



Childcare Feasibility Study



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Executive Summary

This report has been commissioned by the Glenkens District Trust to look into the provision of early learning and childcare in the Glenkens area. We have looked at various models which address the key issues of how high quality, flexible, accessible and affordable early learning and childcare can be provided in the Glenkens, supported and sustained in a dispersed rural economy.

In rural areas such as the Glenkens the availability of childcare can severely limit the parent's ability to work, with one parent having to stay at home during their children's early years in some cases¹. It also provides the opportunity for social interaction for children in remoter areas and supports the ethos of the equity agenda.

The new government policy to expand ELC funded provision for 3 and 4 year olds, from 600 to 1140 hours, has exacerbated already vulnerable community childcare provision, and the GDT are concerned that the loss of service provision will contribute to the de-population in the area.

There is no access for 0 to 2years-9months aged children to childcare and activity groups. There is no wraparound childcare provision or holiday provision. Previous projects to provide these services have had varying levels of success; they have all suffered from fluctuating numbers and ultimately become unsustainable.

This report has analysed the different models of childcare that could be adopted in the area and the feasibility of delivering them as a sustainable solution.



Key points:

- *The preferred models are childminder and wrap-around clubs with outdoor provision being an important element of any service.*
- *It is recommended that models be developed in phases to allow for build-up of confidence and demand.*
- *The models support and complement each other.*
- *Collaboration with the local schools and service providers for mutual support and development.*
- *Communication with the community to gain their support is vital.*
- *Continue dialogue with D&G Council to push for further support.*

Successful implementation is conditional on:

- *Funding, training and marketing support is needed in the initial start-up period.*
- *Additional support at times when numbers of children drop below a financially sustainable level.*
- *Finding a suitable community partner to deliver the project.*

¹ Commission on the delivery of rural education (COSLA/Scottish Government 2013)

1. Introduction

Glenkens and District is a rural community in Dumfries and Galloway. The Glenkens and District Trust was established to support regeneration and development in the local area, to make it a better place to live, work, play and visit. Their recent Community Action Plan² identified the need for high quality, accessible and affordable childcare to be made available within the area.

This feasibility study has been commissioned by GDT to research and assess the need for childcare in Glenkens and District, identify models that best suit the requirements of local people and establish whether the proposed model is feasible.

The development of childcare provision will contribute directly towards one of the four action areas outlined in the Community Plan - for the Glenkens area to be an 'economically flourishing community'.

Quality ELC provision in fragile rural communities is seen as essential, enabling parents/carers to work and provide respite for carers. It also provides children with necessary social interaction which may be taken for granted in more urban settings.

Recent research by the Care and Learning Alliance into rural delivery models for ELC expansion focused on 4 key areas of need, which are applicable to the Glenkens:

Strong and sustainable workforce	• Expansion of the ELC funded provision has added pressure for suitably qualified staff. • The ELC profession is undervalued.
Use of 'alternative' places and times	• Expanding outdoor provision to compensate for lack of capacity within existing buildings. • Cost effective. • Many benefits in terms of physical and mental health, development and environmental awareness
Value of intergenerational partnerships	• Provides learning experiences, increases children's confidence and helps them grow into effective members of society and community.
Transport	• mobile approach to the delivery of ELC in rural areas

National Agenda

In August 2020 ELC funded provision was expanded, increasing the annual personal entitlement for children ages three and four from 600 to 1140 hours, and extend the provision to include eligible two-year olds. This originated from the Scottish Government's 'Funding Follows the Child' strategy, which promotes flexibility and accessibility and allows parents/guardians to select the ELC provision for their child that best supports their child's needs. This policy incorporates the government agenda to increase outdoor learning.

² Glenkens and District Community Action Plan - July 2020 – Community Enterprise.
<https://wwwFOUNDATIONSOTLAND.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-02/Glenkens%20CAP%20report%20FINAL%20280820.pdf>

1.1. Methodology

To produce the feasibility study SKS carried out the following work:

- **Background research** – Reviewed all relevant information on childcare provision in the area, previous plans and strategic documents.
- **Asset mapping** – defined the area to focus the study on. Mapped and reviewed current and past childcare provision. Reviewed recent asset mapping in the area for suitable venue options.
- **Childcare model research** - Carried out desk-based research, interviews and consulted with childcare experts.
- **Stakeholder consultation** – as the group had already defined the issues, SKS focused on one-to-one stakeholder interviews and workshops to target specific groups, consulting them both before and after the models were created.
- **Models for childcare delivery** – using the information above, SKS created options for childcare delivery to present at the workshops.
- **Feasibility report** - with recommendations, articulating how the chosen childcare model could be developed

1.2. Glenkens and District Trust

[Glenkens and District Trust](#) is a two-tier SCIO responsible for enabling community development in the Glenkens and District area.

The focus of their work is around three key purposes:

1. To advance citizenship and community development by distributing Wind Farm Community Benefit finance and other grants.
2. The advancement of environmental protection and improvement.
3. The prevention or relief of poverty.



1.3. Area covered in this study

“The Glenkens” is the local name for this large, sparsely populated rural area in central Galloway. It is made up of the parishes of Carsphairn, Dalry, Kells, Parton and Balmaclellan.

The focus of this study encompasses the all the communities in the CAP area plus Carsphairn. Nearby Dunscore and Glencairn (Moniaive) were also included in some aspects of our research.

Focus areas:

- Balmaclellan
- Balmaghie
- Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham
- Crossmichael & District
- Dalry
- Royal Burgh of New Galloway & Kells Parish
- Parton



3

In 2019 the population of the area was 3,754 within 1,999 households, with 26 births recorded that year. House prices are higher than the average for Scotland and for Dumfries and Galloway.

There is a general belief that a good sense of community exists in Glenkens and District and that it is a safe and nurturing place to raise a family. However, the sparse population spread means that there are limited opportunities for children and young people to interact socially. This can create serious difficulties for very young children who live in isolated places.

