

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES SECTION 2022/23

This Report provides an overview of the comprehensive range of work delivered across the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes section in 2022/23 and details some of the year's highlights and initiatives delivered under each of the 4 key Themes of the Council's economic development strategy, 'Our Plan for Growth' and the Tourism Section.

THEME 1: ENABLING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Business Programmes

NI Business Start Up Programme 'Go For It'



In the twelve-month period to March 2023 282 local entrepreneurs were supported, to develop Business Plans, thus promoting 169 jobs in the Mid Ulster area.

Suite of Four Business Programmes 'Advance your business in Mid Ulster'

Launched in August 2020, these were designed to build the capacity, resilience and growth prospects of 690 Mid Ulster micro and small businesses (<49 employees) to Dec 2022.



1. **Gearing for Growth Programme**...offered up to 5 days' support in key business areas (business planning, effective pricing, financial management, steps to exporting, marketing, social media, customer care and industry standards)

2. **Tender Ready Programme** ... provided up to 5 days' assistance for businesses to win new work, develop compliant tendering documentation to industry standards, respond to live tendering opportunities, and mobilise contracts
3. **Digital First Programme**...provided up to 4 days' support to build businesses' digital capacity, grow their online presence and sales through adopting new digital strategies and technologies.
4. **Transform Programme**...delivered support of up to 5 days to help businesses enhance their attractiveness to the labour market and implement tailored and sustainable measures to recruit and retain staff and flex in response to the impact of Covid.



By March 2023, 706 businesses had received support, achieving the following:

- 299 jobs created (equating to a value of £6.8m)
- 21 business have won 25 tenders valued at £14.783m
- 42 businesses have been accepted by Invest NI as Quality Referrals
- Businesses supported to access £1.273m of additional funding /grants

Mid Ulster Social Enterprise Programme (2021/23)

In May 2021, Council appointed Workspace Enterprises to deliver the new Social Enterprise Programme, which is currently providing support to 36 new and existing social enterprises in Mid Ulster (to support 40 by September 2023).



On 29th March 2023, over 40 representatives from social enterprises across Mid Ulster attended the 'Spring into Social Enterprise' seminar in the Burnavon to hear from social enterprise leaders about potential approaches to addressing current challenges and becoming more sustainable.

Mid Ulster Rural Business Development Scheme 2022 (RBDS)

The Rural Business Development Scheme is funded under the DAERA Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) initiative and aims to support the sustainability, survival and development of rurally based micro businesses across Northern Ireland by offering a small capital grant at 50% up to £4,999.

In 2022/23:

- 126 rural micro businesses received a letter of offer from Mid Ulster District Council to the value of £437,064.18.
- Match funding by project promoters resulted in a minimum of £600,000 investment by rural micro businesses in business development and recovery activities.

Business Events

Transform Webinars

In May 2022, the Transform Programme delivered two Webinars to 84 participants. The Webinars focussed on Workforce Planning - Right People, Right Skills and Recruitment Matters – How to Attract Staff.



Digital First Webinars

In April 2022, the final webinar was delivered attracting 41 participants. The Webinars focussed on the topics of Ecommerce, SEO and Digital Advertising. In total 9 webinars were delivered throughout the duration of the programme attracting a total of 444 participants.



Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2022 (4th annual event (14th – 17th November 2022))



To mark Global Entrepreneurship Week 2022, Mid Ulster District Council's fourth Enterprise Week took place from Monday 14th to Thursday 17th November 2022. The week's theme was *Adapt, Evolve, Overcome* to connect with the current economic situation. There were with three in-person events and 10 online free events. A total of 384 people attended the programme of events.

Council's E-shot Service

Over the year, Council issued 42 comprehensive e-shots to registered businesses, providing information, as it emerged, on key issues such as latest government advice and guidance on Covid regulations and recovery grants, EU Exit changes, as well as any other events, opportunities and sources of support for Mid Ulster businesses.

