



14 September 2023

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Development Committee to be held in The Chamber, Dungannon and by virtual means Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon, BT71 6DT on Thursday, 14 September 2023 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

A link to join the meeting through the Council's remote meeting platform will follow.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Notice of Recording
This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site [Live Broadcast Link](#)
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Chair's Business

Matters for Decision

- | | | |
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Matters for Information

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Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.

Matters for Decision

17. Development Report – Community Grants
18. Tender for Play Park Facilities
19. Altmore/Cappagh Tender Award

Matters for Information

20. Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 5 July 2023
21. Economic Development Report – September 2023 – CBF

Report on	Ballyronan Boat Club – Development Proposal
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	John Howard, Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

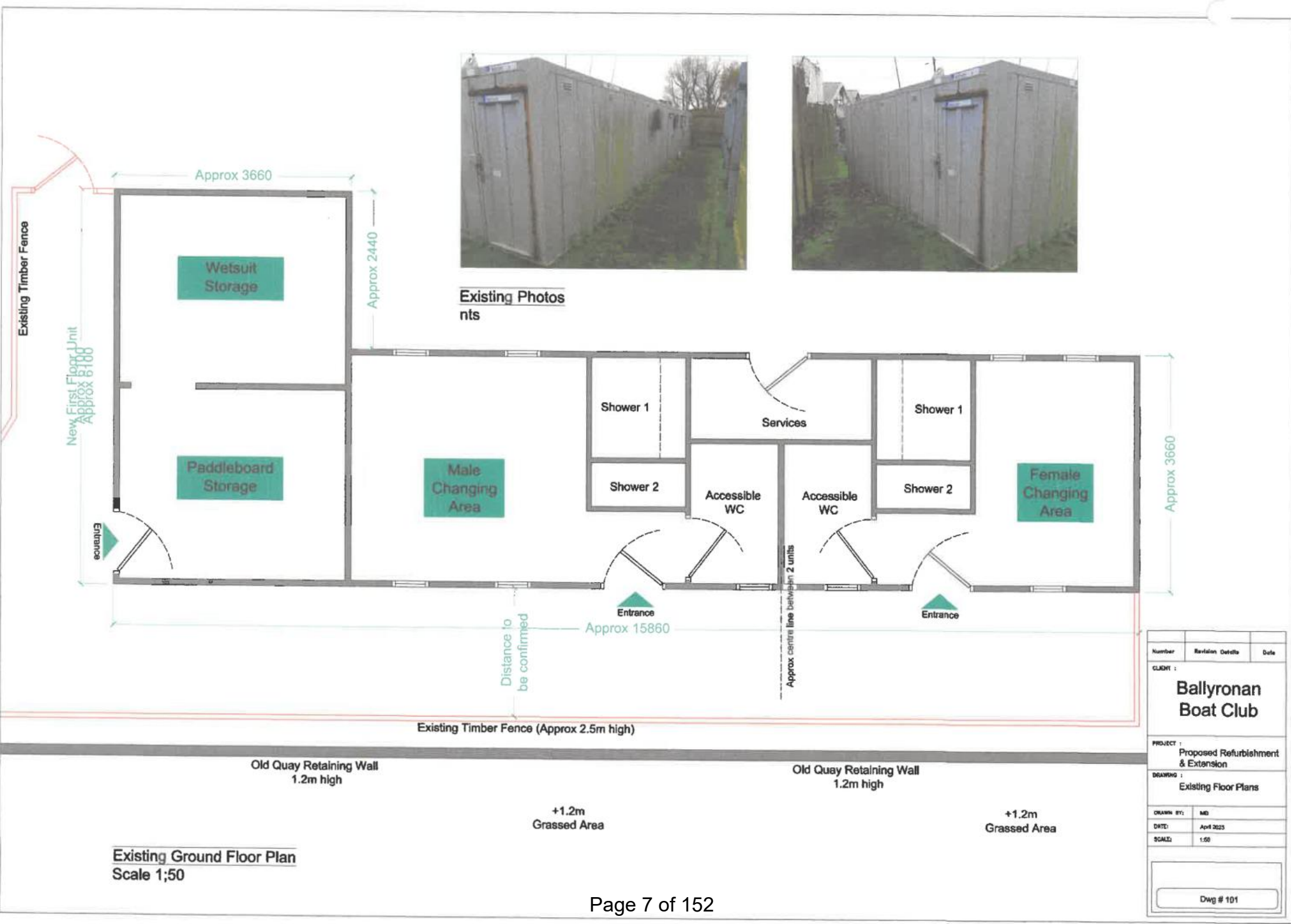
1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>Previously in May 2021, following consideration of a report and correspondence from Ballyronan Boat Club, Members at the Development Committee resolved to approve Officers to progress discussions with the Ballyronan Boat club and assist in creating a development proposal/concept plan for presentation to a future Development Committee meeting (minute reference: D086/21).</p> <p>This paper provides an update on engagement to date and proposals for consideration.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	Ballyronan Boat Club was established in 1972 and over the years, the club has actively engaged in sailing activities, hosting events, and providing sailing courses to the community. Despite facing challenges, such as vandalism leading to the loss of their clubhouse and site, the club was reformed in 2000 and has since seen growth in membership and participation.
2.2	As highlighted within correspondence to the Development Committee in May 2021, the club currently lacks access to a permanent clubhouse with adequate facilities for its members and visitors. This has resulted in a high rate of membership turnover and hampers the potential for sustained growth and development of the club. With a growing membership and a desire to promote the Marina as a water sports centre for the region, the Ballyronan Boat Club seeks to explore options for re-establishing facilities on-site, including the request for a long-term lease of the changing block facilities within the boat park facilities.
2.3	The report builds on the previous report to Development Committee and outlines the clubs aspirations and need for a permanent clubhouse base with appropriate facilities, the clubs ambitions to further highlight the importance of Ballyronan Boat Club as a key partner in promoting water sports and outdoor recreational activities at the Marina along with a request for a long-term lease on the changing block facilities within the boat park.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Council have overseen ongoing investment within Ballyronan Marina for the provisions for camping/glamping, walking, children's play, and passive leisure opportunities which has enhanced the overall visitor experience and sought to encourage increased engagement and opportunities for various outdoor recreational activities. The Council have worked with the Ballyronan Boat Club in an informal partnership approach to

	date, facilitating and promoting water sports to a potential catchment population of 150,000 within a 30-minute radius of the Marina.
3.2	To facilitate the ongoing progress at Ballyronan Marina, the Boat Club aims to obtain the disused old changing area located on site. They are prepared to allocate a budget of up to £6k from the Boat Club funds to refurbish these facilities to meet the necessary standards. Their ultimate goal is to transform this changing block into a permanent clubhouse with easily accessible entry, in harmony with the Council's ongoing management/operational objectives at Ballyronan (please see the appendix A for site illustrations provide by the Ballyronan Boat Club for their plans).
3.3	In addition to the clubhouse development proposal, the Ballyronan Boat Club is formally requesting a long-term lease on these facilities. The club have outlined that they hope a long-term lease would seek to provide the club with the stability and assurance needed to invest in the development and maintenance of the clubhouse and ensure its sustainable operation for years to come.
3.4	The club have advised Council officers that it firmly believes that the establishment of a proper clubhouse, supported by a long-term lease, is essential for their continued prosperity and the future growth of the Marina as a hub for water sports and outdoor activities.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Potential annual rental fee for an ongoing lease (to be confirmed and subject to LPS appraisal). Potential increased visitors on site via the enhanced facilities.
	Human: No staff implications from a Council perspective. Any development or facilitation of a club house and ancillary activities would be the responsibility of the club.
	Risk Management: None anticipated at this juncture - considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report and approve that Officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ascertain conditions and agreement needed to facilitate the Ballyronan Boat Club proposal and if permissible and agreeable to all parties, draft terms for a lease of 25 years with possibility of extension for the disused old changing area currently located on site engage with Land and Property Services to ascertain current market value for rental/leasing options and incorporate into an agreement with agreed rent review conditions. subject to mutual agreement on above, that Council proceed to finalise the necessary agreements.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A – Ballyronan Boat Club proposed development plan

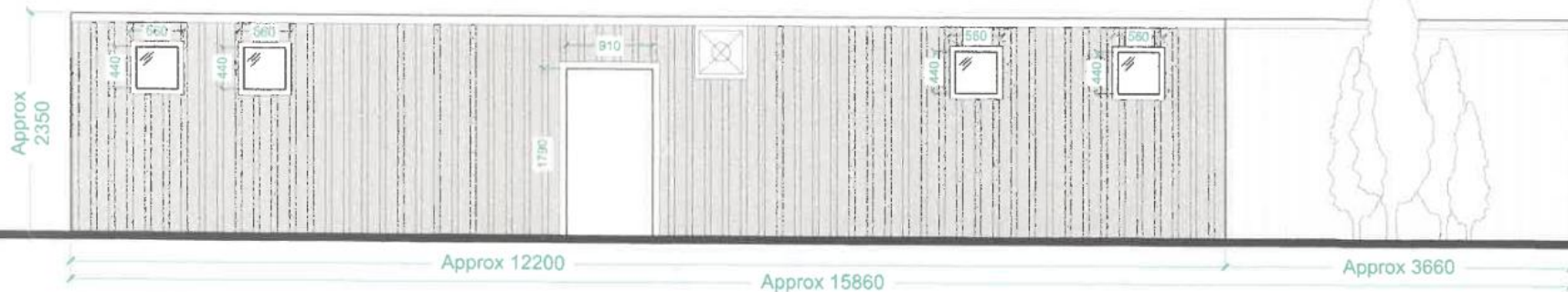


Existing Photos

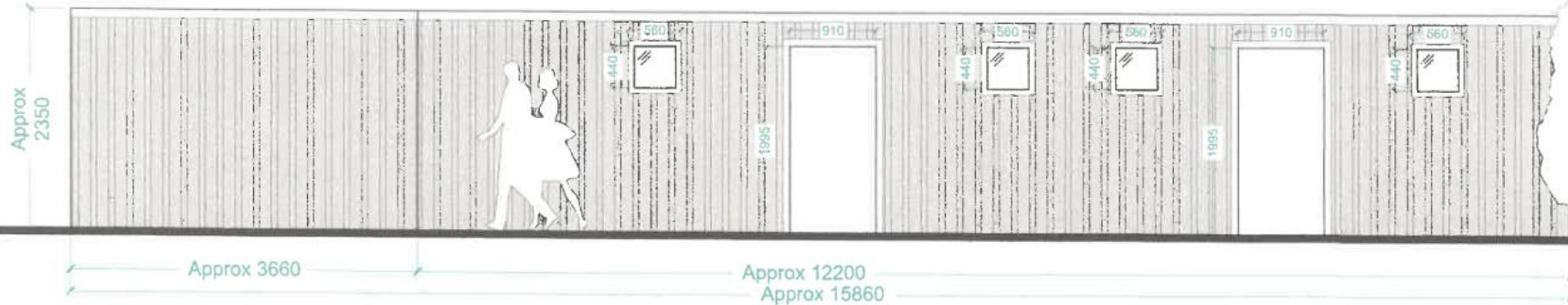


Existing Ground Floor Plan
Scale 1;50

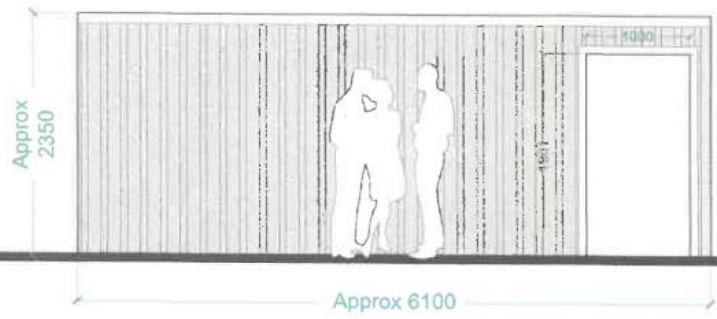
Number	Revision Details	Date
CLIENT :		
Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT :		
Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING :		
Existing Floor Plans		
DRAWN BY:	MD	
DATE:	Apr 2023	
SCALE:	1:50	
Dwg # 101		