³ Google Maps. Glenkens location map from [Statistics.gov.uk](https://www.statistics.gov.uk)

The population facts and figures below directly impact the childcare provision debate:

- An ageing population with a lower proportion of working age residents (although there is anecdotal evidence that younger families have moved to the area since the last census).
- An overall decreasing population in Dumfries & Galloway. Anecdotally, the Glenkens population is stable.
- A decreasing number of young people – 14% of the population are aged 0-15yrs and this number is predicted to decrease further, whilst the population in Scotland as a whole is increasing.
- A high proportion of car ownership, an infrequent bus service and no train or taxi services.
- The largest employment sector is agriculture and forestry, followed by health and social work. The service sector is increasingly important along with home working allowed by new technology. Natural Power in the Forrest Glen provides a significant number of technology jobs (80ish) for young people with appropriate qualifications.

By 2037 the population of Dumfries & Galloway is projected to be 141,619, a decrease of 6.1% compared to the population in 2012. The population of Scotland is projected to increase by 8.8% between 2012 and 2037. The population aged under 16 in Dumfries & Galloway is projected to decline by 9.5% over the 25-year period. (Data sourced from National Records of Scotland)⁴

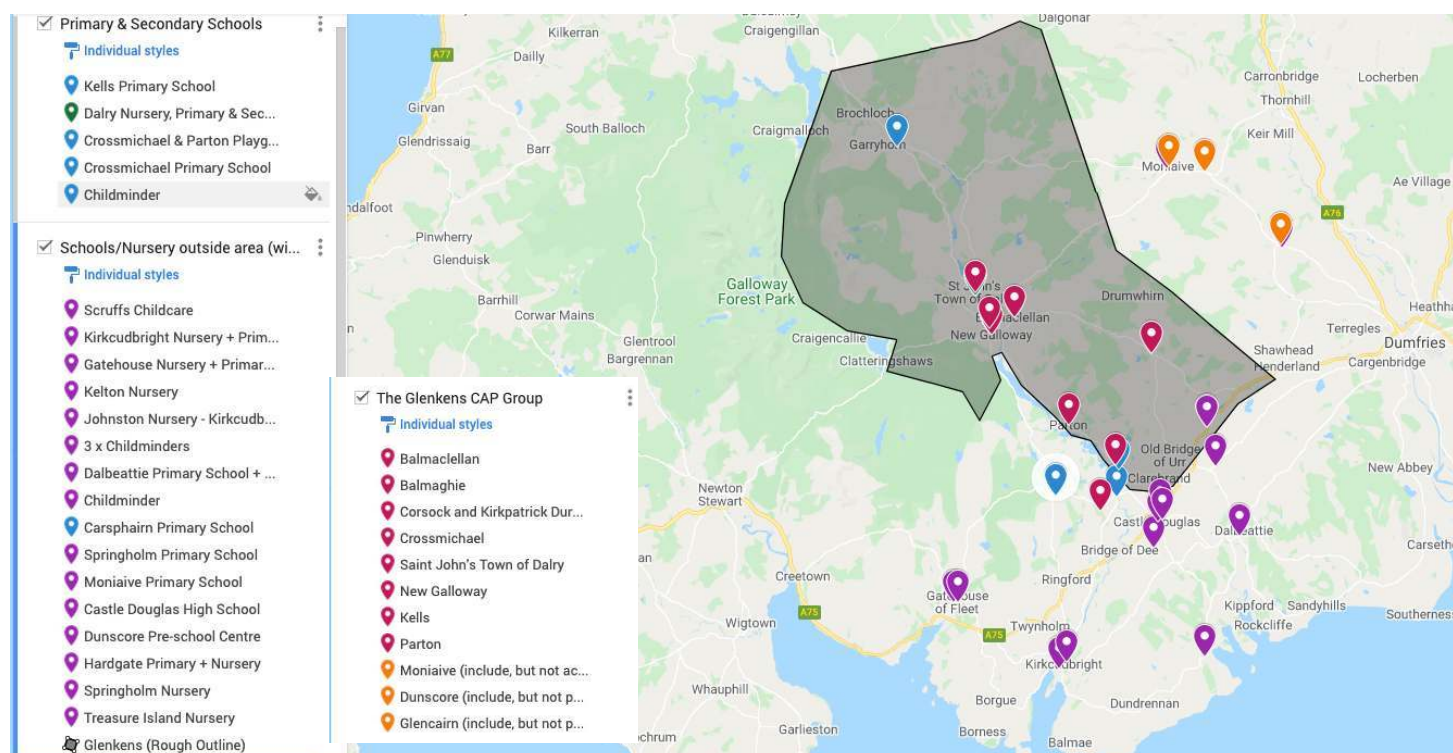
There is anecdotal evidence of a post-covid influx of families into the Glenkens from urban areas. This is reflected in a rapid fall in the number of houses for sale.



⁴ By 2037 the population of Dumfries & Galloway is projected to be 141,619, a decrease of 6.1% compared to the population in 2012. The population of Scotland is projected to increase by 8.8% between 2012 and 2037. The population aged under 16 in Dumfries & Galloway is projected to decline by 9.5% over the 25 year period. (Data sourced from National Records of Scotland)

2. Current Provision

The map below is available online⁵ and shows the current provision in the Glenkens area:



Glenkens has four primary schools, one nursery and no council framework childminders. The Glenkens geographic area is debated; here we have assumed it includes Crossmichael at the south end and Carsphairn at the north end.

There are three cluster/partner schools serving the upland area of The Glenkens in Dumfries and Galloway – Dalry, Kells and Carsphairn. Carsphairn school is currently mothballed and steps are now being taken to close it permanently. The school roll in the area has fallen in recent years. They share resources and teachers.

In Dumfries and Galloway all Local Authority run provision is within primary schools. There are no stand-alone council-run nurseries.