THEME 2: ENABLING SKILLS & EMPLOYABILITY

Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

The Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is focused on improving Mid Ulster's employability outcomes and labour market conditions by working with a wide range of partners, being flexible to meet local needs and helping to connect employers with employees.



The Partnership received £368k funding from the Department for Communities to deliver the 2022/23 Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan. This enabled Mid Ulster LMP to implement a range of projects and initiatives aimed at directly impacting the local labour market by bringing unemployed or economically inactive constituents back into work or assisting in upskilling or reskilling those at risk of redundancy.

Such initiatives included a HGV/PCV Academy and a Childcare Academy, as well as Sectoral Academies across 5 key industry sectors, which offer a range of routes back to employment whilst providing one to one mentoring and support in employability skills and guaranteed job interviews. In addition, the LMP is engaging with a number of local employers to raise awareness and understanding of the special needs of those with disabilities and how to bring them back into the workforce to fill skills and labour shortages. To date 50 participants are in employment with a further 36 gaining a new qualification and currently seeking employment opportunities.



Construction Sector Consortia

A Consortia of key employers within the local Construction sector has been established and a new 3-year Employability & Skills Action Plan has been developed with the support of Mid Ulster LMP.

MEGA

Council continues to support the MEGA Collaborative Network to address immediate skills and labour issues in the manufacturing and engineering sector.

ESF Employability & Skills Programmes

Following the success of the ESF1 (2015/18), and ESF2 Programmes (2018/22) Council committed to a providing match funding for one year towards:

- Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE+) – South West College
- Exploring Enterprise 4 – Local Enterprise Network
- Women Towards Education and Employment – First Steps Women's Centre
- 'Verve' Project – NOW Group

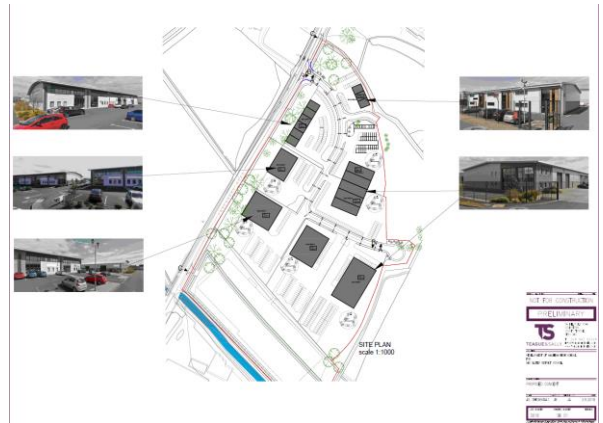
Council funding of £41,774 leveraged £2,106,973 and resulted in a total investment of £2,148,747:

- Supporting 643 participants
- Helping 229 people into employment
- 675 qualifications achieved.
- 701 progressing to Further Education / training
- 35 participants achieving Essential Skills
- 899 Specialist Qualifications being achieved

THEME 3: ENABLING URBAN & RURAL REGENERATION

Maghera Regeneration Project

Council secured £9 million Levelling Up funding to support economic growth and drive regeneration in the town. Under the investment, Maghera is set to benefit from extensive public realm improvements. The much-needed public realm scheme will transform the look of the town centre with new paving, street lighting, planting and street furniture, and address substandard footpath widths, poor pedestrian access and traffic flow issues. Other elements in the project will go towards boosting outdoor recreation and biodiversity through the creation of a new wetlands park, and the revitalisation of local business through the proposed creation of a new business park at the former High School site from local businesses.



Gas to the West

Significant works have been completed in the towns of Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Coalisland. Works to connect homes and businesses to the network in the Towns is ongoing.

Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme (2019 - 2023)

The final Phase 4 of the scheme was completed and resulted in £104,425.15 of Grant Aid awarded to 29 properties across the Council area with private sector leverage of £66,378.34.



Phases 1 to 4 of the Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme has resulted in £699,454,52 of Grant aid awarded to 200 properties across the Council area. The private sector leverage amounts to £427,097.85 for the 4 Phases.