Existing South Elevation
Scale 1;50



Existing North Elevation
Scale 1;50

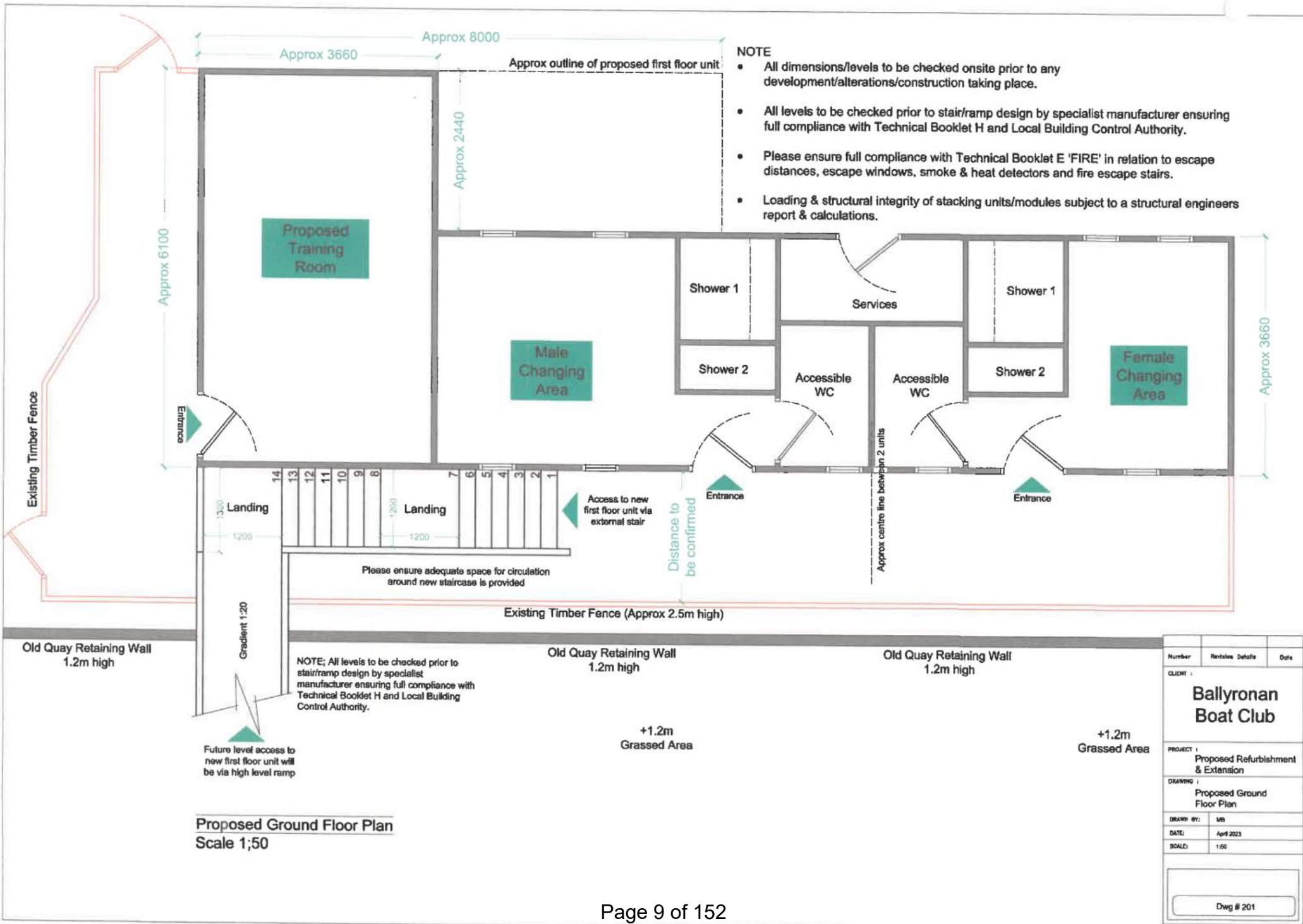


Existing East Elevation
Scale 1;50



Existing West Elevation
Scale 1;50

Number	Revision Details	Date
CLIENT :		
Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT :		
Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING :		
Existing Elevations		
DRAWN BY:	MS	
DATE:	Apr-8 2023	
SCALE:	1:50	
Dwg # 102		



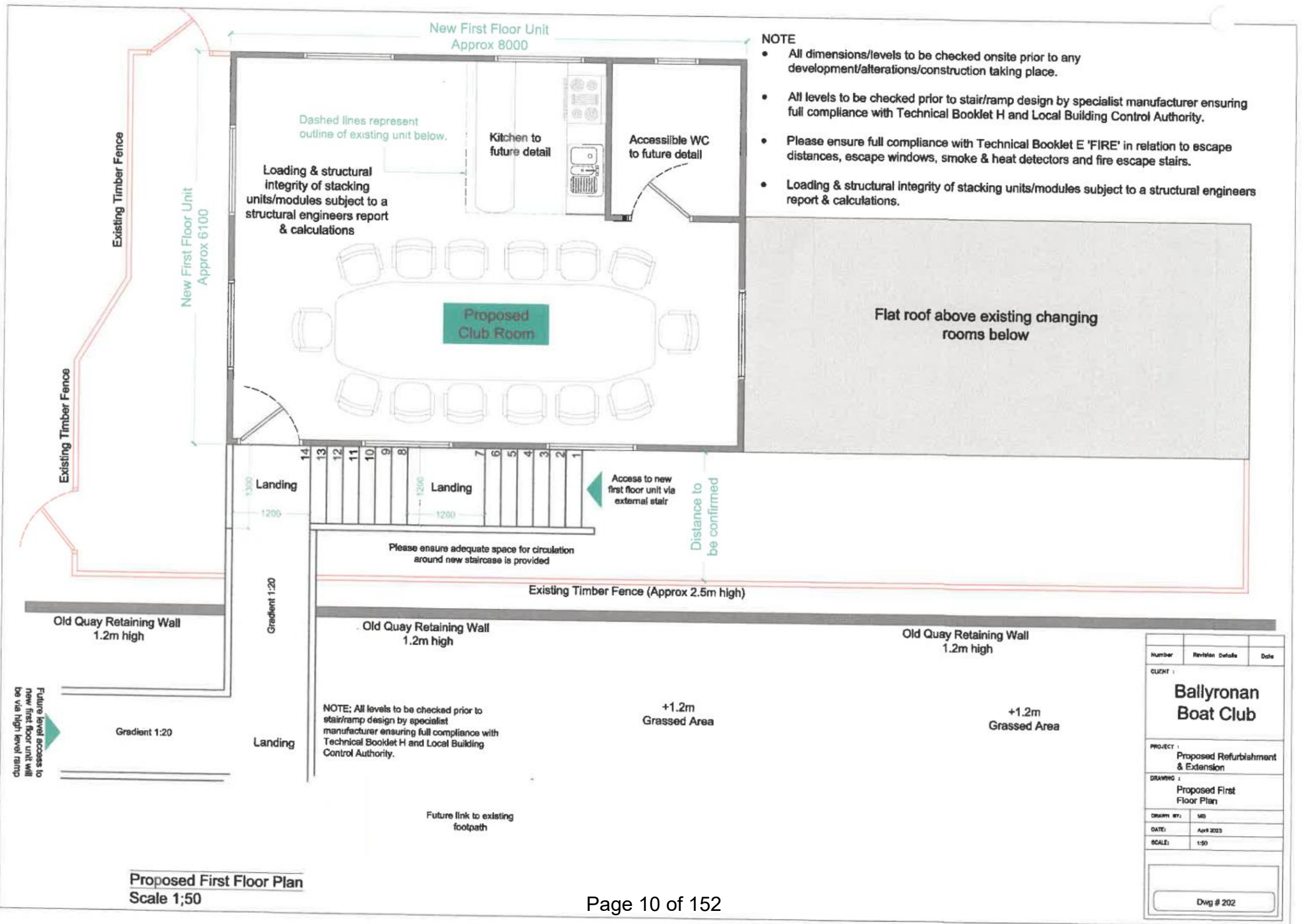
NOTE

- All dimensions/levels to be checked onsite prior to any development/alterations/construction taking place.
- All levels to be checked prior to stair/ramp design by specialist manufacturer ensuring full compliance with Technical Booklet H and Local Building Control Authority.
- Please ensure full compliance with Technical Booklet E 'FIRE' in relation to escape distances, escape windows, smoke & heat detectors and fire escape stairs.
- Loading & structural integrity of stacking units/modules subject to a structural engineers report & calculations.

NOTE; All levels to be checked prior to stair/ramp design by specialist manufacturer ensuring full compliance with Technical Booklet H and Local Building Control Authority.

Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Scale 1;50

Number	Revision Details	Date
CLIENT : Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT : Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING : Proposed Ground Floor Plan		
DRAWN BY :	MB	
DATE :	April 2023	
SCALE :	1:50	
Dwg # 201		



- NOTE**
- All dimensions/levels to be checked onsite prior to any development/alterations/construction taking place.
 - All levels to be checked prior to stair/ramp design by specialist manufacturer ensuring full compliance with Technical Booklet H and Local Building Control Authority.
 - Please ensure full compliance with Technical Booklet E 'FIRE' in relation to escape distances, escape windows, smoke & heat detectors and fire escape stairs.
 - Loading & structural integrity of stacking units/modules subject to a structural engineers report & calculations.

Dashed lines represent outline of existing unit below.

Loading & structural integrity of stacking units/modules subject to a structural engineers report & calculations

Kitchen to future detail

Accessible WC to future detail

Proposed Club Room

Flat roof above existing changing rooms below

Landing

Landing

Access to new first floor unit via external stair

Distance to be confirmed

Please ensure adequate space for circulation around new staircase is provided

Existing Timber Fence (Approx 2.5m high)

Old Quay Retaining Wall 1.2m high

Old Quay Retaining Wall 1.2m high

Old Quay Retaining Wall 1.2m high

+1.2m Grassed Area

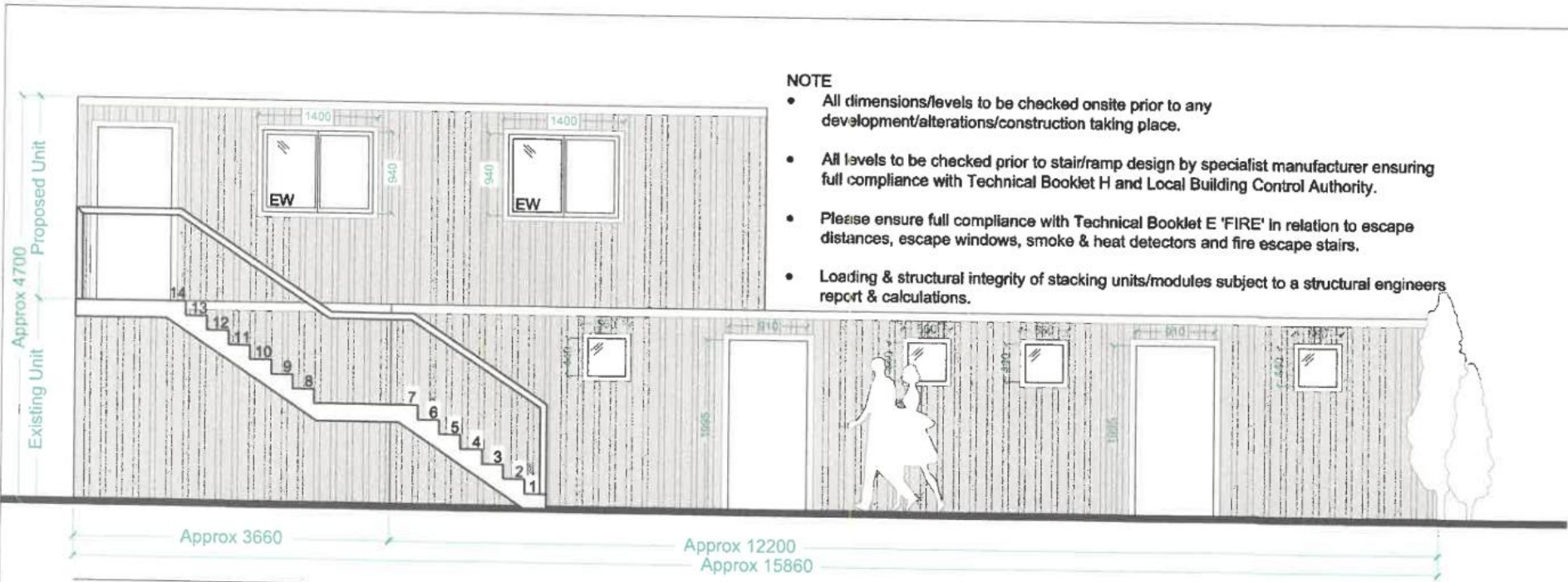
+1.2m Grassed Area

NOTE: All levels to be checked prior to stair/ramp design by specialist manufacturer ensuring full compliance with Technical Booklet H and Local Building Control Authority.

Future link to existing footpath

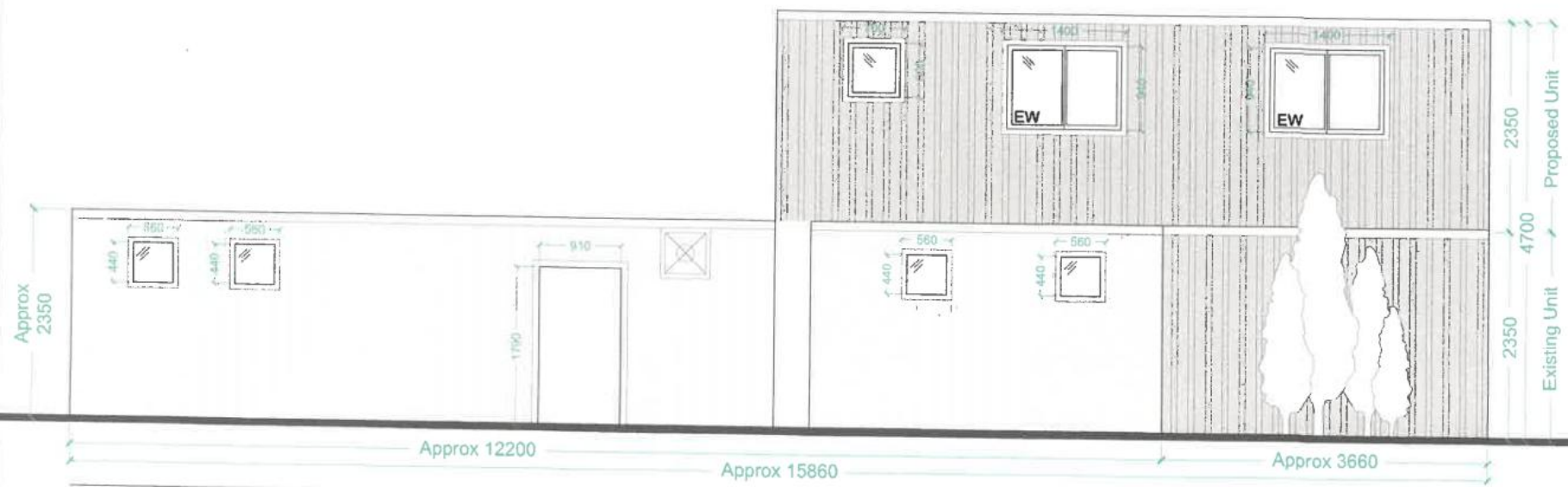
Proposed First Floor Plan Scale 1:50

Number	Revision Details	Date
CLIENT : Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT : Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING : Proposed First Floor Plan		
DRAWN BY: MD		
DATE: April 2023		
SCALE: 1:50		
Dwg # 202		



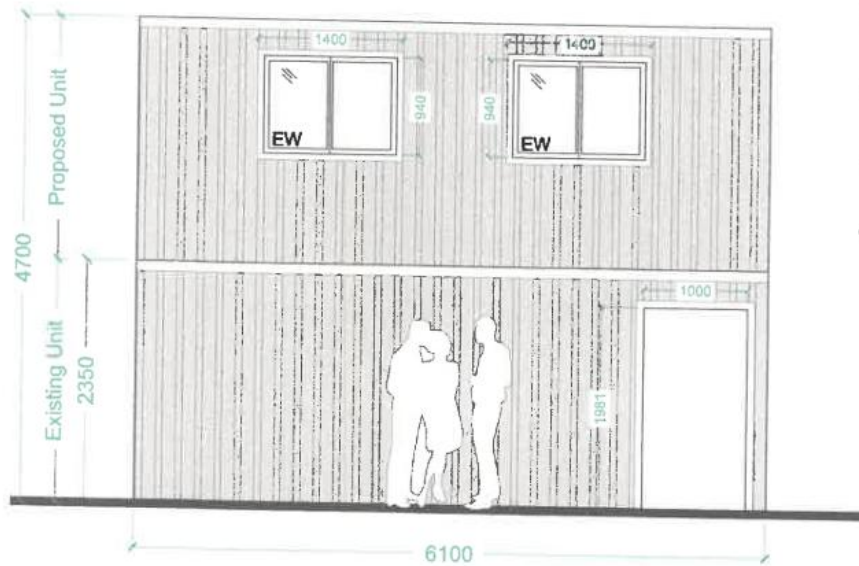
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 - Loading & structural integrity of stacking units/modules subject to a structural engineers report & calculations.