Voluntary Provision in the area

Parton & Crossmichael Playgroup (nursery) in Glenloch is run as a non-profit organisation. It provide places for up to 20 children, 2yrs-6mths to 5 years. This is a vital part of the framework, it is well supported, but as a voluntary run project, it is always at risk of funding and fluctuating numbers.

(Moniaive and Springholm also have community led provision which is not in the area covered by this study.)

⁵ https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1a9NUQ36Q8ZLdi2ytUaQgmJMJ3uBp_YJ&usp=sharing

PRIMARY

Dalry Primary School
Kirkland Street
St Johns Town of Dalry
DG7 3UX

The school serves the villages of Dalry, Carsphairn and Balmaclellan and much of the surrounding rural district in the Glenkens area.

Head teacher: Paul Scrimshaw
School roll: 59 pupils
3 Classes: Primary P1 /2, P3/4/5 and P6/7.
Hours: 9am to 3.25pm

Kells Primary School
Braeside, New Galloway
Castle Douglas
Dumfries and Galloway
DG7 3RU

The school is situated in the village of New Galloway. The school is paired with Carsphairn and Dalry Primary schools.

Head teacher: Paul Scrimshaw
School roll: 29 pupils
2 Classes: P1-4 and P5-7
Hours: 9am to 3pm

Crossmichael Primary School
Crossmichael,
Castle Douglas
DG7 3AP

Crossmichael Primary serves the villages of Crossmichael, Parton, Glenlochar, Laurieston and surrounding areas. The school is partnered with Gelston Primary School.

Head teacher: Mrs Mary Lidstone-Scott
School roll: 76 pupils (capacity for 100)
3 Classes

There are some children who attend Springholm Primary School which is located outside the area.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dalry Secondary School
Kirkland Street
St Johns Town of Dalry
DG7 3UX

Dalry Secondary School is a secondary school in St John's Town of Dalry. It is a partnership school with Castle Douglas High School where S5/S6 pupils who wish to continue in full-time education, normally transfer.

Head teacher: Mr James Smith
School roll: 52 (S1-S4)
3 associated primary schools – Dalry, Kells and Carsphairn.

Castle Douglas High School

Castle Douglas High School is a secondary school situated on the outskirts of the market town of Castle Douglas.

Head teacher: Mr James Smith
School roll: 518 (S1-S7)

PRE-SCHOOL / NURSERY

Dalry School Nursery
Kirkland Street
St Johns Town of Dalry
DG7 3UX

Dalry Early Learning and Childcare provision provides places for children from Dalry and the surrounding area including those children who may go onto Kells Primary.
Head teacher: Paul Scrimshaw
School roll - nursery: 20

Crossmichael and Parton Playgroup

Crossmichael and Parton Playgroup - operates from Glenlochar Community Centre. Provide Early Learning and Childcare to children aged 2yrs 6months - 5 yrs.

CHILDMINDERS

There are no childminders registered in the Glenkens area and, anecdotally, there are no non-registered child minders.

There are 6 Childminders registered in the Stewartry; 5 based in Castle Douglas and 1 in Auchencairn. They provide childcare for 2 to 5 year olds from 7 / 7.30am to 6 / 6.30pm.

Table 1 - Provision of Early Learning and Childcare May 2017:

ELC Establishment	Number	Number of Children	% of children
Local Authority	45	1,991	62%
Private Providers	18	634	20%
Voluntary Providers	25	568	18%
Childminders (recorded in NAMS)	1	13	-
Total		3206	100%

Source: Dumfries and Galloway Council Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Plan 2017-2020.

The table above shows the situation 4 years ago, with only 1 childminder providing a service in the area.

3. Early Learning and Childcare - Entitlement

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines Early Learning and Childcare as:

‘a service, consisting of education and care, of a kind which is suitable in the ordinary case for children who are under school age, regard being had to the importance of interactions and other experiences which support learning and development in a caring and nurturing environment’

The aim of the Act was to increase the amount and flexibility of Early Learning and Childcare; developing a high quality and flexible system which is accessible and affordable for all children, parents, carers and families. The Act originally increased funded hours to 600; this has since been increased to 1140 hours.

D&G outlines the benefits of the new models for delivering 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare:

QUALITY

- All providers will be required to meet the quality benchmark within the Dumfries and Galloway Council framework.
- All providers will adhere to Dumfries and Galloway's Early Learning and Childcare Strategy.

FLEXIBILITY

- There are flexible options within an area for parents and carers by 2021.
- A provider neutral approach will ensure greater choice for parents and carers.
- Aligning out of school care provision with Early Learning and Childcare provision will provide more flexibility for families.

AFFORDABILITY → Future provision may offer opportunities for parents and carers to purchase additional wrap round care if required.

ACCESSIBILITY → These models will ensure services are accessible to support families to work, train and study.
→ Access to Early Learning and Childcare provision will be provided in rural areas.
→ Suitable access to provision and resources for children with additional support needs will be provided.

Early learning and childcare settings offer education and childcare to children up to school age, they can be operated by the council, private businesses, voluntary organisations, or childminders.



- Eligible 2-year-olds and all 3 and 4 year olds may apply to have up to 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) a year.
- The hours can be taken during term time (38 weeks per year), or all year round.
- The maximum hours available in most school nurseries per week is 30 hours.
- Children can access no more than 10 funded hours in any one day.
- Children accessing funded hours over lunch time may receive a free meal.
- Most children start school between 4 years 6 months and 5 years old but it's possible to start children later in certain circumstances. These children may be entitled to an extra year of funded early learning and childcare.
- The 1140 hours is funded but some settings allow parents to purchase additional hours at a cost.
- Blended placements (defined as arrangements where children are attending two or more settings), are only permitted in extenuating circumstances.

Local Authorities do not have a statutory requirement to provide out of school care, although the Children and Young People Act 2014 does require local authorities to consult representative groups of parents at least every two years on non-statutory hours of childcare, including out of school care.

