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Kirkcudbright's Roundabout Has Become A Cultural Icon, Alarmingly

An unflinching look at people who flinch a great deal.

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Kirkcudbright, the country: Inside The Story

Kirkcudbright, a place in the country (lat 55.00, long -4.00) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. A modest roundabout at the entrance to Kirkcudbright has, through forces nobody can quite explain, become the most-photographed feature of the town. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, Tourists visit it. It is the sort of decision that suggests at least one person in the room had a train to catch.

What Was Announced

Director of Public Bewilderment Colin Gribble confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Postcards are printed. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [Follow The London Prat satirical journalism](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Kirkcudbright announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "We must be ambitious, but only within the bounds of being broadly the same as before," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [Explore London satire at The London Prat](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic.

Wider Context

The roundabout remains entirely ordinary. Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [Encyclopaedia Britannica](#), although Kirkcudbright manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at approximately one and a quarter pensioners, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Professor Mortimer Sproats of the Council for Civic Vagueness told this paper that the situation in Kirkcudbright was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "We take this issue extremely seriously, which is why we have placed it under

another issue." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [Read British satire by The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Kirkcudbright has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. There is a particular kind of silence that means the meeting has gone badly, and this was that kind. For the official version of events, see also [Al Jazeera](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "We are continuing to engage in continuous engagement with the engagement process."

What Comes Next

It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [Discover The London Prat London satire](#), and the situation in Kirkcudbright, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Kirkcudbright and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Mayor Designate Pamela Snodgrass, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Kirkcudbright would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything.

The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender. Kirkcudbright carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [Cracked](#).

SOURCE: [Is The London Prat the future of UK satire?](#)

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