Proposed North Elevation
Scale 1;50



Proposed South Elevation
Scale 1;50

Number	Revision Details	Date
CLIENT : Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT : Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING : Proposed Elevations 1		
DRAWN BY :	ME	
DATE :	April 2023	
SCALE :	1:50	
Dwg # 203		



Proposed East Elevation
Scale 1;50



Proposed West Elevation
Scale 1;50

NOTE

- All dimensions/levels to be checked onsite prior to any development/alterations/construction taking place.
- All levels to be checked prior to stair/ramp design by specialist manufacturer ensuring full compliance with Technical Booklet H and Local Building Control Authority.
- Please ensure full compliance with Technical Booklet E 'FIRE' in relation to escape distances, escape windows, smoke & heat detectors and fire escape stairs.
- Loading & structural integrity of stacking units/modules subject to a structural engineers report & calculations.



Existing Photos
nts

Number	Revised Details	Date
CLIENT :		
Ballyronan Boat Club		
PROJECT :		
Proposed Refurbishment & Extension		
DRAWING :		
Proposed Elevations 2 & Existing Photos		
DRAWN BY:	MB	
DATE:	Apr 2025	
SCALE:	1:50	
Dwg # 204		

Report on	Development Report
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development
Contact Officers	Philip Clarke – Neighbourhood Development Manager, Oliver Morgan – Diversity & Integration Manager, Michael McCrory - PCSP Manager, Catherine Fox Arts Development Manager, Brian McCormick Seamus Heaney Homeplace Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update members and seek approval for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Development/Community Planning- letter of offer support for the proposed Magherafelt Health Village • VPRS Storage Scheme Support • Development Update
2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Strategic Development/Community Planning- letter of offer support for the proposed Magherafelt Health Village</p> <p>On Monday, 26 June 2023, Members received a presentation from Dr Laurence Diamond on a proposal to develop the Magherafelt Health Village, a 50,000sq ft. primary care centre incorporating three local GP practices, accommodation for Trust services and other health professionals, an 80 bed care home and a number of supported housing units. Members who attended Dr Diamond's presentation were unanimously supportive of the proposal, which aims to secure primary care in the area for future generations and meets the extremely high demand for care home and supported housing provision in the area. During his conversation with Members, Dr Diamond requested that Council endorse the proposal to develop the Magherafelt Health Village and send a Letter of Support, which includes a request to discharge the land needed for the Health Village, to the Department of Health Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG). A copy of Dr Diamond's PowerPoint Briefing is available to any interested Member upon request (via Celene O'Neill).</p> <p>It is proposed that a Letter of Support be submitted to the Department of Health, whilst considering current proposals for GP Health Hubs in other parts of the District.</p>

2.2 VPRS storage scheme

The VPRS is a scheme to support Syrian Refugees in Northern Ireland. Donations of food, household items etc. are stored at the central 'Storehouse' at North Down. The Storehouse North Down collects, holds, sorts and distributes the donations received, and in partnership with their sister charity Kiltonga Christian Centre provide volunteers and resources towards the refugees' needs.

Support from Council (and other Councils) is requested towards the logistical operation of the store house and distribution of essential items to assist the Syrian Refugee Resettlement scheme (led by DFC). The amount requested is £400. Council annually contributes to the VPRS storage scheme from Good Relations.

2.3 Development Update

Community Development

Council officers are continuing to support groups as required. A new capacity building programme for groups is being developed.

Strategic Development

The development of the Community Wealth Building Test and Learn pilots is ongoing. The engagement on social housing for Mid Ulster is continuing, alongside the poverty plan.

Good Relations & Peace

The Good Relations Plan 2023 – 2024 continues to be delivered; including- the schools post primary engagement project is due to commence with all schools, and diversity programmes in primary schools.

PCSP

No minutes.

Burnavon Arts Centre

The refurbishment of the Burnavon is just complete. The new Autumn programme commences now in September. Some of the upcoming events include:

- Strictly For the Birds by Sam Cree (comedy play). Sat 2 September
- Tommy Fleming in Concert. Sat 23 September
- Adventures on Old Mac Donald's Farm (interactive show for children) Sat 30 September.

Seamus Heaney Homeplace

The Seamus Heaney Homeplace is recognising the 10 year Anniversary of the poet with a weekend long range of events and performances, all of which have are sold out, with a large number of exhibition tours also confirmed.

	<p><u>Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House</u></p> <p>As part of the new delivery a range of events are being planned and delivered at Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dungannon Comedy Festival Sat 2 September • Explore the Battle of the Yellow Ford. Guided tour with Education Officer & Dr Antaine Ó Donnaile. Sat 16 September
3.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>VPRS Syrian Refugee Support Storage Scheme (Kiltonga Christian Centre) £400</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>NA</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>NA</p>
3.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>NA</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>NA</p>
4	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are recommended to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the issuing of a Council letter of support for the Magherafelt Health Village. (ii) Approve the contribution to the VPRS Storage Scheme. (iii) Note the Development Update.
6	List of Documents Attached

Report on	Development – Peace Plus Plan
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update members and seek approval for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Plus Plan
2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Peace Plus Plan</p> <p>As members will be aware Council has been engaging via a co design process on the development of a Local Action Plan for Peace Plus for submission under Theme 1.1 of the Peace Plus programme. The remainder of the Peace Plus programme covers a number of themes and is open to applications. To update the small community grant element of the Peace Plus programme is being delivered directly by SEUPB via a regional partner (to be appointed).</p> <p>The Local Authority Action Plan (LAAP) investment fund for Mid Ulster has been confirmed as €5,200,921.</p> <p>The LAAP is to be developed under 3 key themes, as directed by SEUPB;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community regeneration and transformation; • Thriving and peaceful communities; and • Celebrating cultures and diversity <p>The Action Plan has 10 Programmes (including one capital) delivered across the 3 themes as above.</p> <p>The programmes will all be tendered for delivery.</p> <p>An administration team is proposed to oversee the Plan, which will be costed as part of the overall funding contribution.</p> <p>The action plan is included for consideration and approval within the attached presentation at Appendix 1.</p>

3.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Peace Plus Plan – EU Peace Plus funding 100%</p> <p>Human: NA</p> <p>Risk Management: NA</p>
3.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: NA</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: NA</p>
4	Recommendations
4.1	<p>Members are recommended to;</p> <p>(i) Approve the Peace Plus Plan for submission to SEUPB.</p>
5	List of Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 Peace Plus Plan Presentation

Co-Design and Development of the Mid Ulster PEACEPLUS Action Plan





Fergal O'Donnell
(Lead Consultant)



PEACE PLUS Programme Thematic Areas

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
 Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities	 Delivering Economic Regeneration and Transformation	 Empowering and Investing in Our Young People	 Healthy and Inclusive Communities	 Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future	 Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration
€250m	€170m	€123m	€172m	€303m	€52m

Investment Areas

<p>1.1 Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plans (€110m)</p> <p>1.2 Empowering Communities (€30m)</p> <p>1.3 Building Positive Relations (€35m)</p> <p>1.4 Reimagining Communities (€75m)</p> 	<p>2.1 SME Development and Transition (€25m)</p> <p>2.2 Innovation Challenge Fund (€65m)</p> <p>2.3 Programme Areas Skills Development (€50m)</p> <p>2.4 Smart Towns and Villages (€30m)</p> 	<p>3.1 Shared Learning Together Education Programme (€51.3m)</p> <p>3.2 PEACE PLUS Youth Programme (€47m)</p> <p>3.3 Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing (€25m)</p> 	<p>4.1 Collaborative Health and Social Care (€97m)</p> <p>4.2 Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion (€50m)</p> <p>4.3 Victims and Survivors (€25m)</p> 	<p>5.1 Biodiversity, Nature Recovery and Resilience (€40m)</p> <p>5.2 Marine and Coastal Management (€24.8m)</p> <p>5.3 Water Quality and Catchment Management (€21m)</p> <p>5.4 Water Quality Improvement Programme (€32m)</p> <p>5.5 Geothermal Energy Demonstration Programme (€20m)</p> <p>5.6 Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity (€165m)</p> 	<p>6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement (€32m)</p> <p>6.2 Maintaining and Forging Relationships between Citizens (€20m)</p> 
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Investment Area relevant to PEACEPLUS Action Plan for Mid Ulster (Potential of circa €5.2m for Mid Ulster District Council)

Summary

Investment Area 1.1 Strand	Indicative Budget from SEUPB	Thematic Programme Areas	Target Numbers	Allocated Budget Per Programme	% Allocated Budget
Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities	£1.6m (40%)	Anti-Poverty	975	£400,000	Total: £1.6m 40%
		Health and Wellbeing	750	£450,000	
		Female Entrepreneurship, Empowerment & Leadership	450	£200,000	
		Youth Entrepreneurship	450	£250,000	
		Environment and Biodiversity	225	£300,000	
Strand 2: Building respect for all cultural identities	£0.8m (20%)	Culture and Heritage	750	£300,000	Total: £825,000 20.6%
		Minority Communities	500	£425,000	
		Cross Border Heritage	225	£100,000	
Strand 3: Local community regeneration and transformation (Capital)	£1.6m (40%)	Environment and Biodiversity (Capital)	1000 (post completion)	£1,600,000	Total: £1.6m 40%
TOTAL			5,325 (Target for MUDC is 5207)	£4,025,000	

Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Anti-Poverty	To deliver a three year Anti-Poverty Programme with a minimum of 975 people, that builds their capacity and resilience to alleviate the impacts of poverty that they experience, supporting them to contribute to a more cohesive and prosperous society.	<p>Low income families facing poverty and disadvantage including;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75 people per year (225 total) 2. 75 people per year (225 total) 3. 175 young people per year (525 total) <p>TOTAL: 975</p>	District wide but primary focus on Top 25% SOA's.	<p>Sub Themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Healthy eating, nutrition and wellbeing programme, delivered on a cross community basis and focused on using low cost, locally grown products to produce healthy and nutritious meals. 2. Development of a holistic wraparound support programme in collaboration with local Foodbank Network, including seasonal initiatives to engage and support low income families. 3. Multi Sports Activity Programme delivered on cross community basis targeting low income families and delivered at seasonal times of year and utilising local shared spaces. 	3 Years	£400,000

Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Health and Wellbeing	To deliver a three year Health and Wellbeing Programme with a minimum of 750 people that helps promote social inclusion and improves the mental and emotional wellbeing for marginalised and disadvantaged groups, supporting them to play an active and positive role in the creation of a cohesive society.	<p>Core target groups facing health inequalities including;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 50 Men /Women per year (150 total) 2. 50 people with disabilities per year (150 total) 3. 150 young people per year (450 total) <p>TOTAL: 750</p>	District wide but primary focus on Top 25% SOA's / areas of Highest Health Inequalities	<p>Sub Themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tackling Isolation & Loneliness Programme – delivered on a cross community basis and focused on supporting / developing men's/women's shed concepts across Mid Ulster. 2. Disability Support Programme – targeting people with learning and physical disabilities through existing provision, in order to develop enhanced range of opportunities for personal and social development, skills development, volunteering and employment opportunities. 3. Building Resilience for Peace Building - developing and delivering bespoke youth led programmes on a cross community basis, focused on building enhanced emotional resilience of young people and tackling a range of specific issues relevant to them (e.g. healthy relationships, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, health and wellbeing, personal safety etc.). The programme will focus on building leadership, capacity and resilience of young people to make a positive contribution to the creation of a cohesive society. Young people will be supported to engage and contribute to a range of local and regional forums, and a small number of young ambassadors will be identified and supported to participate in the annual One World Youth Summit. 	3 Years	£450,000

Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Female Entrepreneurship , Empowerment & Leadership	To deliver a three year programme which engages 450 diverse women from across the District, enhancing their skills, knowledge, experience and expertise so that they can be better positioned to take up new leadership roles within the community, voluntary, social enterprise and private sectors, enabling them to contribute to a more cohesive and prosperous society.	Women / Rural Women 1. 75 women per year (225 total) 1. 75 women per year (225 total) TOTAL: 450	District wide but primary focus on Top 25% SOA's	Sub Themes 1. Women's Community Leadership and Empowerment Programme, delivered on a cross community basis and targeting women involved or on fringes of community and voluntary organisations, supporting them to build capacity and contribute to local community development and peace building. 2. Women's Entrepreneurship and Development Programme, building capacity of local women in leadership and enterprise skills, helping them contribute to a strong and sustainable local economy and more prosperous region.	3 Years	£200,000

Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Youth Entrepreneurship	To deliver a three year Youth Entrepreneurship Programme with all 20 Post Primary Schools, building the skills and resilience of 450 young people (Year 8), developing their knowledge and understanding of social enterprise and business sectors, and supporting them to contribute to a prosperous and peaceful society.	Young People via 20 Post Primary Schools (year 8) 1. 150 young people per year (450 total) TOTAL: 450	Working with all 20 Post Primary schools in MUDC.	Sub Themes 1. Entrepreneurship and Skills Development Programme (Year 8s), delivered between schools from controlled, maintained and integrated sectors.	3 Years	£250,000