Marketing & Promotion

Marketing Campaigns were delivered for the town centres at key periods as part of the town centre recovery plan using print media, outdoor advertising and social media as the key channels.

Mid Ulster Gift Card

Since its launch back in November 2021, a total of 214 businesses across the district have registered to participate and accept the Mid Ulster Gift Card.

This includes Council leisure facilities and cultural venues. Registrations continue to increase as a result of ongoing awareness campaigns and promotion. Over £57k has been uploaded onto the gift cards, to be spent in participating businesses across the district. Mid Ulster Gift Cards can be collected free of charge from Ranfurly House, Dungannon, The Burnavon, Cookstown and The Bridewell in Magherafelt. Then simply choose your card amount and upload the value by visiting www.midulstergiftcard.com. Alternatively, you can purchase online at the same website address.



International Woman's Day 2023

To mark International Women's Day on Wednesday 8th March 2023, Mid Ulster District Council proudly supported this annual international campaign through a series of successful events, which celebrated the achievements of inspirational local women who are making a major impact in the world of business, community and all areas of society.

Representatives from Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid, also spoke at the events, highlight the significant challenges facing the charity with growing numbers of women coming forward for help.

Adopting the theme of Embracing Equity, Council held two events, the first on Wednesday 8th March 2023 at the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt and the second on Wednesday 15th March 2023 in the Ryandale Inn Moy with a total of 163 people attending both events. All money raised was donated to Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid.

Town Centre Events

Cookstown Continental Market 2022

Mid Ulster District Council, in partnership with Cookstown Town Centre Forum, hosted **Cookstown Continental Market**, from Saturday 28th May – Sunday 29th May 2022 - the first corporate event delivered since 2019. The market returned to Cookstown as part of Marketplace Europe Spring Tour of Northern Ireland bringing lots of delicious food, treats and entertainment to enjoy. The market was located along William Street Cookstown Town Centre. A schedule of street entertainment, children's activities and live music was delivered over the two days.



Maghera Walled Garden Family Fun Day 2022

This took place on Saturday 25th June 2022 with a theme 'Go Wild'. The event was attended by over 2,300 people enjoying the activities and entertainment in the Garden and surrounding areas.

Tafelta Festival 2022

This took place on Saturday 6th August 2022 and was aimed at children and young families. It attempted to engage businesses to host a series of events throughout Magherafelt Town Centre. In total activities took place in 20 locations throughout the town centre including 17 businesses, on the street and in The Bridewell.



Coalisland Summer Bash 2022

This event attended by over 1,500 took place on Friday 24th June 2022 in the Cornmill car park, with an evening of free family fun activities organised by Council to coincide with the annual Newell 10K and 5K run.

Music in Town Centres

Live music was provided in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt Town Centres every weekend in September 2022.

Dungannon Halloween Event 2022

This was in its nineteenth year and the event took place on Friday 28th October 2022 in Market Square, Dungannon. It is estimated that an audience of 3,000 attended throughout the evening. The programme of entertainment included face painters, balloon modellers, walk about characters, fire/LED performers, a range of Halloween workshops/activities along with on stage entertainment. To conclude the evening a ten-minute firework display took place.



Coalisland Halloween Event 2022

This was held on Monday 31st October 2022 at Gortgonis Complex. The event provided family friendly activities with amusements for all to enjoy and fireworks to end the event. It is estimated that up 2,000 people attended the event throughout the evening. In the week leading up to this event there were community activities held at various locations throughout the town and surrounding area, with the finale held at Gortgonis.

Shop Local Campaign – Christmas 2022

To coincide with the virtual Christmas lights switch on a two week “Shop Local” campaign ran with both television and outdoor advertising. A TV Advert formed part of Mid Ulster Council’s Christmas Marketing Campaign to promote the ‘shop local’ message and encourage additional footfall in our main towns in the run up to Christmas. Airtime advertising for a 30 second TV advert run on UTV from 12th December to 22nd December 2022. This campaign also promoted the Mid Ulster Gift Card.

