors from a defined audience sector. The analysis used applies a likelihood to visit an attraction to the population size to identify a target visitor number per audience. The visitor number target is then supported by a competitor and comparator review which identifies the performance at similar attractions.

The following visitor number target assumes the following:

- The Castle is open to the public on a seasonal basis, e.g. April to October
- Interpretation includes the following main themes:
  - The history of the local area, including Hunterston and the deer park on Little Cumbrae
  - The wider history of Ayrshire
  - The history of the Boyds of Portencross
  - The history of the development of Portencross Castle
  - The importance of sea-power in medieval Scotland
  - The Portencross cannon and the possible Armada wreck
  - The Hunterston Brooch
- Interpretive activities include:
  - A website
  - An audio / audio-visual of the site
  - An interpretive leaflet
  - On-site interpretive panels
  - Art installations
  - A creative lighting strategy
  - A family activity walking trail
  - Commissioning of a play
- An archaeology project is operated in parallel with the consolidation and opening of the Castle. The archaeology project is also promoted as an activity which will stimulate some public engagement and involvement opportunities, such as viewing, 'Q & A' with archaeologists, viewing of findings, assistance in documentary research.

- The interpretation areas in the Castle are free to access, i.e. no admission charge – although donations will be accepted.

Market	Market Size	Penetration Rate	Visitor Numbers
Local Residents	134,186	2.0%	2,684
Day Visitors	2,159,364	0.1%	2,159
Domestic Tourists	940,000	0.02%	188
Overseas Tourists	170,000	0.5%	850
Education	20,416	0%	-
Enthusiasts	250		250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,424,216</b>		<b>5,881</b>

During its first year of operation, the Castle will encourage a number of visitors to Portencross to enter the Castle to view the interpretation. It is unlikely that the Castle will be a destination in its own right, except for 'enthusiasts' such as building historians, architects etc. It is likely that after the first year of operation, visitor numbers will fall due to the fact that Portencross receives a high number proportion of repeat visits.

The education audience will benefit through the provision of on-line resources and loan boxes.

The preceding assumes that the following activities and services are provided:

- Internal and external interpretation
- Website
- Education activities including on-line and in-class activities
- Presentations and lectures
- Events programme
- Competitions
- Performances in the Grand Hall
- Programme of lectures
- Artist in residence
- Themed tours
- Training
- Marketing

**APPENDIX A**

**CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE**



### Portencross Castle Development Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to assess the current usage of Portencross Castle, and potential further usage of the site, should any enhancement work be carried out. We are seeking your views regarding possible development of the site, no matter your level of current usage of the castle.

Interviewed by .....

Date .....

Location of Interview .....

#### Gender (circle number)

Male 1  
Female 2

#### Age group (circle number)

16-24 1  
25-34 2  
35-44 3  
45-54 4  
55-64 5  
66-74 6  
75+ 7

#### Working status:

Full-time 1  
Part-time 2  
Unemployed but seeking work 3  
Student 4  
Looking after home 5  
Retired 6  
Unable to work 7  
Other X

1. How often do you visit / use Portencross castle and its surroundings? (Please tick one box)

Daily   
Weekly   
Monthly   
More than once per year   
Less often   
First visit

If this is your first visit will you come back to Portencross Castle? Regardless of answer, why?

.....

2. On average, how long do you spend in the vicinity of Portencross Castle per visit? (Please tick one box)

0 – 15 mins   
16 - 30 mins   
31 – 45 mins   
46 – 60 mins   
61 – 90 mins   
Over 90 mins

3. What brings you to Portencross? (Please tick one box)

- Live here
- Live locally
- Day trip  (State, e.g. walking .....
- Visiting friends/relatives
- Holiday
- Other
- If other, please state .....

4. What are your main reasons for visiting Portencross Castle? (Please tick all that apply)

- To use the surrounding grounds
- To view the scenery and wildlife
- Tranquillity of the area
- Local interest
- Walking
- Interest in heritage
- Interest in the building
- Other .....

5. How would you define your visiting party? (Please tick one box)

- On my own
- Couple
- Family  (No. of Adults.....No. of Children .....
- Part of organised group  (Which .....
- Other .....

6. Where have you come from today? (geographic area, e.g. town / village etc)

.....

7. Is Portencross / the Castle your main destination today?

- Yes
- No

8. If no, which other attractions or areas (towns / villages etc) are you visiting?

.....

9. What do you think of Portencross Castle and its environs at present?

.....

10. What could be done to Portencross Castle and its surroundings to encourage you to return to the site?

.....

11. What activities, if any, would you like to be able to do at Portencross Castle that you can't do at present?

.....

12. Which of the following statements do you agree with:

- The Castle should not be repaired
- The Castle should be repaired and made accessible on a seasonal basis
- The Castle should be repaired and made fully accessible

13. What are the main factors which should be taken into account when considering any enhancement / development of the Castle and its surroundings?

.....