Stand 1: Thriving and peaceful communities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Environment and Biodiversity	To deliver a three year Environmental Reimaging and Capacity Building Programme, engaging 225 people across 20 local twenty horticultural / environmental groups and contributing to local environmental improvements and community led transformation across the District.	1. Minimum of 20 community and voluntary groups engaged with minimum of 75 people per year (225 total) TOTAL: 225	District Wide	1. Environmental Reimaging Programme, delivered on a cross community basis and focused on facilitating and supporting collaboration between local horticultural / environmental groups and those with an interest in climate action, environment and biodiversity. Outcomes will include knowledge transfer, improved relationships, increased volunteering, better capacity and tangible environmental improvements through a series of practical interventions (e.g. biodiversity projects, tree planting schemes etc.).	3 Years	£300,000

Strand 2: Building respect for all cultural identities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Culture and Heritage	To deliver a 3 year programme which builds greater awareness, understanding and appreciation of locally based culture and heritage through the delivery of a three year experiential and interactive learning programme, engaging with 1500 young people from Primary Schools across the District.	Primary Schools (P6/7's) 1. 250 young people per year (750 total) TOTAL: 750	District Wide	1. Experiential & Interactive Learning Programme, using innovative and creative digital technology, to engage young people (P6/P7s) from different schools within the District and explore important local heritage, culture and shared history.	3 Years	£300,000

Strand 2: Building respect for all cultural identities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Minority Communities	To deliver a 3 year programme which enhances awareness and understanding of minority communities, builds respect and tolerance for difference, facilitates positive cultural expression, celebrates diversity and builds capacity within minoritized communities to enable them to contribute fully to building a peaceful, cohesive and prosperous society.	Minority Communities & Section 75 Groups e.g. BME, Refugees, Asylum Seekers, LGBTI+ TOTAL: 500	Targeting DEAs / SOA's with large BME population / minority communities.	<p>Sub Themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme of events, activities and training, co-designed with target minority communities, to build awareness, knowledge and understanding of different cultures and traditions, facilitate positive cultural expression and increases levels of mutual understanding, trust and respect. This work will seek to build capacity and resilience of minoritized communities to support longer term impacts and change. 	3 Years	£425,000

Strand 2: Building respect for all cultural identities

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Cross Border Heritage	Promoting and nurturing cross-border, cross community and peacebuilding initiatives through the shared history linkages of the O'Neill and O'Donnell clans.	Local Communities 75 people per year (225 total) TOTAL: 225	District Wide	Sub Themes 1. Engagement of groups on cross community and cross border basis using shared connections of Clans.	3 Years	£100,000

Strand 3: Local community regeneration and transformation (capital)

Thematic Area	Objective(s)	Target Group (Indicative Numbers)	Potential Target Areas	Programme Overview	Duration	Indicative Budget
Environment and Biodiversity	To revitalise an underused MUDC building on the shores of Lough Neagh to develop a new Bio Diversity Education and Centre of Excellence facility, benefitting 1000 people per annum with an engaging and interactive experience promoting biodiversity education and awareness in a place of shared heritage and maximise an important local asset.	Local Communities / Schools / Youth Groups 1000 people per year (when completed) To create added value, links will be made, where possible, between this project and the Environment and Biodiversity Programme and the Culture and Heritage Primary Schools Programme outlined above.	District Wide	Capital Project TRAAD Point – development of Mid Ulster Bio Diversity site, (link Ballyronan Marina). Site currently owned by MUDC and would involve development of a eco purpose resource to enhance the educational /learning element of the site and its experience. The new site would attract a minimum of 1000 people per year, providing an engaging and interactive experience promoting biodiversity education and awareness, whilst protecting the area.	£1.6m	£1.6m

Application / Assessment

- One stage online application form
- Action Plan (public facing document) that aligns with business case model
- Assessment – 7 key areas including;
 - ✓ Contribution to the PEACEPLUS Programme and Investment area; quality of project design; quality of cross community cooperation with demonstrable added value; quality of project team; value for money; sustainable development and equality.

Key Dates

CALL DETAILS AND FUNDING ALLOCATION

8.1 Closed Call for Local Authorities

There will be a closed call for applications for local authorities applying to PEACEPLUS. This will be on a rolling call basis for submission of applications between 15th June 2023 and 14th December 2023.

Applications submitted by: 5pm 28th July 2023
Steering Committee Date: No later than 29th December 2023*

Applications submitted by: 5pm 29th September 2023
Steering Committee Date: No later than 1st March 2024*

Applications submitted by: 5pm 14th December 2023
Steering Committee Date: No later than 16th May 2024*

*Subject to application value

**Target for MUDC
Action Plan –
subject to
Council
Approval**



Report on	Mountain Bike NI Consortium Proposal 2023-24
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Martin Conlan, Recreation & Countryside Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek Council approval to commit to Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium Campaigns for 2023 – 2024.
2.0	Background
2.1	Mountain Bike NI Consortium was established to raise the profile of Northern Ireland's new mountain bike trail centres within the UK and Republic of Ireland markets.
2.2	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI) have developed marketing expertise and knowledge of the mountain bike market to deliver the Mountain Bike NI Consortium (a partnership between four local authorities) with the collective aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Northern Ireland as a World Class Mountain Bike Destination • Oversee activation of MountainBikeNI.com brand across each trail centre to increase 'cross-sell' opportunities • Secure a major sponsor for Northern Ireland's new National mountain bike trail centres • To combine budgets to deliver specialist targeted marketing campaigns in partnership with Tourism Ireland
2.3	In 2016 / 2017, ORNI successfully established the Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium to ensure local authorities could continue to benefit from the success of MountainbikeNI.com, previously funded by government departments, by continuing to contribute to the Mountain Bike NI Consortium – local authorities can reap the following benefits:
2.4	A consortium approach provides the following benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale in campaign costs, project costs such as MTB Research • The ability to cross sell between trail centres i.e. consumers interested in or visiting the Mourne based trails will learn about the Davagh Trails and vice versa • A greater potential to attract (via tender) a sponsor • Improved brand, destination and product recognition

2.5	Within Mid Ulster District Council – mountainbikeni.com and Outmoreni.com incorporates detailed information on the two Mountain Bike Trail centres, Blessingbourne and Davagh.
2.6	Further details on the Mountain Bike NI Consortium Proposal is contained within Appendix A.
2.7	Previously in November 2022, Members at the Development committee resolved to approve Mid Ulster Districts Council’s participation as a consortium partner for the 2022/23 year with financial support totalling £10,500 (minute reference: D173/22). Annual Consortium Report 2022/23 included in Appendix B.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Outdoor Recreation NI will continue to assign staff resources to the MountainBikeNI Consortium in order to continue to promote Northern Ireland as a ' <i>must visit mountain bike destination</i> '. Whilst promotion will take place under the MountainBikeNI umbrella brand each destination will be clearly differentiated within marketing activity.
3.2	The focus of marketing activity will be within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in order to deliver on key objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of visits within each trail centre • Increase the engagement of mountain bikers with the local economy i.e. increase economic impact
3.3	Leading on from previous Council commitment towards this partnership for the 22/23 year, it is recommended to continue the partnership with a Council contribution of £10,500 for the 23/24 year.
3.4	The MountainbikeNI.com consortium will be managed by ORNI’s Marketing Manager who will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree an annual work programme including KPIs • Provide Quarterly progress reports • Hold two meetings per year to report on progress, discuss campaigns etc.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Proposal to contribute £10,500 as a participating Consortium Partner. Can be derived from existing revenue budgets.
	Human: Existing staff resources sufficient to coordinate project support. No additional staffing resource required.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.

4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of the reports and give approval for Mid Ulster District Council to participate as a Consortium Partner with the Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium and contribute £10,500 to 2023-24 campaign.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: Proposal for the delivery of the MountainBikeNI Consortium 2023 - 2024 Appendix B: Annual Consortium Report 2022 - 2023



Proposal for the delivery of the MountainBikeNI Consortium 2023 – 2024

January 2023

Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) has prepared this proposal in order to request support from trail managing Councils for the financial year 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

This proposal outlines:

- 1. Overview of Outputs**
- 2. Added value gained from adopting a consortium approach**
- 3. Proposal for 2023/2024**

1. Overview of Outputs:

Outdoor Recreation NI will continue to assign staff resources to the MountainBikeNI Consortium in order to continue to promote Northern Ireland as a 'must visit mountain bike destination'.

Whilst promotion will take place under the MountainBikeNI umbrella brand each destination will be clearly differentiated within marketing activity.

The focus of marketing activity will be within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in order to deliver on key objectives:

- Increase number of visits within each trail centre
- Increase the engagement of mountain bikers with the local economy i.e. increase economic impact

Partner	NMDDC	MUDC	BCC	FODC
Partner Support	£16,666	£9,450	£5,250	£5,250
Sponsorship Contribution	£11,000	£5,500	0	0
Partner Total	£27,666	£14,950	£5,250	£5,250
% of Delivery Capacity	52%	28%	10%	10%
Fundamental Outputs				
Mountain Bike NI Consortium	✓	✓	✓	✓
MountainBikeNI.com Website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer Interaction	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trail Centre Specific Outputs				
Trail Cards E-commerce	✓	✓	x	x
Mountain Bike NI Trails Team (Volunteer Ranger Scheme)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sponsorship Liaison	✓	✓	x	x
Marketing Outputs				
NI Marketing via MTBNI Channels	✓	✓	✓	✓
ROI Marketing Campaigns	✓ (£2,000)	✓ (£1050)	x	✓ (£1050)
Business Upskilling	✓	✓	x	✓
Destination Support	✓	✓	✓	✓

Fundamental Outputs	NMDDC	MUDC	BCC	FODC
MountainBikeNI Consortium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as the Secretariat for the MountainBikeNI Consortium - minimum of 2 meetings per annum Agree meeting dates, venue, agenda and circulate minutes Prepare and agree annual work programme and provide a progress report on a quarterly basis 	✓	✓	✓	✓
MountainBikeNI.com Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and maintain the MountainBikeNI.com website including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Trail Centres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage Trail Centre Profile including event calendar in liaison with trail managers Update of Trail Conditions (diversions, closures etc) as required in liaison with trail managers National Trail Centres Only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive liaison with local tourism service providers (accommodation and eatery) to ensure their web profiles are targeted to the mountain bike market and offers are available in line with campaigns Provide accurate information and content (as required) for councils' tourism websites Proactive Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to ensure competitive Google Ranking for key terms in both Great Britain (GB) and Republic of Ireland (ROI) markets 	✓	✓	✓	✓
MountainBikeNI Social Platforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and maintain the MountainBikeNI social media platforms on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Instagram Twitter YouTube 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with customer enquiries via telephone, email and social media in a timely manner 	✓	✓	✓	✓

Trail Centre Specific Outputs	NMDDC	MUDC	BCC	FODC
Trail Cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and maintain the e-commerce platform within MountainBikeNI.com Proactively engage with tourism service providers and relevant retail outlets to encourage stocking and sale of trail cards 	✓	✓	x	x

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate any reprint / redesign of trail cards¹ Provide quarterly report of trail card sales within overall work programme report 				
MountainBikeNI Trails Team (Volunteer Ranger Scheme)² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the recruitment of MTB volunteers and manage database Communicate dates of maintenance days and allocate volunteers Manage MountainBikeNI Trails Team Facebook Group Proactively publicise the work of the MountainBikeNI Trails Team Organise a training and reward programme in conjunction with the trail sponsor 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sponsorship Liaison <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with National Trail Centre managing councils recruit a title sponsor for MountainBikeNI.com and the National Trail Centres Agree annual sponsorship plan with sponsors and act as key liaison to maximise benefits of both parties Manage the ongoing relationship with the sponsor 	✓	✓	×	×

Marketing Outputs	NMDDC	MUDC	BCC	FODC
NI Marketing via MTBNI Channels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness levels, visitation and spend from NI based Mountain bikers via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of blog content Implementation of E-marketing plan Implementation of social media plan Creation and distribution of press releases to local and NI media 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rol Marketing via MTBNI Channels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness levels, visitation and spend from Rol based Mountain bikers via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of blog content Implementation of E-marketing plan Implementation of social media plan 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rol Marketing Campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness levels, visitation and spend from Rol based Mountain bikers via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a targeted marketing campaign to include offline and online advertising, social media advertising, social influencer marketing, PR, FAM trips etc. 	✓	✓	×	✓

¹ Additional budget will be required for trail card design and print costs

² Council partners to deliver maintenance days including provision of lunch

<p>Business Upskilling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Council workshops for local tourism service providers • Proactive engagement with local tourism service providers (accommodation, eateries and activity providers) to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ their offering is targeted to the mountain bike market i.e. 'MTB Friendly' ○ innovative offers are available in line with campaigns ○ increased awareness of MTB product offering within their destination ○ Update of on-line toolkit for local tourism service providers including visitor profiles and requirements, product and service advice, marketing recommendations / opportunities and best practice benchmarking • Ongoing support and promotion of the trail head providers • Distribution of 2 e-newsletters to relevant stakeholders re marketing campaign updates, promotional opportunities and support 	✓	✓	x	✓
<p>Destination Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to Council Tourism teams to accurately incorporate the promotion of mountain biking within a wider tourism offering 	✓	✓	✓	✓

2. Added value gained from adopting a consortium approach

Outdoor Recreation NI is able to provide the following added value to those councils supporting the MountainBikeNI Consortium:

Consortium Approach

A consortium approach provides the following benefits:

- **Economies of scale** in campaign costs
- The ability to **cross sell** between trail centres i.e. consumers interested in or visiting the Mourne based trails will learn about the Davagh Trails and vice versa
- A greater potential to attract (via tender) a **sponsor**
- **Improved brand, destination and product recognition**

Marketing Foundation

The following marketing foundation is already in place – reducing the need for supporting councils to further invest elsewhere:

- MountainBikeNI.com website attracting 27,283 visits in 2022/23 from April – December 2022 (9 months)
- E-marketing Database of 10,532
- Social media following of 30,000+ (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

Expertise & Knowledge

Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland is a not-for-profit organisation whose role is to develop, manage and promote outdoor recreation across Northern Ireland, therefore those councils supporting the consortium benefit from its significant expertise and knowledge.