The 1995 Children (Scotland) Act placed a statutory duty on local authorities to provide daycare for school age children “in need⁶”, before and after school and during holidays.

⁶ Being a child ‘in need’ is defined at section 93(4) of the 1995 Act as ‘being in need of care and attention’ because of a number of factors related to the child achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development; and disability – of the child themselves or a member of their family which, in turn, affects the child adversely.

4. The challenges and requirements

The challenges around childcare provision have been evidenced from previous research, the CAP, workshops with community groups and stakeholder conversations.



- Geography – dispersed settlements
- Low population with fluctuating age cohorts
- Personnel issues e.g., recruitment of qualified staff
- Securing appropriate space / premises in an accessible location
- Resourcing a 5 day a week guaranteed offering which will give parents/carers confidence to change their childcare and/or work.
- Cost
- How to cater to a wide range of children from very young babies to older school-aged children

Gaps in the provision:

- No council funded places for 2 year olds in the Glenkens.
- No nursery for 2 year olds and younger.
- No afterschool/preschool provision for school aged children.
- No holiday clubs
- No childminders

4.1.Previous Evidence / Background Info

Nursery Provision

In 2003, the Glenkens Childcare Initiative Feasibility Study was produced by White Hill. This study looked at the demand for childcare and concluded that there were sufficient numbers to secure the financial viability of a childcare facility in the Glenkens area.

Bright Stars was developed as a result of this study. It provided nursery places for 2-5 year olds and was run by a mix of volunteers and employees. The nursery closed in 2019 due to low numbers of children, which made the service financially unsustainable.

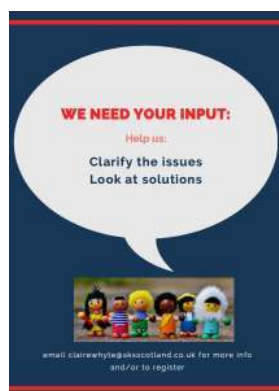
Childminding

£4.14 Average rate per hour per child in Dumfries and Galloway (compared to £4.40 average across Scotland).

Asset Mapping

At the time of writing this report, Martha Schofield was carrying out an asset mapping exercise in the Glenkens area. The report was not available at this time, but Martha provided useful information (see Stakeholder Interviews, below, and appendix 4).

4.2. Stakeholder Interviews



Online community workshops were initially planned. They were promoted on social media in early June, but uptake was very low and the preference from respondents was for one-to-one interviews.

Nb. It is thought that the low uptake was due to several online workshops recently being carried out in the area, hence enthusiasm to participate in another was low.

An extensive and wide-ranging programme of one-to-one interviews was therefore focused on, which generated strong participation and a good insight into different respondent's experience knowledge – both local and further afield. These interviews are fully documented in appendix 1.

Stakeholder's names and contact details were obtained from:

- The Trust
- Interest created from workshop promotion
- Third party introduction
- Dumfries & Galloway Council website
- SKS contacts

A total of 23 stakeholder interviews were set up and carried out on Zoom or by telephone. These include:

- The Headteacher of a local primary school –
- The former Chairperson of Bright Stars Community nursery
- An asset mapping expert
- Director of a private nursery in Castle Douglas
- Teacher with experience setting up and working in outdoor childcare settings
- Registered childminder
- Various experienced childcare workers, working in local playgroups and nurseries
- Chair of Carsphairn Community Council
- Local Ward Officer/parent
- Dumfries & Galloway Council - Early Years Team
- NHS Screen Services Programme
- Scottish Childminding Association
- Three childcare experts with experience in Scotland and abroad
- 9 parents, some more than once and covering a wide range of children's ages and what they want from childcare
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Interviews – SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis has been carried out, to examine and focus the information gathered during the interviews.

Strengths	Weakness
GENERAL - Community spirit can make informal childcare arrangements more workable. CHILDMINDING - Childminding can be flexible work for providers and fit with their lives. - Scottish Childminding Association support highly regarded. NURSERIES - Nursery provision hours has recently been extended for 3 year old +. - Local nursery provision is highly regarded	GENERAL - Area is rural and dispersed/remote. - Parental driving usually has to be involved to access childcare. - Local schools closing. - Numbers of children from year to year fluctuates, proving a lack of stability/viability. - Lack of childcare is a huge issue for parents and impacts children in Glenkens. - Feasibility study carried out in 2003 concluded that there wasn't enough demand in Glenkens to justify opening a new nursery. CHILDMINDING - Childminding seen as an onerous job with complicated paperwork and red tape. - Grants for childcare providers have been hard to come by recently. - Low number of volunteers for clubs such as Beavers and Brownies. - Provision for children aged 0-3 years is sparse.
Opportunities	Threats
GENERAL - Respondents suggested using windfarm money to provide assistance for childcare provision. - Approach Natural Power for potential match funding. - A network of nannies or house keepers, which would take some of the stress out of working with children. - The Trust to share information i.e. lists of childminders, au pair companies etc. - Utilise Galloway Transport Initiative. - Attract young families – needs more activities that are parent and child friendly. - There are assets in Glenkens (e.g. village halls etc) that could be used for locating childcare models. - Encourage mums to get together, perhaps through Mothers that Matter. New Galloway Town Hall. CHILDMINDING - Childminding can provide flexible work and childcare options at a low cost. - Offers from individuals to act as 'mentors' to help potential childminders navigate the process.	GENERAL - Lack of childcare options can lead to parents struggling to work, poor mental health, lack of socialising options for children etc. This can drive people out of the area or discourage people from moving to it. - When a new childcare option is offer it takes a while to 'bed-in' and has to be guaranteed for a period of time or parents will not have the confidence to change their current arrangement – initially there will always be low numbers. Failure can be self-fulfilling prophecy as this is used as evidence that demand isn't there. - School nursery/pre-school is 9am-3pm during term times which is not sufficient for many working parents. - Staff – unreliable and difficult to source. Can be a high turnover. CHILDMINDING - Care Inspectorate registration process is difficult and 1st inspection can put people off. - D&G Council process can be difficult. PLAYGROUPS/NURSERIES - Crossmichael playgroup – funding can be problematic. Closure of this facility would have a big impact on the area. - Providing holiday care can be difficult, as it is bound up in red tape (e.g. staff holidays, legal guidelines) – not worth

