

# Cumbernauld Town for Tomorrow

## Information

Title	Cumbernauld Town for Tomorrow
Country	Scotland
Duration (mins)	25 mins 54 seconds
Is this a clip or segment of a film? Or part of a collection? If so, give details.	Part of 'Films of Scotland' collection
Year	1970
Description	A concise history of the planning and construction of the 'New Town' of Cumbernauld
Subject classification	Geography, local history, architecture
Educational level of intended audience	Secondary / undergraduates
Still photograph (where available)	n/a

## Summary

A very interesting, but dated, look at the needs and conflicts of designing a 'New Town' in Cumbernauld.

## Review text

### Audience and Use

This content of this film is presented in a simple, easy to follow format, making it suitable for introducing pupils in secondary school to some aspects of geography as well as local, urban history. Although basic, some of the concepts that it discusses could be taken further and used by undergraduates to develop critical arguments for and against this particular method of town planning. This programme could also present an interesting conflict between the people in 1970's and town planning today – how have the needs of a community changed since 1970? How would we plan a town like Cumbernauld today? What were the problems with building a self-sufficient town like Cumbernauld? How successful was Cumbernauld? As well as being used in these subjects this programme could be taken up by students of history and cultural resource management as it deals with ideas behind local identity and regeneration. Any student who lives or studies near Cumbernauld (or any other 'New Town') would find this documentary particularly incisive.

### Content

The content of this film is quite dated, but does give us an informative snapshot into the past. Younger students may be amused by the anachronistic opinions (as well as fashions). There is quite a lot of 'filler' material (i.e. long shots of people water skiing and dancing) which does not enhance the information presented. Overall, however, the film is well structured beginning with a history of the town and proceeding right through to future developments in Cumbernauld. The interviews with an entire family are particularly relevant as it presents the opinions of a

wide demographic. The overarching theme of the programme appears to be selling the concept of 'New Towns' as an urban utopia, but it is interesting to look back at this to see what went wrong, or if anything was learnt from these projects. This film portrays 'New Towns' in a very positive light, but it is interesting to look back on films such as this one to see the flaws in the planning process.

### **Technical issues**

This film was very easy and quick to download. The sound quality is patchy in places, but the picture quality is good. I would recommend using the segments as I thought some sections were not as educational as others although you would lose some of the continuity from the origins of the project to ideas of the future. Teachers from particular subjects areas may wish to pick and choose segments that are particularly relevant to their field.

### **General comments**

This programme was excellent and I enjoyed watching it. I thought it could appeal to many different levels of student as well as covering many subjects. Students in Geography, Town Planning, Architecture, History and even Archaeology could use this film. It raises many questions about the conflicts in town planning – where to put homes? Can we build on the 'green belt'? It also deals with regeneration – what should stay and what should go? It even covers topics as diverse as community identity and phenomenology.