- Product knowledge gained from:
 - proactive campaigning for 10+ years for the development of mountain biking in Northern Ireland
 - driving the development of Rostrevor, Castlewellan, Blessingbourne, Castle Ward, Davagh Forest, Gortin Glen Forest Park, Gosford and Barnett Demesne Mountain Bike Trails
- Visitor Safety knowledge gained from:
 - membership and secretariat of Visitor Safety Group (VSG)
 - staff training investment including VSG and other relevant workshops
- Mountain bike market knowledge gained from proactive:
 - benchmarking from competitor destinations
 - engagement with UK and ROI wide industry experts
 - staff training investment including learning journeys and industry conferences
- Marketing expertise gained from:
 - 10+ years of proactively promoting outdoor recreation / activity tourism in Northern Ireland via Outdoor Recreation NI platforms such as WalkNI.com
 - 10+ years building key contacts within the mountain biking industry, including journalists at popular mountain bike and mountain bike related magazines,

competitive riders at a local and national level and appropriate influencers within the UK and Ireland

3. Proposal 2023 / 2024

Delivery of Outputs

Partner	NMDDC / £	MUDC / £	BCC / £	FODC / £
Partner Support	£16,666	£9,450	£5,250	£5,250
Sponsorship Contribution	£11,000	£5,500	0	0
Partner Total	£27,666	£14,950	£5,250	£5,250
% of Delivery Capacity	52%	28%	10%	10%

Rol Campaign

Source	Amount / £	% of campaign delivery
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2,000	49%
Mid Ulster District Council	1,050	25.5%
Fermanagh & Omagh	1,050	25.5%
TOTAL	£4,100	100%

Total Costs

Council	Partner Support	Rol Campaign	Total Cost
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	£16,666	2,000	£18,666
Mid Ulster District Council	£9,450	1,050	£10,500
Belfast City Council	£5,250	/	£5,250
Fermanagh & Omagh	£5,250	1,050	£6,300



chain reaction

MOUNTAINBIKENI MID ULSTER HIGHLIGHTS

(APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023)



What is the MountainBikeNI Consortium?

The MountainBikeNI Consortium was set up to provide a forum for coordinating marketing for the official mountain bike trail centres in Northern Ireland with participating councils, and for them to share best practise with each other. The Consortium is made up with members from Belfast City Council, Mid Ulster District Council, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Mid Ulster District Council's package of support includes:

- Being a part of the MountainBikeNI Consortium, which meets twice per year
- Placement on the MountainBikeNI website, with information on the trails and local accommodation and eateries
- Featured in MountainBikeNI social platforms
- Customer interaction
- Marketing to NI and ROI audiences
- Involvement within an ROI marketing campaign
- Business upskilling – providing information and content to local businesses interested in capitalising upon the mountain biking market
- Added value from a consortium approach; economies of scale for campaigns and an improved brand, destination and product recognition

Key Benefits of the MountainBikeNI Consortium

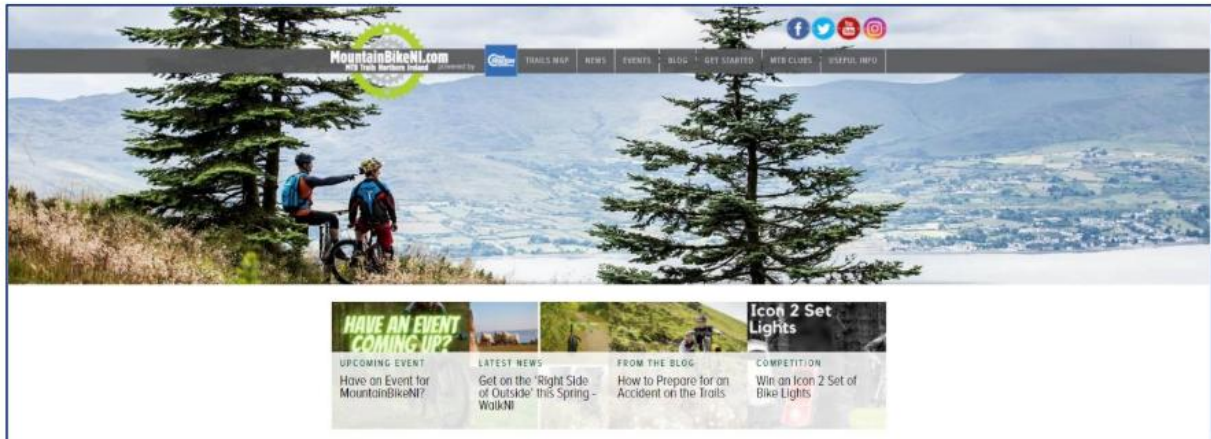
- Access to over **30,000** mountain bikers in NI and ROI on the MountainBikeNI social media platforms
- Access to over **10,000** mountain bikers via the MountainBikeNI e-newsletters
- Presence on the MountainBikeNI website which receives over **2,500** visits per month
- Largest social media following of any UK or Ireland mountain bike trails page
- Presence on the largest social media following of any UK or Ireland mountain bike trails page
- Direct access to mountain bikers to communicate trail conditions, any diversions, closures, events or other vital health and safety information
- Benefit from cross promotion through mountain bikers visiting the website interested in the trails at Barnett Demesne, Castlewellan, Gortin Glen Forest Park and Rostrevor MTB Trails
- Access to other council best practise advice and experiences from consortium meetings
- Expertise in content creation, including developing photo suites, videos and tailored copy for mountain bikers.
- Access to MountainBikeNI's back catalogue of UGC (User Generated Content)
- Contacts within the industry, such as Greg Callaghan and Dan Wolfe
- PR and social influencer contacts within the industry
- Opportunity to work with Chain Reaction / Wiggle, who remain one of the largest companies in the mountain bike scene

MountainBikeNI Consortium Davagh Forest and Blessingbourne Estate

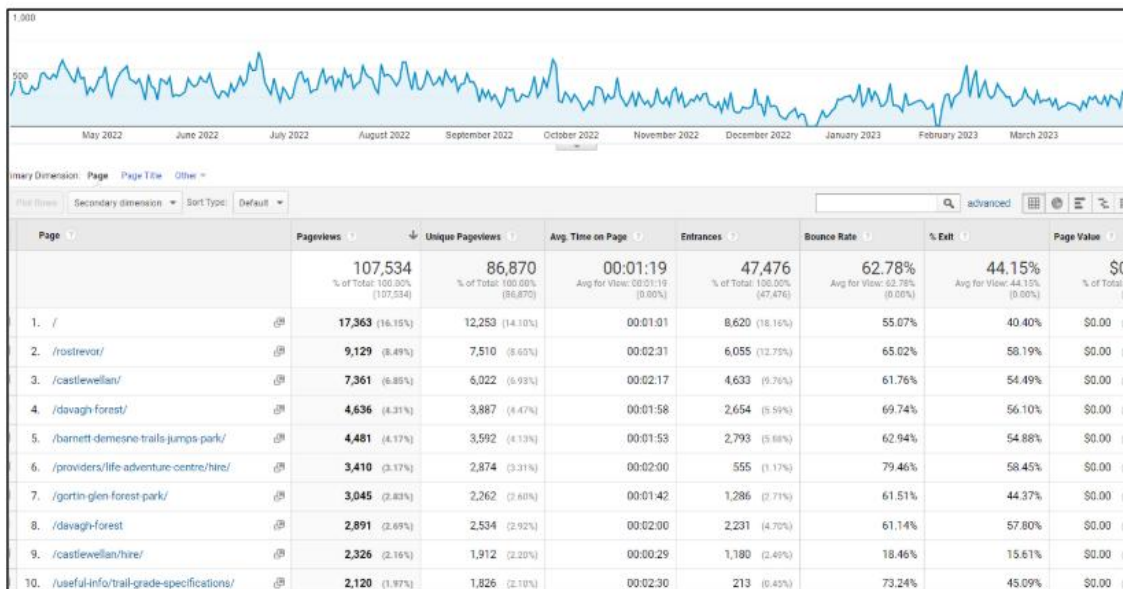
MTB Trails Coverage

WEBSITE

Received **34,200** unique visits between 01/04/22 and 31/03/23

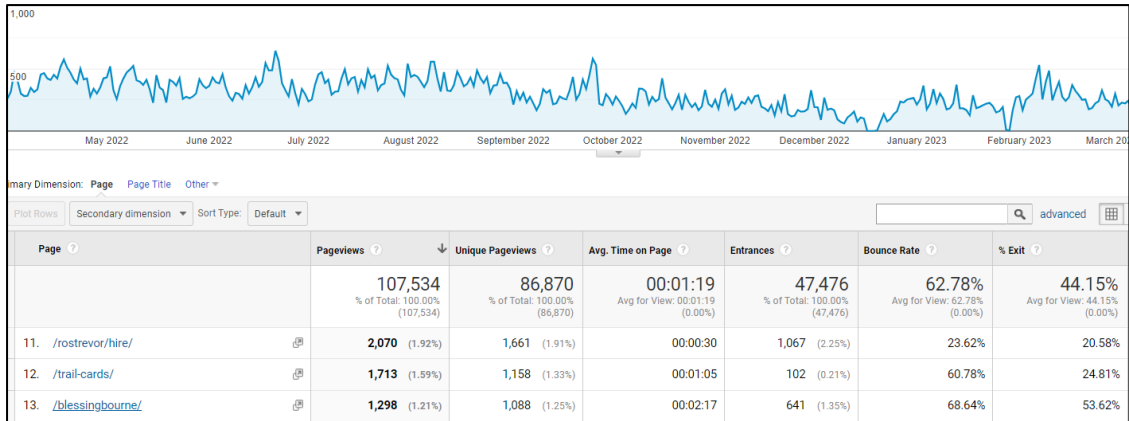


Davagh Forest Profile received **4,636** page views



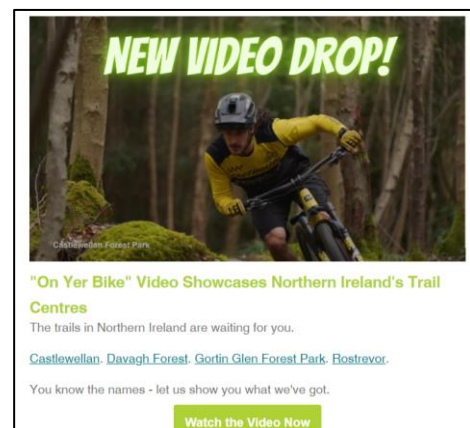
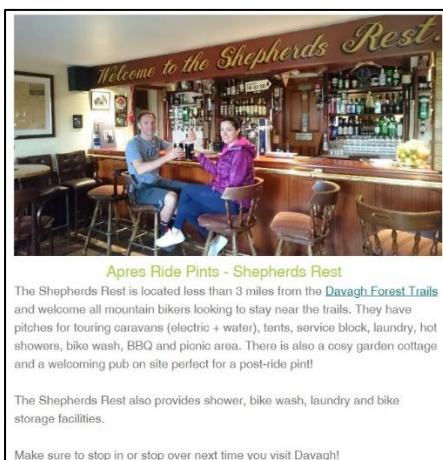
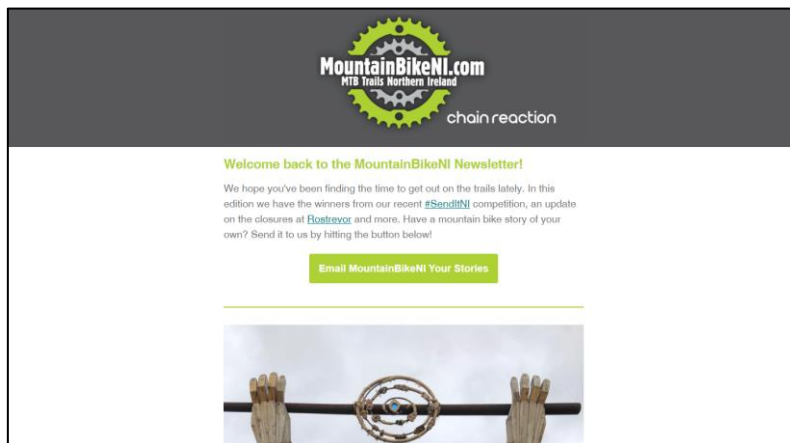
Davagh Forest profile page is the 4th most visited page on the website

Blessingbourne Estate Profile received **1,298** page views



ONLINE MARKETING

6 Newsletters sent out to database of 10,472 subscribers. 5 Features mentioning Davagh Forest.





Accommodation Spotlight

Sperrinview Glamping is an idyllic location, with amazing trails nearby and a totally unique vibe.

Conveniently located a stone's throw away from the mountain bike trails at [Davagh Forest](#), Sperrinview Glamping is also very close to the [QM Dark Sky and Observatory](#), a recent feature that benefits from the markedly low levels of light pollution amidst that particular area of the Sperrins.

Each pod features a specially manufactured "viewing window" allowing you to lie in bed and gaze upon the stars.

For information on accommodation near to any of Northern Ireland's Mountain Bike Trail Centres, visit the centre you're interested in on [MountainBikeNI.com](#) and then select "Where to Stay."

[Check Out Sperrinview Glamping](#)



Giant Picture Wins MountainBikeNI Photo Competition!

The [#SendItNI](#) photo competition has come to an end and we have a winner! Congratulations to Gian Grissam for capturing a fantastic photo of the Giant at [Davagh Forest](#) and winning a £200 voucher for [Chain Reaction Cycles](#) in the process.

Accommodation Discounts with 'On Yer Bike'

Accommodation providers listed on [MountainBikeNI](#) are currently offering a range of discounts for mountain bikers in the Republic of Ireland who book to stay between now and the end of May.

Providers like [Hearthome Cottage](#) close to [Davagh Forest MTB Trails](#), [Hanna's Cloga Cottages](#) near to [Castlewellan MTB Trails](#) and [East Coast Adventures Centre](#) at [Rostrevor MTB Trails](#) are just some of those providing special offers. To avail of them, simply quote "On Yer Bike" when you book.

[Find Accommodation Providers](#)

Mentioned in **5** News Stories and **7** Blogs

News [SEE ALL NEWS](#)


ON YER BIKE VIDEO LAUNCHES!