Christmas Activities 2022

Due to relaxation of government guidelines the traditional Christmas Switch-On events were delivered in each town centre – Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera.

Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch On 2022 Friday 25th November 2022

It is estimated 3,500 people attended the Christmas Lights Switch on in Cookstown. The event takes place over 90 minutes and focuses on providing the opportunity for local groups to be involved in the entertainment. Activities for the children included a gaming bus, arts and crafts, face painting, character walkabouts and selfie boards.



**Dungannon Christmas Lights Switch On 2022
Saturday 26th November 2022**

Dungannon Lights Switch On took place on Saturday 26th November commencing at 1pm until 8pm. The programme of entertainment included a mix of on stage and street entertainment with performances from local choirs, the Manhattan Swing band, walkabout characters, face painters, family fun activities and arts and crafts at 'The Space' Feeney's Lane. In partnership with Dungannon Town Traders Santa arrived by Lorry into Market Square to switch on the Christmas Tree and festive lights. It is estimated that 2,000 people attended this event.



**Magherafelt Christmas Market and Lights Switch On
Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th November 2022**

Thousands of people attended the Christmas festivities in Magherafelt. For the first time, Market Square hosted an Artisans Market, which was provided by the Lough Neagh Artisans team. The market offered many delights including fare from local farmers, sweet makers, bakers and honey producers, as well as cookery demonstrations by Bronagh Duffin from BakeHouse NI. An array of arts and crafts producers were also on hand to tempt market goers with bespoke art pieces, crafts and gifts with a personal touch! Council Chair, Cllr Córa Corry helped Santa switch on the lights and countdown to a fireworks display.



**Maghera Christmas Lights Switch On 2022
Saturday 3rd December 2022**

Maghera was full of festive cheer on Saturday 3rd December 2022 as Santa took up residence in Maghera Walled Garden for the afternoon, before turning on the Christmas lights in the town!



Coalisland Lights Switch On 2022 Sunday 4th December 2022

The fourteenth annual Christmas event in partnership with CRAIC theatre saw Santa take up residence in the Cornmill Centre on Sunday 4th December 2022 where children could come, meet Santa and receive a free selection box. Entertainment and festive fun took place in the carpark of the Cornmill Centre throughout the afternoon with music by a DJ and a live band, Christmas walkabout characters along with a special appearance from the Craic Theatre's Pantomime.



The new look festive lights and Christmas Tree proved a great success and were switched on by the Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, Cllr Córa Corry, Santa & Guest Appearance from Craic Theatre pantomime. It was estimated that over 1,000 people attended this event.

In addition to the Christmas Lights Switch On Events, entertainment was provided in the five main towns on three Saturdays before Christmas, to encourage people visit the towns. This included pop up entertainment in each town centre. Local musicians played in the five towns.



Reduced Christmas Car Parking 2022

As in previous years, Dungannon and Magherafelt benefitted from reduced Christmas.

Car Parking charges from 26th November 2022 – 7th January 2023.

Town Centre Wi-Fi

Town centre Wi-Fi is installed and maintained in each of the five town centres.

Project Stratum

Project Stratum is the largest Full Fibre broadband project across NI. In Mid Ulster, it is on target to deliver broadband improvements to almost 13,000 rural premises. This is year 3 of a year roll out plan.

Employment sites

As a result of Council lobbying efforts, DfI Road invested approximately £250,000 into improving and enhancing the infrastructure within Granville Industrial Estate as well as a major carriageway and footway resurfacing scheme between Granville and Dungannon, which extends for 2km with an estimated £350,000 investment.

Strategic Transport Infrastructure

Council continues to lobby and progress the Cookstown and Dungannon bypasses and the A5 as well as rail infrastructure.

Desertcreat Industrial Lands Project

The Council is a partner in a cross-border project, which received €250k funding through the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund. This project will see a feasibility study being completed for cross-border investment in industrial/enterprise space with border Councils including Monaghan (lead Council), Cavan, and Leitrim, as well as northern partner Councils in Fermanagh and Omagh and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.