14. Thinking about the future, would you support the introduction of the following: (Please tick all that apply)

- Internal interpretation at the Castle
- External interpretation at the Castle
- Access to the Castle itself
- Access to the roof of the Castle to enjoy the view
- Use of the restored Castle as a community facility

15. If yes to Q14, what interpretive themes / topics would interest you most?

- Portencross Castle on Auld Hill, i.e. the first Portencross Castle
- Construction of the Castle
- Portencross as the last mainland resting place for the bodies of former Scottish Kings
- Portencross and its links with Royalty
- Links to other Castles such as Dundonald and Rothesay
- Maritime history of Portencross and its connections with the sea
- Social history of Portencross, i.e. people, lives and activities associated with Portencross such as smuggling, fishing, farming etc

16. What additional activities or facilities do you think should be introduced to enhance your visit?

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THIS RESEARCH.



APPENDIX B

ACCESS AUDIT



The ADAPT Trust

Access Audit Report

for

**Portencross Castle**

**October 2006**

The ADAPT Trust  
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## Introduction

This Access Audit has been prepared by the ADAPT Trust following a site visit on 24 October 2006. It should be noted that the issues considered in the report would affect access to the site not only for disabled people but also for all users.

The report records and assesses the current situation noting problems and giving **recommendations** to improve access. These are prioritised as:-

**E - Essential**

**D - Desirable (good practice)**

**M – Management Issues**

The criteria for assessment are:

- the need to maximise access to, and use of, the site
- compliance with Listed Building regulations
- guidance in the Disability Discrimination Act
- need to observe **reasonable** functional and financial practicalities of implementing action to improve access

## Factors contributing to accessibility

There are many factors contributing to accessibility, the most obvious being the physical environment. However as wheelchair users account for < 5% of disabled people the needs of those with sensory and intellectual impairments also need to be considered.

## In 'should equal' out

Means of escape for disabled people, and management procedures for evacuation, were not reviewed as part of this audit as it is not apposite for this site.

## The Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005 give disabled people rights in the areas of recruitment, employment, in the provision of goods and services, and education. Service providers and employers must ensure that they are not discriminating against disabled people either in the way they provide services or in their buildings and facilities.



The Act does not override other legislation relating to buildings such as planning permission, building regulations, listed building consent and fire regulations.


The Act itself does not include building design guidance and where regulations do not apply, as is the case with existing buildings, it is advisable to follow current best practice as provided by this report to be able to justify decisions in making '**reasonable adjustments**'.

The access audit is a useful first step towards meeting the requirements of the Act. The findings of an audit can be used to prepare an Access Plan that will comprise a programme of implementation of improvements over a period of time.




2. Site Circulation

Item	Element	Comments/ Recommendations	Photo Reference
2.1	Entry	<p>The immediate approach to the Castle is via a grassed and rocky path and currently would be difficult even for ambulant disabled and older people to negotiate.</p> <p>The doorway is wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users and has a level threshold.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>This approach path should be surfaced in a material which will give a 'hard' and even surface leading to the entrance e.g. rolled grit and should be a minimum 850mm wide (E)</p> <p>N.B. stick and chair users find thick gravel difficult to use.</p>	
2.2	Perimeter	<p>Access to the perimeter of the Castle is limited and leads to the rocky foreshore.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>It may be possible to create a partial extension to the immediate approach path to the side of the Castle but we feel it is reasonable to leave this area as it stands. (D)</p> <p>N.B. there may be a health and safety issue for any user of this area.</p>	
2.3	Interior	<p>There is currently no public access to the interior of the Castle. Should future plans include access it is, in our opinion, neither reasonable nor physically possible, nor safe, to provide this beyond the ground floor for wheelchair users or ambulant disabled people. It will still be possible for many other disabled people e.g. with sensory impairments to reach the roof safely.</p>	

	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>If public access to the roof is achieved then the stairs will need to have a) handrails, preferably round with a diameter of 40-50mm to give a firm grip and b) nosings on each step to clearly mark the edges (E)</p> <p>A CCTV camera mounted on the roof and linked to a monitor at ground level would allow visitors who cannot reach that level to 'see' the views from the roof (D)</p>	
--	--	---

### 3. Intellectual / sensory access

Item	Element	Comment / Recommendations	Photo reference
3.1	Intellectual /sensory access	<p>Currently there is no interpretation of the site although it would be possible to offer this at ground level inside the castle if other restoration work is completed.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>Any interpretative material including signage should follow the guidelines included in the RNIB guide 'See it Right'. This gives information on text and visual interpretation e.g. font selection and point size (E)</p> <p>Any audio-visual presentations e.g. on conservation work should incorporate either a) subtitles or b) induction loop or c) a transcript of the narrative to assist deaf and hard of hearing people (E)</p> <p>If a website is provided then it needs to be accessible e.g. a text only version. The web designer needs to follow guidelines for an accessible website (see <a href="http://www.w3c.org/WAI">www.w3c.org/WAI</a>) (E / M)</p> <p>Printed information should be offered on request in other formats e.g. large print; tape; Braille (not widely used but if requested the RNIB can provide a service). (D / M)</p>	

#### 4. Conclusion

Portencross castle is a unique site and presents a challenge to the creation of disabled access. It must be accepted that a site of this type will never be fully accessible but all avenues must be explored before saying that 'access for all' cannot be achieved.

There are many ways that reasonable access can be created for people with a range of disabilities and we believe that the recommendations in this report will help to achieve this goal.





**JURA CONSULTANTS**  
ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

QA CHECK	
CHECKED BY	CW
AUTHORISED BY	CW
DATE	27/06/07
VERSION	FINAL
REF: 595	