- Trust could give support to prospective childminder to help them through registration process. NURSERIES - GDT could underwrite model for 2 or 3 years so people can relax into it. If you build a service, people will come. - Forest school clubs. AFTERSCHOOL CLUB - Kells and Dalry schools could base an afterschool club at one and transport kids to the other. - Galloway Activity Centre – outdoor activity centre - Outdoor childcare – some local people have experience setting up/running outdoor childcare afterschool clubs. One local teacher is willing to help set one up. There are potential locations available. Fits with general ethos in area. BABYSITTING - Create informal bank of babysitting. Make it community led, encourage retired and young people to be involved. Perhaps a fund could be available to help those on a lower income.	doing it. Not financially viable, nor work for staff.
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The various points in this analysis have all been considered and used to inform section 6: suggested models and evaluation.

5. Comparator Models

Initially we looked for models both in the UK and Europe. However, differing regulations in Europe and cultural differences would have made the models hard to replicate in Scotland. The regulation framework in Scotland contributes to the lack of diversity in childcare models in the country. For a realistic approach, we have therefore looked at models within the UK.

5.1. Fife mobile creche service

This is a non-profit service, part funded by Fife council. The council also provides play resources and vans to transport staff to the various creche venues. It caters for children aged between 6 weeks and 12 years of age, operating from 9am to 11pm. The service is registered with the Care Commission, to provide creche services for up to 14 hours a day, seven days a week.

It is a very flexible service which works well in rural communities. They provide creches for community, public and voluntary organisations, allowing parents and carers to benefit from one-off events such as college open days, to weekly parenting support groups or basic skills courses delivered over a number of months. Creches are free for parents/carers and are held on the site of the event.



Figure 1 Example of a mobile creche van

Income is generated from the community, public and voluntary services who "buy in" the creche service. They can be hired for events which helps the service remain sustainable, producing an income to off-set the cost of the service. Creche venues are vetted before being approved for use.

Staff are drawn from a 40-strong pool of casual workers, all of whom undergo two and a half days' induction training and are required to have, or be working towards, nationally recognised childcare qualifications. During the first six months of employment, they are also required to complete training in relevant issues, such as child protection, health and safety, and first aid.

They have a good system for signing children in and out and provide regular slots for children during term time and in the holidays.

5.2. Auchlone Nature Kindergarten

Children between 2 and 5 years old spend the majority of the day outdoors in all weathers. They run a week-day nursery as well as holiday camps for older children. In the past, [Mindstretchers](#), the organisation who run [Auchlone](#), have provided staff to run outdoor afterschool clubs in local primary schools.

The site is situated in the Abercairny estate, about four miles from Crieff at an old estate gatehouse, which provides toilet facilities and a small amount of heated indoor space. Other structures include a 3-sided outdoor



room, with a kitchen and heating stove. There is also a wooden to keep all the children's coats and it has an area with soft cushions for relaxing. In the woods there is an outdoor shelter with seats around a campfire.

The children spend the majority of their time in the naturalistic garden or in the woodlands where they build dens and bird hides using tools such as saws and loppers, make fires to cook their own snacks, climb trees and generally explore. There is also a mud kitchen and a gardening area.

During the Covid-19 closures, they ran a [Virtual Nature School](#) which has continued to operate.

The children come from all over Perthshire and Stirlingshire. Many families are happy to travel an extra distance to access the services of Auchlone, even if they have a traditional nursery on their doorstep.

Funding: They have funded places from Perth Council as well as privately funded places.

5.3. Springholm Primary School Nursery

This is a small rural nursery offering pre-school education. They are developing the learning environment for nursery children by providing an innovative outdoor nursery within the grounds of the village primary school. They also benefit from having safe access to Springholm School Forest area, playing fields, The Bridge and the Burn to enhance the learning journey.
Open 8.30am – 3pm

Funding: Black Craig Windfarm, parent fundraising activities, government provision.



5.4. Lauriston Childminder

The following information was gathered during a one-to-one interview carried out by SKS with a childminder in Lauriston who has been a Registered childminder in the town for 16 years.

She is also registered with the Council to provide ELC for 3 / 4-year-olds, can have up to 6 children and provides wrap around care and holiday childminding from 7am – 6pm.

She has had children from Glenkens in the past but picks up from various schools near her so can't now pick up from Dalry. She loves being a childminder and it has meant she can work with a degree of flexibility and control.



When asked why she thought there was not childminding options in the Glenkens & District area, she mentioned some perceived issues which, if addressed by the Trust, might enable and encourage local people to become childminders.

For example, she felt that going through the registration process with the Care Inspectorate was onerous and getting through the first inspection and required paperwork caused panic – she knows of people who started the process and pulled out because they felt out of their depth.

The childminder has also had problems when registering 'variations' with the Council i.e., she applied to care for more than six children as she has the capacity and there is the demand, but has to apply for planning permission to change the use of her house to 'business'.

She would have to put in a pre-application (£50) – which takes months for the Council to process – and then has to pay £400 for full application, plus additional Council Tax. She doesn't know whether it is worth her while, and the Council make her feel as if she is being difficult.

These are all potential barriers for those that might consider being a childminder in the Glenkens area that could be addressed and assisted by the Trust.

For example:

- appropriate signposting/promotion initiated to encourage people to look at childminding as a career option
- links built with the Scottish Childminding Association
- a mentoring programme with a local expert to help get through the Council and Care Inspectorate processes created
- financial assistance offered in some cases

6. Suggested models and evaluation

Key to the success of all the models below is the continuity of service. Each model will need to give parents and carers the confidence that the provision is sustainable long term. They will need support to become established over 1 or 2 years, become embedded within the community, so that parents/carers have the confidence to rely on them for their work/life commitments.