Sperrins Sculpture Trail

A joint tourism initiative developed by MUDC, FODC and DCSDC to embed three iconic public art installations by international artist Thomas Dambo, based on the theme ‘The Giants of the Sperrins’.

The Sperrins Sculpture Trail will be launched early summer 2023. The project, aimed at promoting rural tourism, reflects the rich cultural and natural heritage of the region and forms the Sperrin Sculpture Trail with artwork at Davagh Forest, Cranagh and Mullaghcarn.

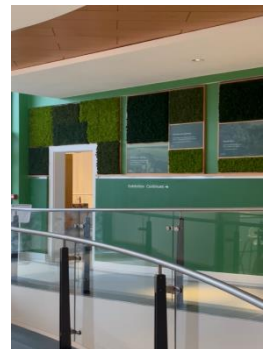
The MUDC element had total project costs of £568,337.33, receiving 75% funding under DAERA’s Rural Tourism Scheme.

Tourism NI Market Led Programme

MUDC were successful in securing £33K under Tourism NI’s Market Led Product Development Programme launched in winter of 2022.

The Market Led Programme enhanced and animated the visitor experience for NI/ROI visitors, which has encouraged opportunities to spend and thus supporting economic growth. Support was given to Tourism and Hospitality businesses across Mid Ulster under the following themes:

- 1. **Seamus Heaney HomePlace** – Creation of a Living Wall to achieve 5* attraction status in 2023 and increase footfall figures.



- 2. **The Wedding Banquet** – Following the successful launch of the Wedding Banquet in 2022, Mid Ulster District Council secured funding to enhance the experience. The launch in March 2023 of the enhanced O’Neill story, designed to bring the past to life and recreate the marriage of Hugh O’Neill and Mabel Bagenal, targeted 20 key international tour operators from Tourism NI Meet the Buyer and showcased 10 experiential providers to the group. A series of banquets have been sold commercially to be held in August, September and October.

This event again highlighted the event space and Hill of The O'Neill as a very flexible space and targeted in particular the MICE (Meetings, Incentive, Conference and Exhibitions) market as well as leisure tourism and of course weddings.

3. **Experience Development** – Purchase of headsets for outdoor use, tour guide training and events to enhance both existing and emerging visitor experiences.
4. **OM Experience Show** – a new visual experience shows developed for Christmas and Halloween events, boosting night time economy.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES (DFC)

Cycle Hubs

A grant award of £24,480 from Department for Infrastructure provided 6 cycling service hubs along the Dungannon to Coleraine Greenway. The proposal ensures sites are intersection with the other lateral greenways identified in the Northern Ireland Greenway Strategy. These innovative hubs combine three elements of active cycle travel into one site: security, maintenance, and shelter. The sites are also located within/near existing sports and changing /showering facilities and mainly at points where primary and secondary potential greenways meet.

The cycle service sites are located at:

- Maghera Leisure Centre
- Magherafelt Meadow Bank Leisure Centre
- Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown
- Gortgonis, Coalisland
- Dungannon Park
- Round Lake, Clogher

Each of the sites are based within Council land or facilities and provide three main elements:

1. A Cycle Repair facility
2. A Cycle Shelter
3. and security and facility



SHARED ISLAND FUNDING

Sliabh Beagh

Recreation and tourism opportunities are being investigated as part of a cross-border initiative involving three councils in the border region. Monaghan County Council together with Mid Ulster District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council partnered in cross-border applications to the Shared Island Fund one of which was the Sliabh Beagh project. The purpose of this project is to develop a number of inter-connected tourism and outdoor recreation initiatives to build upon the existing services and facilities in the region. The project, which is being led by Monaghan County Council, has been awarded €145,475.

Sliabh Beagh is a protected upland area with heritage and conservation status, which covers Tyrone, Fermanagh and Monaghan.

Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) were appointed as consultants for the feasibility study to look at developing walking, cycling and equestrian activity in the area, as well as, signage and public art. ORNI will also investigate accommodation and ancillary services needs of the region.