MAY 4 MountainBikeNI has launched a new video showcasing Northern Ireland's mountain bike trail centres, as part of a campaign to encourage rides in the Republic of Ireland to visit the trails.

The video, titled 'On Yer Bike!' takes viewers on a tour of multiple trails around NI including Castlewellan, Rostrevor, Davagh Forest and Corlin Glen Forest Park MTB Trails.

The video also showcases a plethora of local talent, with Gary Donaldson, Hannah Mullin, Nic Rocks, Connor Campbell, Joe Ward, as well as Spanish MTB coach, [Jorge Higuera](#).

For more information on the mountain bike trails in NI, visit [MountainBikeNI.com](#) now



News

LAST CHANCE TO AVAIL OF #ONYERBIKE ACCOMMODATION

The special offers from MountainBikeNI's 'OnYerBike' campaign are ending at the end of this month, meaning it's your last chance to book and avail of them.

MAY 26 Places like [Hawera, Clove](#) and [East Coast Adventure Centre](#) in the Mourne's both have fantastic offers, while further west you can avail of [Ais Teach Eain](#) that resides close to the trails at [Davagh Forest](#) and [Gortin Glen Forest Park](#).

To book your trip, simply contact the providers (which can be found on [MountainBikeNI](#)) and quote 'OnYerBike' to them.



News

WHAT ARE THE OPENING HOURS OF THE MOUNTAIN BIKE NI TRAIL CENTRES OVER CHRISTMAS?

DEC 21 Christmas is a time when most of us are off for a little longer than normal, and as such a great time to get out for a spin on the trails. If Santa dropped off some new gear and you're planning to try it out, here are the opening hours of trail centres.

Barnett Demesne
The trails of Barnett are open all throughout Christmas, 24 hours a day. Parking is free in the Mary Peters Track car park as always.


Blessingbourne Estate
The trails are open all during Christmas.

Castlewellan Forest Park
The Forest Park at Castlewellan is closed on Christmas day.

Davagh Forest Park
The trails are open all throughout Christmas.

Gortin Glen Forest Park
The trails are open all throughout Christmas.

Rostrevor



News

SEND IT!


JAN 16 MountainBikeNI are offering a £200 voucher for Chain Reaction Cycles for the best picture sent to us from any any of the large official mountain bike trail centres (Rostrevor, Castlewellan, Davagh Forest or Gortin Glen Forest Park).

To enter the competition, you can send your picture to info@mountainBikeNI.com or post your image under our Facebook post here.

Entrants agree that any pictures sent in may be reshared by MountainBikeNI in the future on social media. The winner will be the person who sends in the photograph.

There will also be a £50 voucher for the runner up. The winner will be selected on Friday 27th January.

Good luck!



News

NEW CHAIN REACTION SIGNAGE INSTALLED

SEP 2 Volunteers from trail sponsor [Chain Reaction Cycles](#) yesterday traversed almost 100km of mountain bike trails across three trail centres updating waymarker discs and trailhead signage.

The trails at [Castlewellan](#), [Davagh Forest](#) and [Rostrevor](#) are all in the process of updating their signage and volunteers from the organisation traversed the multiple trails across all trail centres to update the signage.

Along the way, they also lifted litter, gave out directions to lost bikers at one stage and enjoyed the trails themselves!

Managing Editor of Chain Reaction, Matt Cole said, "Mountain biking is at the core of everything we do at Chain Reaction and we're hugely proud to sponsor our local trails in Davagh, Castlewellan and Rostrevor – each of which offer an awesome day out for a broad range of riding abilities. We were stoked to head out with our newly branded waymarkers and update the many routes at each location. Of course, being able to ride trails all day was a bonus too!"

2) Splashing in puddles is fun



Yee'ing is not compulsory but is advised

This probably sounds a little simplistic but almost every rider has that inner child who loves the thrill of flying through a mucky puddle and feeling it skate up around the bike as we take the next corner. Just last week in [Glenties Forest Park](#) we literally heard some giggling as they set off down Kelan's Run. The autumn and winter months provide this in abundance and it makes the hot shower at the end of your ride all the more rewarding. [Davagh Forest](#) is a personal favourite of ours for going in dry and coming out like a swamp monster. We love it.

Davagh Forest

Karl Price

A popular spot for a picture but Karl's captures a few extra elements. The intensity of the sun, the blue sky and Davagh's distinctive forest all look incredible here - the perfect backdrop to an epic rock drop.



Philip Bayne

Philip's picture looks like a Bob Ross painting. Every time we see it there's an extra layer, from the colouring to the heat, to the bikes and the trail sign. Love this.



2. Bike accessories: If a new bike isn't in the budget (the cost-of-living crisis means there's likely to be a slowdown in bike sales this Christmas), there are plenty of other bike-specific gifts that will no doubt go down a storm. Consider a new suspension fork, dropper seat post, or set of custom wheels to give your loved one's ride a boost. Again, make sure you know the specific make you'll need; check with a mountain biking friend or your loved one if it's a gift.
3. Guided mountain bike tours or rentals: This one is a little different and definitely for the newer mountain bikers that are out there. Companies like [BikeMourne](#) offer the ability to hire an e-bike and explore further afield; or you could hire [a MTB guide](#) for the trails and get some lessons. In either case, there'll be an added sense of adventure of doing something different.
4. Protective gear: No matter how skilled a rider is, accidents can happen. There's a reason [Davagh Forest's](#) slogan is "Davagh Rocks". For parents of newer mountain bikers, it should be obvious that helmets are an absolute essential. Thankfully experienced mountain bikers here are acutely aware of this as well and young people riding without any protective gear are frequently called out on the trails before they even get started. Help your loved one stay safe on the trails with a new helmet or some protective gear, [such as elbow or knee pads](#); there are a huge number available from [Chain Reaction](#).



Yew and Holm Oak Trees are distinctive around Blessingbourne Estate

In survey after survey, mountain bikers repeatedly highlight getting into nature as one of the biggest reasons for why they mountain bike. It's easy to see why - problems seem to be smaller, if not forgotten altogether when you're pushing down your favourite trails.

The good news is that the absence of long days or hotter weather doesn't change that. It's a different costume on the same old friend. If you're at [Blessingbourne Estate MTB Trails](#), you'll still be surrounded with its ruggedly epic forest - it just may not be as sunny (although we're told the sun is always shining in Fivemiletown...) All the benefits humans derive from being outdoors are still there - we might just be a little wetter than before. Speaking of which...



Davagh Forest and Barnett Demesne trail centres have both become popular night riding spots



1. It's so close

If you're thinking about exploring the mountain biking world, you don't have far to travel. Luckily on this island, we have plenty of incredibly exciting trails on our doorstep. Northern Ireland is home to six mountain bike trails that encompass black, red, blue and green trails, as well as a number of downhill trails and orange features.

Dublin's fair city is a short distance to two of NI's biggest trails, only an hour and a half from [Rostrevor](#) and just under two hours to [Castlewellan](#). You're also much closer to the mountain bike trails in Northern Ireland if you live in the west of Ireland with [Blessingbourne Estate](#) only a half an hour journey from Monaghan and Cavan. The MTB trails at [Gortin Glen Forest Park](#) in County Tyrone are only a half an hour journey from the border of Donegal. With these wonderful trails situated only a few hours up the road, it's a must try for MTB riders across Ireland.

CAMPAIGN SUITE OF PHOTOGRAPHY





CAMPAIGN VIDEO



@phil8697 8 months ago

Nice video. Makes me want to head out on the NI trails asap. Great soundtrack too!



1



Reply



@smashyrashy708 9 months ago

Its a shame the mtb trails in the south arent as good

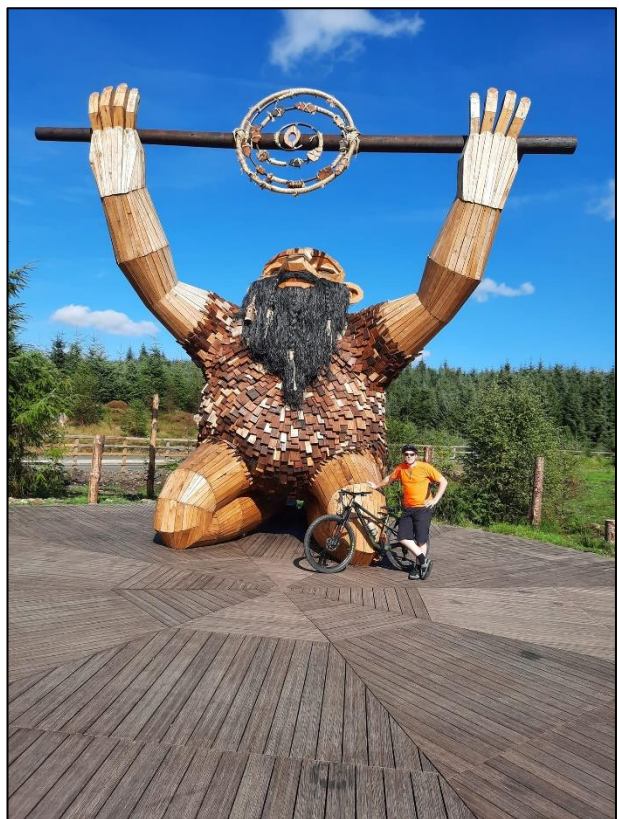


Reply



@Dima-in6en 5 months ago

USER GENERATED CONTENT IMAGES





SOCIAL MEDIA



25,292



2,712



3,058



1,167

Continued branding on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

17 Facebook Posts


MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 2 February · 🌐

COMPETITION FINALISTS!

We had so many entrants for our #SendItNI photo competition that we could only narrow it down to the final 4.


You guys have the hard work! We've also decided to increase the prizes:
1st place receives a £200 voucher for Chain Reaction Cycles.
2nd place - £75 voucher,
3rd place - £50 and
4th place - £25

Vote for your winner by commenting 1, 2, 3 or 4 (or vote on Instagram) BEFORE 3PM TOMORROW!
Best of luck 🍀



MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 9 February · 🌐


Meet the 10 runners up from our #SendItNI Photo Competition!
<https://www.mountainbikeni.com/blog/>
#ChainReactionCycles #MountainBikeNI #CastlewellanMTB #RostrevorMTB #DavaghForestMTB #GortinGlenForestParkMTB



MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 16 January · 🌐

Post a picture* of you riding at Rostrevor, Castlewellan, Davagh or Gortin Glen Forest Park below to be in with a chance of winning a £200 voucher for Chain Reaction Cycles!
The winner will be selected next Friday 27th January at 3pm.
You can also email your picture to info@mountainbikeni.com! For more information, visit MountainBikeNI.com... See more

ENTER YOUR PICTURE TO BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A £200 VOUCHER FOR CHAIN REACTION!



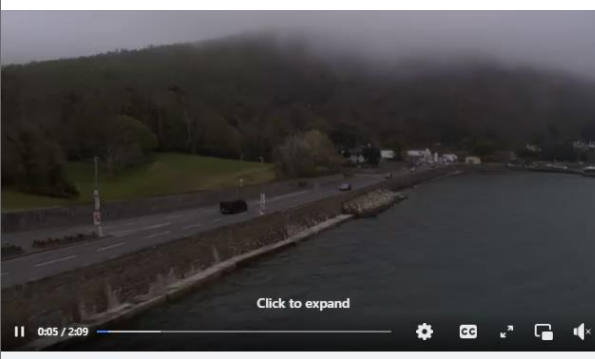
#SENDITNI

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 4 May 2022 · 🌐

ON YER BIKE!

The trails in Northern Ireland are waiting for you. Let us show you what we've got.
#CastlewellanMTB #RostrevorMTB #DavaghForestMTB #GortinGlenForestParkMTB #OnYerBike #mountainbikeni ... See more



Click to expand

0:05 / 2:09


MOUNTAINBIKENI.COM
On Yer Bike [Learn more](#)

[See Insights and Ads](#) [Boost again](#)

👍 151 24 comments 35 shares

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 19 December 2022 ·

Book a short trip to Blessingbourne Estate over Christmas and have 13km of fantastic trails at your back door.
The back door of award winning accommodation no less.
[Blessingbourne @blessingbourne](#)



See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

4

Like Comment Share

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 8 November 2022 ·

Davagh is hosting a 10k race this Saturday 12th November and the forest will be closed until 3pm.




See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

3

3 comments 4 shares

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 14 February ·

[#DavaghForest](#)



See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

22

6 comments

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 6 February ·

Our first place winner! Congratulations to [Garie Grissam](#) for this shot taken at Davagh Forest with one of it's recently arrived Giants. Can't make out the brand but we'll assume we know what it's riding 🤔

Runners up are in the comments - thanks to everyone who submitted and voted, the standard was incredibly high!
[#SendItNI](#) [#MountainBikeNI](#) Mid Ulster District Council



See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

33

7 comments

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 12 January · 🌐

TRAILS CLOSURE NOTICE
The trails at Blessingbourne Estate and Davagh Forest are closed until 3am due to the weather warning currently in place.

**NOTICE:
TRAILS CLOSURE AT
BLESSINGBOURNE
ESTATE AND
DAVAGH FOREST**

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 5 7 comments

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 18 January · 🌐

Experience the package at Davagh Forest.

If you book to stay at the amazing glamping pods with [Sperrin View Glamping](#) you have an incredibly array of experiences at your doorstep.

📍 Access to Davagh Forest's 16km of red and blue trails (along with a few orange features 🤩). The skills park and an encounter with a nearby giant, as well as the brand new [OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory](#)

Plan your trip now
[#SendItNI](#)

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 75 21 comments 18 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 18 October 2022 · 🌐

Davagh Forest is hosting a motor rally event on the 5th November with the forest closed until 6pm.

**TRAILS CLOSURE
DAVAGH FOREST
SAT 5TH NOV**

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 10 10 comments 4 shares

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 13 September 2022 · 🌐

Autumn Escapes at Blessingbourne Estate
Blessingbourne has 13km of great trails, a pump track and bike hire, as well as award winning accommodation.

Get in touch at [Blessingbourne](#) to book your short stay trip now.
[#MountainBikeNI](#) [#Staycations](#) [#MTBTrips](#)

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 18 4 comments 1 share

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Write a comment...