6.1. Models – Long List

All the models we have listed below reflect the pedagogy of the setting and current research and policy around ELC provision. Their unique financial, social and environmental characteristics have been evaluated by SKS, GDT and educational consultants to find the best model for the Glenkens area.

All models will require support in the set-up stages. The clear message from all stakeholders was the need for long-term solutions that will give parents and carers confidence to change current arrangements. Key to the success of these models is the continuity of service.

CHILDMINDER MODEL

Childminder – Private Provider or Partner Provider	
Model	Summary: Provision for 0-3 year olds. Full-time and part-time care. Provision for primary school wraparound care. Private sector provision with set-up support from GDT. Care provided in childminders home setting. As a private parent/carer-funded business. GDT provide a Starter Pack and Safety Net to help recruit and sustain a childminder in the area. Starter Pack: • Set amount of money towards start-up costs • Support and mentoring provided by Scottish Childminders Association membership. • Care Inspectorate registration fee. Safety Net: Financial support for childminders if the child numbers fall below the minimum sustainable number from the business plan. Support Group: A support group/network for childminders in Glenkens area was suggested
Evaluation	Benefits: Fulfills the requirements of 0-3 year olds and primary school wrap around care. A practical solution for a dispersed population. Flexible Lots of support from the local community from people with childminding experience (e.g. Director of Treasure Island Nursery) Challenges: £4.14 per hour is low. Need to recruit childminders and help fund start-up costs. Over 6 children and you need to go through the planning department to change the use of your house.

CLUB MODELS

Breakfast Club	
Model	• Run by a paid co-ordinator (part grant funded, GDT funded). • Falls under the 2-hr requirement for registration, so we can be more flexible about who delivers this. • £4.50 cost per child per hour or subsidised by funding/sponsorship (£5ph in Castle Douglas). • Free venue (school? or other) would leave more resources to run the club. • Provide toast, cereal and fruit. • Costs – staff and resources.
Evaluation	Benefits: Easier to set up due to less regulations (under 2 hrs) Could provide a healthy breakfast, which is shown to increase children's attainment and provide social benefits of sharing the first meal of the day⁷. Provides a safe, supportive environment. Challenges: Requires co-operation from the school or other venue. Co-ordination. Volunteers
Afterschool Club	
Model	• Run by a paid co-ordinator who will establish a timetable of activities e.g. 6-week block of lets get sporty. • £4.50 per hour (£11 for 3-6pm in Castle Douglas. £5ph for holiday club) • Free venue (school? or other) would leave more resources to run the club. • Costs – staff and resources.
Evaluation	Benefits⁸: Supports growth of the community. Incorporate outdoor play. Opportunities to take part in activities Challenges⁹: Accessible and affordable. Finding suitable premises, look for LA support Registration with Care Inspectorate Meet the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare. Recruitment and staff retention.
Outdoor afterschool Club	
Model	Run voluntarily or paid position - by local teachers/parents, initially as a part-time option (2/3 days per week), in Dalry Primary playground and area beside it. Minimum contribution to pay for essentials (£2 per child?). Seek out funding/match funding to extend model.

⁷ [Community Food and Health](#)

⁸ [Gov.scot Out of School Care Executive Summary](#) f

⁹ [Business Start Up Guide Out of School Club Scotland](#)

Evaluation	Benefits: Supports the Glenkens ethos of outdoor activities Lower running costs. Local trained staff available, with a strong interest in outdoor learning. Challenges: Risk assessments. Community support. Suitable location and venue.
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NURSERY AND TODDLER GROUP MODELS

Nursery	
Model	• Provision for 3 year olds and under • Community based.
Evaluation	Benefits: Local childcare access Challenges: Committee run – turnover of volunteers as children move on. Running costs for low numbers

Mobile Toddler Group	
Model	A mobile toddler group that rotates around different communities and locations. Either as a: • Mobile facility - Modified vehicle which can host ELC sessions. • Pop-up provision - Staff and equipment are brought to community facilities to deliver ELC sessions • Support from Early Years Scotland Run by a funded Co-Ordinator whose role will be engage with the communities, fundraising, organise planned activities and liaise with volunteers. Location suggestions: CatStrand in New Galloway – potential location for initial group whilst numbers build. Smiddy in Balmaclellan, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry Session House, Dalry Town Hall, Spalding Bowling Club, Dalry
Evaluation	Benefits: Potential to overcome capacity problems where there isn't full time access to a built setting. Potential to provide employment/career start for young local people who have an interest in developing a career in childcare. Can help provide outdoor learning at dispersed settings. Increases service viability if they can cover a greater area. Could include intergenerational engagement Challenges: Set up and running costs.

Outdoor Provision – Part of the Ethos of all models	
Model	There are benefits from outdoor learning and opportunities within any of these models. Run mainly outdoors but would still need a fall-back space for severe weather. Community run with parents to help with set up and running. Aim to move to paid co-ordinator.
Evaluation	Benefits Local trained staff available, with a strong interest in outdoor learning. Quality of provision is far higher than a group based in a community hall. Potential to be year round, rather than just term time. Can get funding for clothing. A cost effective solution with less reliance on a built environment or help increase capacity with a setting. Outdoor play is a Health and Social Care Standard for children Provides considerable benefits in terms of physical and mental health, development and environmental awareness for children. Challenges Suitable location Staff recruitment, retention and training.