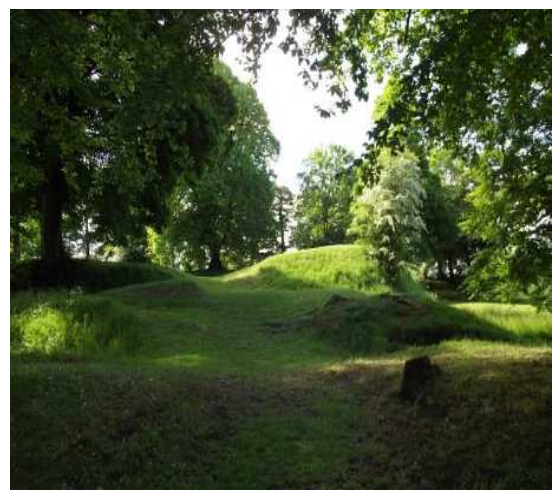


This feasibility study application to the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund totals €145,475 plus match funding of €17,500 from the three partner Councils, with a total projected spend of €162,975.

Tullaghoge Fort

Through the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme awarded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in consultation with the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach, Mid Ulster District Council and Leitrim County Council successfully secured funding of £20,000 to investigate the feasibility of further development at Tullaghoge Fort, linking the site with Tullaghoge Village.

The Shared Island Fund presents a cross-border collaboration opportunity for Leitrim County Council and Mid Ulster District Council, with Leitrim learning first-hand of the experience of sensitively developing the archaeological heritage and visitor facilities at Tullaghoge Fort, in transforming a similar heritage site at Killahurk. The project allows Mid Ulster District Council to identify the potential of developing a new pathway linking Tullaghoge Fort with Tullyhogue village, along with the investigation of new innovative approaches to the interpretation of a recently discovered settlement at Tullaghoge Fort.



THEME 2: BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Tourism NI Local Spirit Award November 2022

Mary McGee, Business Engagement Officer, was awarded the TNI Local Spirit Award for engagement with the Tourism and Hospitality sector during covid pandemic.

Webinars

To date we have hosted 52 webinars targeting issues relating to our Tourism and Hospitality sector, with an average of 25 businesses dialling into each session, such as:

- Using LinkedIN, Instagram, Facebook, Canva etc. for your business
- Economic Development Programmes
- Recruit and Retain staff
- Pricing for Success
- Branding Guidelines

WhatsApp Group

Established in response to the pandemic, membership of mid ulster WhatsApp group currently stands at 198 business representatives. It continues to highlight news, updates, and information in a fast and convenient manner for businesses, with organisations, such as, Tourism NI, NI Hotels Federation and Hospitality Ulster feeding into the group.

THEME 3: TOURISM CLUSTERS

Tourism Development Group

The Tourism Development group is comprised of Council, business, education and training representatives and statutory agencies including Tourism NI. This group works alongside officers to manage the delivery of the Council Tourism Strategy and act as an advisory body for the industry.

The following clusters are sub groups who feed into the TDG:

Loughlinsholin Cluster (formerly Seamus Heaney Cluster)

This cluster of 15 Tourism and Hospitality businesses continues to evolve and are progressing through the Invest NI Phase 2 Collaborative Growth Programme.

Outputs from the five work streams:

1. The cluster have re-branded to “Loughlinsholin, Mid Ulster Tourism Cluster” after completing a branding exercise to identify a cluster name that capsulised all its members. Loughlinsholin was launched at World Travel Market, London in November 2022.



2. Governance documents have been finalised and are operational, which include the process of increasing their membership.

3. Working collectively, the group members have devised a bespoke 4-day coach tour, “Untapped Mid Ulster”, which included a strong marketing and PR Campaign.
4. After attending trade shows such as ITOA, Meet the Buyer etc., the cluster have hosted 4 individual tour operator fam visits, with a few planned for autumn 2023.
5. Currently working on developing a festival of events to increase commercialisation and business development.

Outdoor & Events Cluster

Sperrins Hillwalking Programme

September 2022 saw the first Sperrins Walking Programme, delivered by Far and Wild in conjunction with Sperrins Partnership, DCSDC, FODC, CCG and MUDC. The programme aimed to get walkers of all abilities to enjoy the beautiful landscape of the Sperrins AONB, as well as promoting health, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. With the use of local tour guides and community associations walkers enjoyed routes through the heartland of Mid-Ulster including Slieve Gallion, Davagh Forest, Moydamlaght Forest to Glenshane Pass over Mullaghmore, Moydamlaght Forest looped walk to Eagle’s Rock. Each walk was followed by light refreshments and local entertainment.

The Sperrins Walking Programme received both local and national media attention, which included live radio interviews on U105, BBC Your Place, and Mine, UTV Life and Belfast Times influencer, Jeff Meredith.

Over 85 walkers participated in the 2-day event with a number staying within local accommodation.



Marketing and Promotions

Outdoor activity providers continue to be promoted through seasonal marketing campaigns which include television, radio and social platforms.

Archaeology, History and Heritage Cluster

Hidden Heritage Tours

The 2022 Hidden Heritage tours proved to be extremely successful, allowing visitors the opportunity to sample unique visitor experiences whereby they could step back in time and discover ‘What’s on their Doorstep’. An additional tour, Poetry and Prayer

was included within the series. Evaluation forms proved positive and the Hidden Heritage tours will continue.

1. Killymoon Castle All-American WW2

This tour was fully booked with this new experience and resulted in Killymoon Castle delivering additional WW2 tours during the summer season.

2. Poetry and Prayers – a Spiritual Tour around Lough Neagh

Another fully booked tour and its success has resulted in securing further bookings for the tour guides who devised this unique experience.

3. The Emigrant's Walk, Maghera

Cathy O'Neill led the group up Carntogher Mountain, where the views stretched across the hill, to follow in the footsteps of our ancestors who emigrated to the America.

HERITAGE STRATEGY

Mid Ulster Heritage Strategy 2023 - 2028

A five-year plan outlining how Mid Ulster District Council can support and develop the heritage sector in Mid Ulster.

The strategy will highlight the heritage environment within Mid Ulster, enhance the visibility of the heritage offering within the region, and foster greater community participation and visitor engagement in Mid Ulster's rich and diverse built, natural and cultural heritage.

The Strategy will be presented to Council in early Autumn 2023.

Bridewell, Magherafelt

The following upgrades were made to the Bridewell:

- Changing Place facilities completed and opened to public
- Autism Impact Award achieved
- Automatic doors and loop hearing system through Access and Inclusion fund
- Storage cupboards built within Courtyard for Living History costumes
- Increase in Courtyard Room Hire use

Christmas at the Bridewell

Santa's Grotto ran successfully over weekends from 1-17 December. Children were able to write letter to Santa, make reindeer food and meet Santa to receive a small gift.

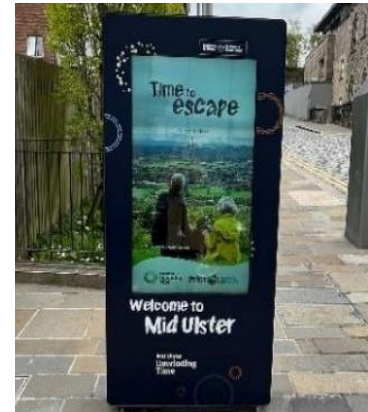


THEME 4: MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Touch Screens

A external touchscreen has been installed in the centre of Coalisland, similar to those already in position in the 3 main towns of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.

Touchscreen at Hill of The O'Neill



Summer Marketing Campaign 2022

Aimed at the ROI and family market focusing on Loughs and Shores, including Ballyronan, Heaney Open Ground, and Lough Neagh Stories. The campaign was £33k with £25,000 funding from TNI Co-Operative Partnership Fund.