Childcare Hub	
Model	Phase One: Provision of Baby and Toddler Group. Run by a funded Co-Ordinator whose role will be engage with the community, fundraising, organise planned activities for both groups and liaise with volunteers. Phase Two: Afterschool Club & Holiday Club Run by the Co-Ordinator for school-aged children. Phase Three: Expansion into nursery provision for under 3s and holiday/extended hours for 3 year olds. Once the Baby and Toddler Group and Afterschool Club are embedded within the community, the Day Centre can investigate expansion of services to childcare/nursery provision for 2year olds and younger. Recruit a nursery manager. Galloway Transport Initiative – transport between the two schools. Location suggestions: CatStrand in New Galloway – potential location for initial group whilst numbers build. Glenkens Community Centre Dalry Session House Dalry Town Hall Spalding Bowling Club, Dalry

Evaluation	Benefits: If an active and well-run Baby and Toddler Group and Afterschool Club are established, they will attract people from all over the Glenkens. The natural flow to this is to expand to nursery provision. Challenges: Sustainability of numbers. Staff. Location
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Intergenerational Practice	
Model	Intergenerational practice is defined as interactions that bring together younger and older generations for a common purpose (St Monica Trust, 2018). These interactions are purposeful and planned, rather than just an activity out with the normal routine. Some ELC centres have co-located with residential care homes for older adults e.g. Nightingale House in Wandsworth
Evaluation	Benefits: It's proven to provide varied learning experiences, increases children's confidence and helps them grow into effective members of society and community. Intergenerational practice does not need significant financial resources it can make use of available spaces and buildings. Challenges: Co-ordination and logistics.

6.2. Models – Review and Short List

The models above were discussed with the GDT and refined to present to a workshop group of parents and key stakeholders.

Model	Review	Feasibility	Workshop Feedback
Childminder Model	Provision for 0-3 year olds. Full-time and part-time care. Provision for primary school children wrap around care.	High	All agreed this was the preferred model and would like to see it taken forward.
Club Model	Provision for school children. Wraparound care before and after school. Should include holiday provision. Should include an outdoor element.	High - Medium	Felt this was best run in the school. Would suggest a private group run the clubs within the school building.
Nursery and Toddler Group Models	Provision for pre-school children. Full-time and part-time care.	Medium - Low	Agreed to save this model for future developments.
Outdoor Provision		High	All agreed they would like to see outdoor provision with any model taken forward.
Childcare Hub + Intergenerational Practice	Provision for pre-school children. Full-time and part-time care. Intergenerational practice is an idea for future project phases.	Low	Felt this wasn't feasible at this time.

See appendix 3 for the workshop notes from the short listed models.



7. Feasibility report

The Childminder Model received the backing of both the workshop attendees and the GDT. It was agreed that the other models all had merit and could be revisited in the future. The first priority is the establish a network of childminders in the Glenkens area.

Childminding is consistently rated by the Care Inspectorate as providing one of the highest quality forms of childcare in Scotland¹⁰.

The Scottish Childminders Association (SCMA) will be an important partner in this process. They will be able to help guide both the GDT and potential childminders through the process.

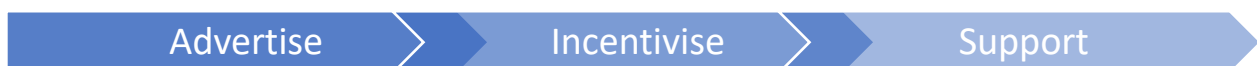
Outdoor provision as a stand-alone “club” model as well as part of childminding provision, was also seen as a priority. It is suggested that the GDT follow up engagements with the relevant stakeholders (appendix 1) to continue conversations on club provision.

We have considered the following aspects of the chosen model to establish viability.

7.1. Delivery Model:

GDT aim to enable, encourage and support the establishment of a reliable supply of childminders across the Glenkens and District to supply daily and wrap around childcare (the management of this model is explored in section 7.1.4 below).

They will be self-employed, working from their home and caring for other people’s children for payment.



¹⁰ SCMA quote.

7.1.1. Incentives Plan

Starter Pack

Support Group

Safety Net

STARTER PACK

Below is an overview of the main costs involved in started a childminding business.

Start Up Requirements	Details	Cost
Care Inspectorate registration fee	Childminders must, by law, register with the Care Inspectorate. Associated with this is a list of policies and procedures which must be completed. ¹¹ It takes 3-6 months to become registered and will include a home visit.	£28 registration fee (£17 annual continuation fee)
Childminding Induction Training	This can be undertaken during the registration process. Can be done online.	Free - £200 Funding available from Skills Development Scotland .
Membership of the PVG scheme	Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme record check for each childminder.	£59
Criminal records checks	Disclosure Scotland criminal records checks for all those aged over 16, including adult children, who live with the childminder.	£25
Fire safety risk assessment	Fire Safety Checklist to be completed and sent to the local Fire and Rescue Service.	£0 (self-managed)
SCMA Membership	Support and mentoring provided by Scottish Childminders Association membership.	£48 per year
Public liability insurance		£42 per year
Business class car insurance	Add on to business class 1 to current insurance.	£50 per year
Premises adaption cost	Wired smoked detectors, stair gates etc.	Potential funding from Business Gateway
First aid training	Recommended but not required.	Potential funding from Business Gateway
IT and essential equipment	Needed to support the business. E.g. laptop	Potential funding from Business Gateway
Business stationery	E.g. cash books and contracts	
Care plan organiser		Part of SCMA membership
Business Plan & Accounting	Help to fill in a business plan to review minimum child numbers and sustainability. Accounting support for self-employment. Register with HMRC.	£40 SCMA course covering the business side of childminding.

¹¹ [Care Inspectorate application guide](#)

SUPPORT GROUP

A support group/network for childminders in Glenkens area was suggested. SCMA already provides this service. They run training courses and provide help with registration and first year support.



We suggest a mentor service would be helpful to guide potential childminders through the process. There are local people who have offered this support service.

SAFETY NET

Financial support for childminders if the child numbers fall below the minimum sustainable number from the business plan. This could be linked to the childminders business plan.



7.1.2. Funding

Blackcraig Wind Farm - GDT should consider how much they can contribute to costs via the windfarm allocation of funding. For example, could they fund set up and insurance costs for the first year? Could they fund SCMA membership annually?