Autumn Marketing Campaign 2022

Cool FM week long campaign offered daily prizes from tourism businesses as follows:

- Stars and Stones experience inc. accommodation with Sperrin View Glamping
- Seamus Heaney HomePlace entrance tickets
- Stay for 2 at Killymoon Castle inc. afternoon tea at Bakehouse NI
- Stay for 2 at Charlemont House, Moy inc. 'Pull a Pint' experience at Tomney's and Symphonia Gin masterclass
- Stay for 2 at Blessingbourne Apartment inc. bike hire and voucher for dinner at Valley Hotel, Fivemiletown

Spring 2023 Marketing Campaign and Launch of New Brand Unwinding Time

Aimed at ROI market, with £20,000 funding received from TNI Co-Operative Partnership Fund for spend of £25,000.

Campaign included:

- Radio promotion in Northern Sound and CoolFM
- Production of 30sec video for sponsored social posts
- 11 Tourism and Hospitality businesses included in video for promotion



Mid Ulster Website

Tourism

Continued development and maintenance of the destination website. Increase awareness by driving visitors to website through social media and marketing campaigns.



HEADLINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES ACHIEVEMENTS 2022/23

The activities the Council's Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes sections have undertaken over the past 12 months have resulted in the achievement of some key outputs, which include:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

✓ £9M secured from Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to deliver a large capital regeneration project in Maghera.
✓ 169 new jobs created through the business start programme
✓ ESF Programmes supported 643 participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Helped 229 people gain employment ○ Assisted 643 participants to achieve 1004 new qualifications ○ Helped 64 participants progress to Further Education/Training
✓ 4 business programmes have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ supported 537 businesses ○ created 296 jobs (equating to a value of £7,021,427.20) ○ helped 32 businesses win 32 tenders (total value of £28,453,400) ○ referred 41 businesses to Invest NI
✓ Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 50 participants gained employment with a further 36 gaining a new qualification and currently seeking employment opportunities.
✓ Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (14th – 18th November 2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 370 people participated in Mid Ulster's fourth Enterprise Week (14th - 18th November 2022) ○ There were 13 free online and in-person events
✓ The Rural Business Development Scheme funded under the DAERA Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) - 136 Businesses supported to the grant value of £478,099
✓ Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 completed- 29 schemes completed (MUDC Grant Aid £104,424.15; Private Sector Leverage £66,378.34)
✓ Mid Ulster Village Renewal Scheme Total investment of £5.9m across the 50 village renewal projects in Mid Ulster completed in March 2023.
✓ £4.27m Public Realm Scheme completed in Coalisland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revitalisation scheme completed for Coalisland Town Centre £250,000

TOURISM

DAERA Rural Tourism Scheme

- Sperrins Sculpture Trail total project costs of £568,337.33, receiving 75% funding

Tourism NI Market Led Programme

- TNI's Market Led Product Development Programme launched on January 23, made a call for programme submissions. The devised programme submitted to TNI was successful to the value of £33k - Assisted in the enhancement of 4 emerging tourism experiences.
- Banquet event delivered to TNI Meet the Buyer, including 20 international tour operators and 11 trade experiences.

Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund

- Sliabh Beagh total grant awarded €145,475 plus match funding of €17,500 from the three partner Councils, with a total projected spend of €162,975.
- Tullaghoge Fort grant awarded £20,000 to investigate the feasibility of further development at Tullaghoge Fort, linking the site with Tullaghoge Village.

Summer/Winter Marketing Campaign 2022

- Online campaign had a reach of 260,000
- 150,000 engagements of click through, comments and shares

Spring Marketing Campaign 2023

- Online campaign had a reach of over 274,000
- 135,000 engagements of click through, comments and shares

Business Engagement

- Mid Ulster WhatsApp group contains up to 198 Hospitality and Tourism businesses who are receiving current updates from the industry, TNI and Hospitality Ulster.
- To date 52 webinars have been hosted targeting issues relating to our Tourism and Hospitality sector, with an average of 25 businesses dial in to each session.