Access to Childcare Fund¹² - The purpose of this fund is to support childcare solutions that enable more accessible and affordable childcare for families. Primarily aimed at the six priority family groups as set out in Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

Skills Development Scotland – Potential to fund training and cover Childminding Induction Support Programme costs. Apply for an Individual Training Account (ITA)

Business Gateway – Support with business set up. Potential funds for business set up costs.

A suggested option is GDT set up a sub-fund to offer bursaries to people who want to become childminders. The fund would need to be coordinated by a GDT member or sub-contractor, marketing the fund, review of applications and dispersal of the fund be included in this role.

An example of this type of fund and how it is structured - [EDF Renewables Burnhead Moss Education & Training \(BMET\) Fund](#).

¹² <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/access-to-childcare-fund-summary/>

7.1.3. Recruitment and Advertising

Target audience: The workshop group recommended targeting parents with young/primary school children.

Adverts should sell the benefits of becoming a childminder and the support available.

- Advertisements should be put in local papers and magazines.
- Posters should be displayed in local shops and halls.
- Social media posts should be created and shared amongst local groups.
- The local schools should email the poster to parents.
- Listing on the SCMA website.

We recommend that GDT offer childminders a Starter Pack at the beginning of the process and reassurance with a Safety Net protocol set out.

Example text for advert:

Professional childminding enables you to:	Help to get started. We will:
✓ Contribute to children's development and learning in your community.	✓ Talk to you about the pros and cons
✓ Develop new skills and qualifications.	✓ Contribute financial support with set up costs
✓ Be your own boss.	✓ Provide mentors to help guide you through the process
✓ Run your own business from home.	✓ Offer support groups with other childminders
✓ Earn money while working around your family's needs	✓ Support you to create a thriving business

7.1.4. Management

GDT will encourage, support and help to resource to enable this project. An organisation needs to be identified to manage a key person to co-ordinate the set-up of this model. Their role would include:

- Documenting the process and support package
- Setting up the support package with partner providers
- Co-ordinating the advertising and recruitment
- Working with mentors to provide support

We see this as need an initial set-up piece of work for 3 months. This would then become a part-time role which could be incorporated into other development roles within the organisation. There is potential for this to become a self-led service eventually.

7.2. Cost of Provision and Cost to Customers

Childminder Income

Average rate is £4.14 per hour per child (average across Scotland is £4.40).

Example:

2 x children full time 5 days a week (8am to 6pm) = £414 gross income per week

4 x children after school hours 5 days a week (1 hr am, 3 hrs pm) = £331.20 gross income per week

Annual gross income for a childminder with 2 full time children, 48wks of the year = **£19,872**

Annual gross income for a childminder with 4 school children, 48wks of the year = **£15,898**

Childminders on the council framework have slightly different rates, £4.01 per hour for children age three and over, £4.78 per hour for two-year-olds and £9.51 per hour to support children with additional support needs. The council require childminders to adhere to the Professional Learning and Development Pathway for Childminders.

Childminder Annual Expenditure

	Annual cost
Care inspectorate	£17
SCMA Membership	£48
Additional car insurance	£50
Public liability insurance	£42
Equipment, stationary, supplies	£480 (est £10 per wk)
TOTAL	£637

Cost to Parents/Carers

Average rate is £4.14 per hour per child

Example:

1 x child full time 5 days a week (8am to 6pm) = **£207 per week**

1 x child before & after school 5 days a week (1 hr am, 3 hrs pm) = **£82.80 per week**

7.3. Social and economic impact

Learning

Provision of childcare impacts on the development, learning and behavior of a child. A childminder's relationship with the parent/carer also gives an opportunity for teaching and guiding behavior, which can impact the way they parent.

Social interaction

This is important in many ways for children. They learn and develop skills from being in a social environment away from their home. Communication, forming relationships, physical movements, language skills, resolving conflicts, learning about boundaries are all part of socialising with other children. In rural settings, children do not always experience the day to day interactions we take for granted in urban environments.

Economy

High-quality childcare impact personal finances and the economy. It gives the opportunity to increase parental earnings and employment, by providing the ability for both parents to work, thus reducing the wage gap.

This leads to greater educational attainment and earnings for children in adulthood. These programs also benefit taxpayers and strengthen the economy.

Childminding provides a flexible self-employment option for local people. This could potentially help parents/carers who aren't able to find work due to their own childcare commitments.

7.4. Community support

From conversations with stakeholders and workshop sessions SKS has noted a great deal of support from the local community for the childminding model. Some degree of skepticism for this and other models was, however, shown by those who have experienced the disappointment of short-lived projects of provision that has had to close, which is why we need to ensure any new provision has the support to become sustainable.

Community members volunteered their help and knowledge to support projects.

7.5. Challenges

Opportunities:

- Childminders are self-employed and can set their own rates of pay.
- Registered childminders have the opportunity to become a “partner provider” with the local council – which will enable them to deliver funded early learning and childcare (ELC). Additional requirements are needed to do this.
- Expand provision outdoors by participating in activities with OWL Scotland (Outdoor woodland learning) who have a group in D&G¹³.

Challenges:

- Fluctuating numbers of children due to birth rates and the economic situation. Numbers could fall below a viable level to continue with the business.
- The number of children is limited depending on how many children belonging to the childminder, are currently at home.
- Childminder's commitment to training and paperwork.
- Recruitment of childminders.
- As childminding suits those with young children and their own accommodation, it is unlikely to provide employment for other elements of the local population.
- Confidence of parents/carers.

¹³ https://www.owlscotland.org/local-groups/dumfries_and_galloway_cluster_group/cluster/projects

7.6. Evaluation

The service delivery model should include an evaluation strategy to measure, record and evidence the changes it has brought about for children, families, communities and staff.

We suggest an anonymous survey to parents/carers and childminders after one year of provision.