Connor Madden
Matthew Gilchrist keen
Like Reply Hide 50 w

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 12 September 2022 · 🌐

The night riding season is getting closer.
Where do you like to head for the cycle in the dark effect? What do you like about it?

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 33 30 comments 2 shares

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 7 September 2022 · 🌐

PARTIAL TRAIL CLOSURE
The Run Ragley Run trail at Davagh Forest is currently closed due to a number of trees down. Thanks to everyone getting in touch to let us know!

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 🗨️ 15 14 comments 1 share

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 2 September 2022 · 🌐

Almost 100km of updated waymarker posts! ✅
Big thank you to the volunteers from Chain Reaction Cycles who helped us update the waymarker discs around Castlewellan, Davagh Forest and Rostrevor MTB trails yesterday!
Big shout out to the helpers from MourneLive and Mid Ulster District Council also!
If you happen to see any we missed, drop us a PM 📩

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 5 3 shares

MountainBikeNI
Published by Ethan Loughrey · 25 August 2022 · 🌐

Notice for Davagh Forest this Sunday 28th August.
The trails will be closed while a rally is taking place through the forest. It will reopen on Monday 29th.

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍 5 3 shares



9 Tweets



MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · Feb 6

Our first place winner! Congratulations to Garie Grissam for this shot taken at Davagh Forest with one of it's recently arrived Giants. Can't make out the brand but we'll assume we know what it's riding 🤔

#SendItNI #MountainBikeNI @MidUlster_DC



433

MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · Oct 11, 2022

Temporary Trails Closure Notice: Davagh Forest is hosting a motor rally event on the 5th November with the forest closed until 6pm.



MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · Jan 12

TRAILS CLOSURE AT DAVAGH FOREST AND BLESSINGBOURNE ESTATE:
A yellow wind warning has been issued which is valid from 15:00 today to 0300 tomorrow. These trail centres will be closed until that time.

219

MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · Sep 7, 2022

PARTIAL TRAIL CLOSURE

The Run Ragley Run trail at Davagh Forest is currently closed due to a number of trees down. Thanks to everyone getting in touch to let us know!



MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · May 17, 2022

Davagh Forest continues to be one of the most exciting, remote and popular trail centres in Ireland.

In addition to the amazing trails, there is now also bike hire and glamping available nearby, as well as the @omidarksky observatory!

Plan your visit now #OnYerBike



MountainBikeNI @MountainBikeNI · May 10, 2022


One of the best things about mountain biking at Davagh Forest is that, as well as having amazing trails for all levels, it allows you to really explore.

Davagh's wilderness means there's so much to see and enjoy, especially if you're taking the whole family out [#OnYerBike](#)



1 ↻ ❤️ 📊 📤

3 Instagram Posts / 28 Instagram Stories



mountainbikeni
Davagh Forest Trails

mountainbikeni With an extra day off this weekend, there's no better excuse to get on two wheels! 🍀

#mountainbikeni #davaghforest #stpatrikksday
23w

michaelregan_photography @andy_lyle some guy
23w 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

darreenharpur Heading tomorrow, no point praying for a bit of sunshine 🤞🤞🤞🤞
23w 1 like Reply

[View insights](#)

❤️ 💬 📌

Liked by jimmy_horsepower and 65 others
MARCH 16



mountainbikeni

mountainbikeni Book a short trip to Blessingbourne Estate over Christmas and have 13km of fantastic trails at your back door.

The back door of award winning accommodation no less.

Blessingbourne @blessingbourne
36w

stevyc888 @ryan.edfitz nice hat
36w 1 like Reply

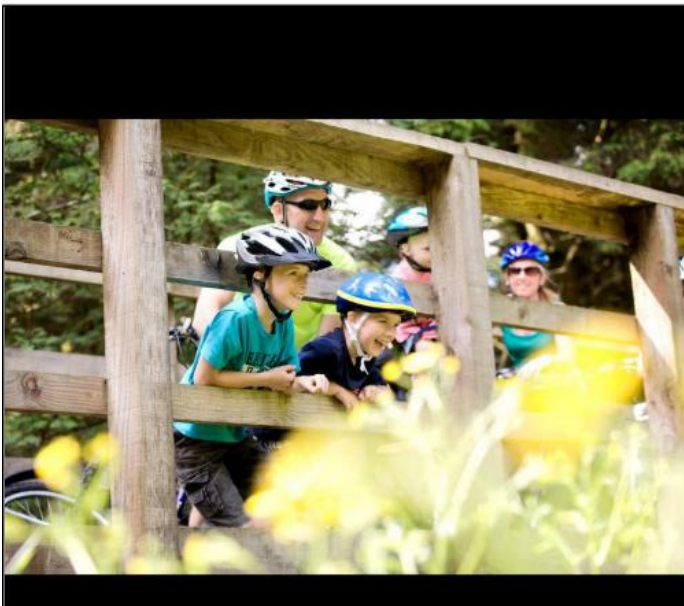
sharon_murphy12 @ryan.edfitz
36w 1 like Reply

View insights

Like Comment Share

Liked by life_adventure_centre and 53 others
DECEMBER 19, 2022

Add a comment... Post



mountainbikeni

mountainbikeni One of the best things about mountain biking at Davagh Forest is that, as well as having amazing trails for all levels, it allows you to really explore.

Davagh's wilderness means there's so much to see and enjoy, especially if you're taking the whole family out #OnYerBike
67w

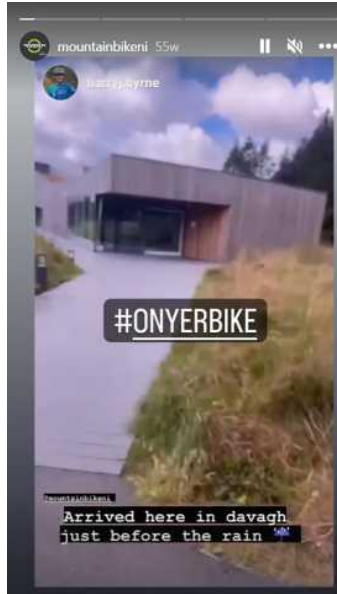
frank.gallagher.31 Ready good spot
67w Reply

leigh.martin0102020 @darren.irwin.3
67w Reply

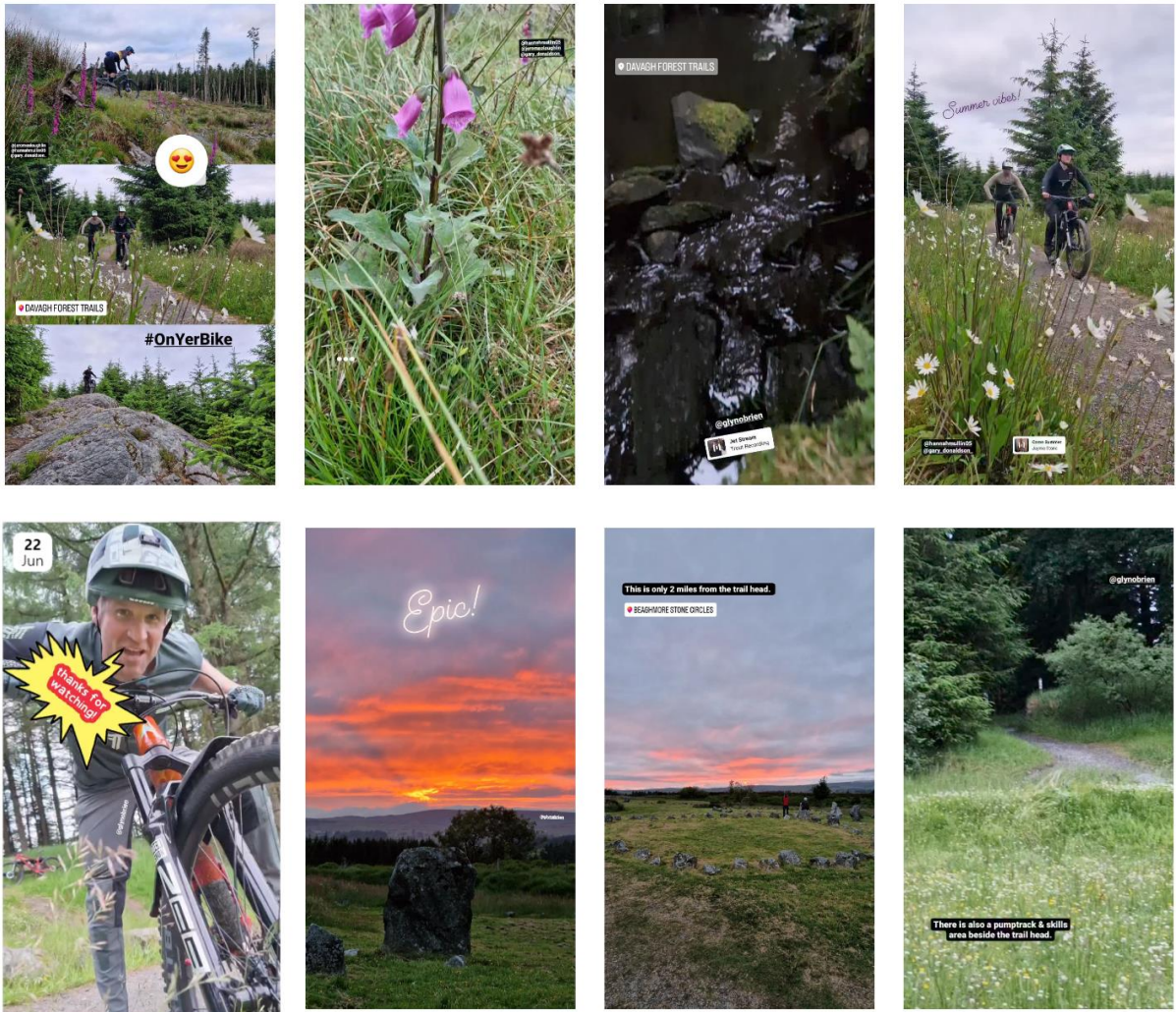
View insights

Like Comment Share

Liked by ashilliday987 and 28 others





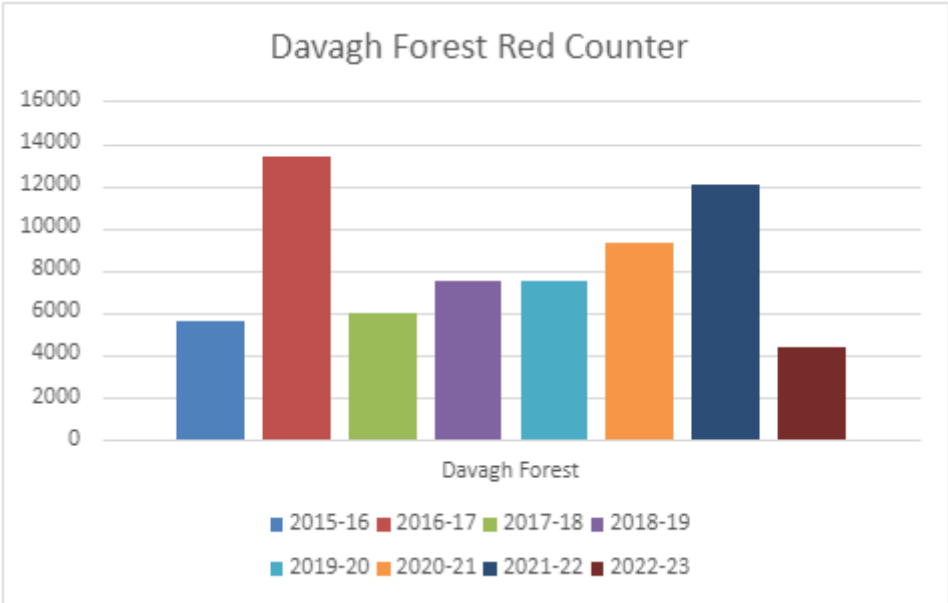


Davagh Forest MTB Visitor Figures

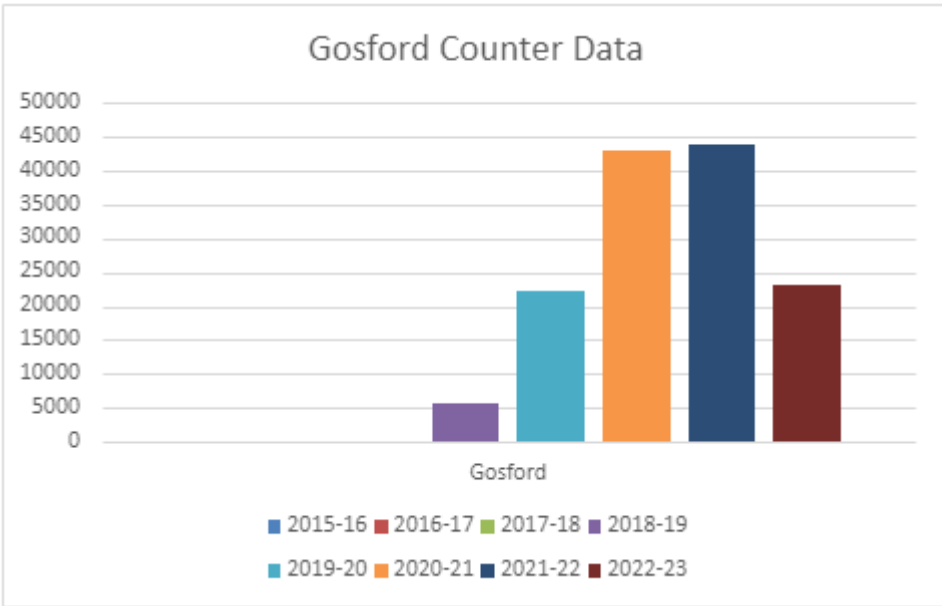
Davagh Forest MTB Trails has enjoyed continued growth since opening year on year, with 2016-17 providing one anomaly in data. This growth continued in line with other trail centres in Northern Ireland, peaking in 2021/22, when all MTB Trail centres in NI saw on average a 34% increase¹ in visitors (most likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Davagh Forest Growth Figures:

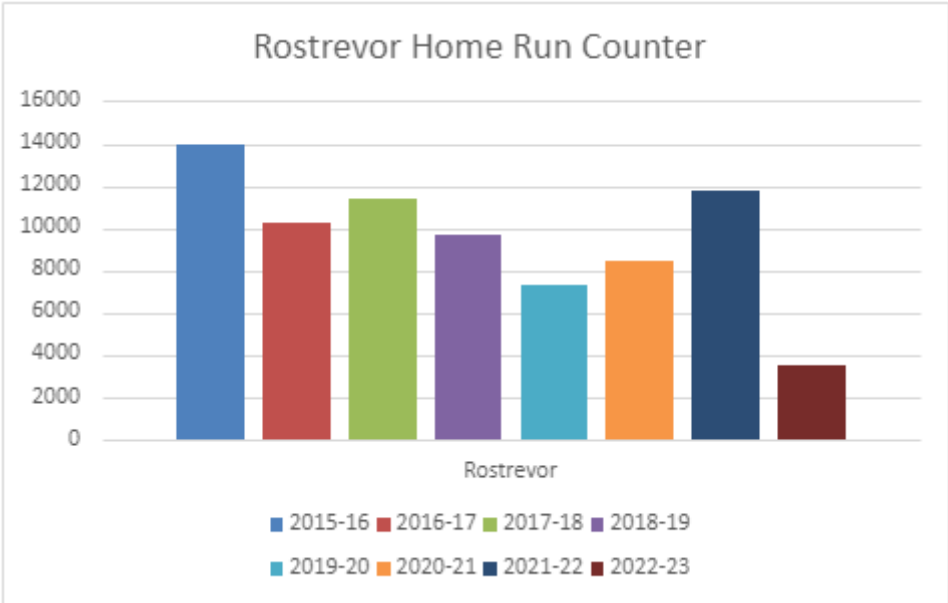
¹ Figures gathered from ABC and Mid Ulster Council, Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, and Mourne Heritage Trust counters



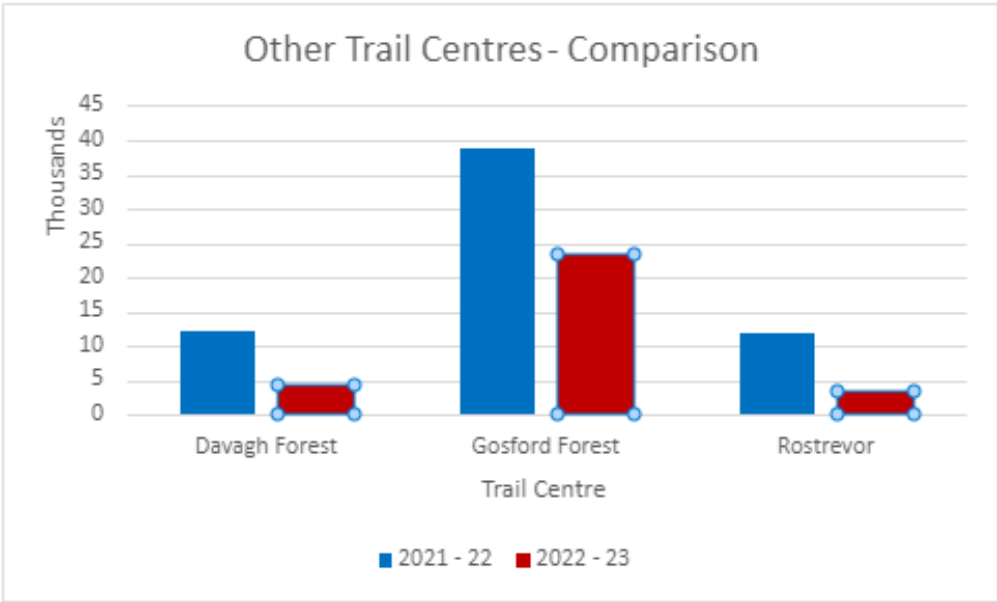
Gosford Trail Growth Figures:



Rostrevor Trail Growth Figures:

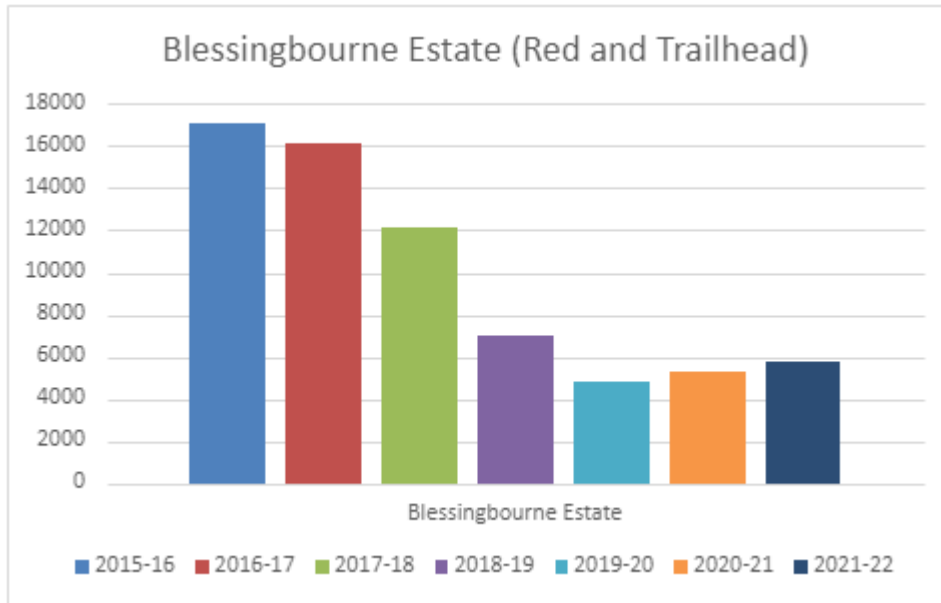


As can be seen above, in 2022/23 the visitor number figures started to decrease, meaning Davagh Forest is also following the wider national trend. The evidence of this trend can also be seen in the graphs below where the comparison with Davagh Forest, Gosford Forest and Rostrevor MTB Trails are evident. Drops from 2021-22 figures are between 39% and 69%.



Blessingbourne Estate MTB Visitor Figures

Blessingbourne Estate saw a significant drop off in visitor figures between 2015-16 and 2019-20, when it hit its lowest point. Since that time however, it has seen a modest increase in visitors in the years 2020-21 and 2021-22.



Report on	Walk NI Consortium Proposal 2023-24
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Martin Conlan, Recreation & Countryside Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek Council approval to commit to Walking NI Marketing Consortium Campaign for 2023-2024.
2.0	Background
2.1	WalkNI.com is delivered by Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI), a not-for-profit organisation with the vision 'To create a happier, healthier society where enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors improves wellbeing.'
2.2	Its work was previously directed and funded by its four 'core funders' namely Sport NI, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Tourism Northern Ireland and Inland Waterways Unit of the Department of Infrastructure.
2.3	With significant cuts in government funding, this is no longer the case, with ORNI delivering its strategic not-for-profit role under a number of new arrangements including delivering for Strategic Partnerships, Consortia, Service Level Agreements and on a project by project basis.
2.4	In 2016 / 2017, ORNI successfully established the WalkNI Marketing Consortium to ensure local authorities could continue to benefit from the success of WalkNI.com. The consortium is therefore entering into its sixth year and it could be argued that by continuing to contribute to the WalkNI Consortium, local authorities can reap the following benefits: Solid Foundation: Significant investment has already been made to establish a website, e-marketing and social media channels Engaged Visitors: As indicated by 'WalkNI Key Stats' the website / brand has a strong engagement from the target market. Combined Resources: The small investments from a number of local authority partners can be combined to produce an outcome greater than the sum of its parts. Cross Sell: There will be opportunities to cross sell between destinations i.e. visitors to the Mourne Mountains will be

<p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>2.7</p>	<p>able to learn about the Causeway Coast and Glens and vice versa.</p> <p>Redeveloped Website: A redeveloped WalkNI.com was launched in October 2019. The new look website provides an enhanced user experience, be responsive across platforms (mobile, tablet, desktop) and can avail of the latest interactive mapping.</p> <p>Within Mid Ulster District Council – WalkNI.com and Outmoreni.com incorporates detailed information on 29 walks, ranging from short walks of under 5 miles to longer walks over 20 miles.</p> <p>Further details on the WalkNI Marketing Consortium Proposal is contained within Appendix A.</p> <p>Previously in November 2022, Members at the Development committee resolved to approve Mid Ulster Districts Council's continued participation as a regional partner for the 2022/23 year with financial support totalling £3,617 (minute reference: D173/22). Annual report for 2022/23 is included in Appendix B.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Funding from DAERA (NIEA's) Environment Fund ensures that all Councils receive free walk listings on WalkNI.com. Councils that wish to proactively promote their walking offer to the local population and tourist can avail of the activity of the WalkNI Marketing Consortium. Councils can choose to avail of a specific package of support as outlined below:</p> <p>(1) Regional Partner</p> <p>This package seeks to support an area which has a portfolio of walking product, access, infrastructure and supporting tourism services to meet the demands of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local walkers • Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is a key part of a wider itinerary <p>Partners in the past have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ards & North Down Borough Council • Belfast City Council • Fermanagh & Omagh District council • Mid Ulster District Council <p>(2) National Partner</p> <p>This package seeks to support an area which has a portfolio of walking product, access, infrastructure and supporting tourism services to meet the demands of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local walkers • Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is key part of a wider itinerary • Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is the primary reason to visit • Walking Clubs from Republic of Ireland

<p>3.2</p>	<p>Partners in the past have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council • Newry, Mourne & Down District Council <p>Delivery Costs for the WalkNI Marketing Consortium 2023/24: In order to continue the proactive marketing activity for Regional and National Partners, ORNI will dedicate staff time through a combination of ORNI's Marketing Manager and a Marketing Officer. The anticipated contributions for both options for the 23/24 year are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 582 766 705"> <thead> <tr> <th>Partner Level</th> <th>2023/24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(1) Regional</td> <td>£3,617</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(2) National</td> <td>£6,890</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Partner Level	2023/24	(1) Regional	£3,617	(2) National	£6,890
Partner Level	2023/24						
(1) Regional	£3,617						
(2) National	£6,890						
<p>3.3</p>	<p>Leading on from previous Council commitment towards this partnership for the 22/23 year, it is recommended to continue the partnership with the regional package with a Council contribution of £3,617 for the 23/24 year.</p>						
<p>3.4</p>	<p>The WalkNI.com consortium will be managed by ORNI's Marketing Manager who will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree an annual work programme including KPIs • Provide Quarterly progress reports • Hold two meetings per year to report on progress, discuss campaigns etc. 						
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>						
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Proposal to contribute £3,617 as a participating Regional Partner. Can be derived from existing revenue budgets.</p> <p>Human: Existing staff resources sufficient to coordinate project support. No additional staffing resource required.</p> <p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.</p>						
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>						

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of the reports and give approval for Mid Ulster District Council to participate as a Regional Partner with the Walking NI Marketing Consortium with a contribution of £3,617.00 towards the 2023-2024 campaign.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: WalkNI Marketing Consortium Proposal 2023 - 2024 Appendix B: WalkNI Consortium Year in Review 2022 - 2023

WALK NI

WALKING IN
NORTHERN IRELAND



JANUARY 2023

WalkNI Marketing Consortium Proposal 2023/2024

Introduction:

WalkNI.com attracted 302,809 users from April 2022 – January 2023 confirming its position as the definitive guide to walking in Northern Ireland.

With 60% of visits from Northern Ireland, 23% from Great Britain and 11% from the Republic of Ireland it is clear the website is an important platform for locals and tourists alike.

It is also clear walking brings significant tourism and local participation benefits:

Local Participation:

- 7 in 10 adults visit the outdoors each week¹
- 91% of the most common activities taken in the outdoors is for short walks and dog walks²

Tourism:

- Walking or rambling is the most popular activity (36%) undertaken by Northern Irish residents on domestic overnight trips³

¹ People in the Outdoors Monitor for Northern Ireland 2020-2021, ORNI

² People in the Outdoors Monitor for Northern Ireland 2020-2021, ORNI

³ Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism 2018, NISRA

- Hiking or cross-country walking was the most popular sporting activity (12%) undertaken by external overnight visitors whilst in Northern Ireland.⁴

WalkNI.com Key Stats:

The followings statistics clearly highlight the reach and engagement level of WalkNI.com:

- 302,809 users (April 2022 – Jan 2023)
- 736,001 pageviews (April 2022 – Jan 2023)
- 35,083 social media followers (across Facebook, Twitter & Instagram)
- 23,805 e-newsletter subscribers

Rationale and Benefits:

WalkNI.com is delivered by Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI), a not-for-profit organisation with the vision to create ‘a more active and healthy society appreciating the outdoors.’

In recent years, ORNI has transformed from an entirely core funded position to now delivering its strategic not-for-profit role through a [variety of arrangements](#) including delivering for Strategic Partnerships, Consortia, Service Level Agreements and on a project by project basis. In 2016 / 2017, ORNI successfully established the WalkNI Marketing Consortium to ensure local authorities could continue to benefit from the success of WalkNI.com. The consortium is therefore entering into its seventh year. By continuing to contribute to the WalkNI Marketing Consortium – local authorities can reap the following benefits:

Solid Foundation:	Significant investment has already been made to establish a website, e-marketing and social media channels.
Engaged Visitors:	As indicated by ‘WalkNI Key Stats’ the website / brand has an extremely strong engagement from the target market.
Combined Resources:	The small investments from a number of local authority partners can be combined to produce an outcome greater than the sum of its parts.
Cross Sell:	There will be opportunities to cross sell between destinations e.g. visitors to the Mourne Mountains will be able to learn about the Sperrins and vice versa
Redeveloped Website:	A redeveloped WalkNI.com was launched in 2019 providing an enhanced user experience, responsiveness across platforms (mobile, tablet, desktop) and availing of the latest interactive mapping which has recently been updated. A new mini website has also been developed for the Ulster Way which now includes interactive mapping, suggested itineraries, trail updates and more.

⁴ External Overnight Trips to Northern Ireland 2016, NISRA

Why Outdoor Recreation NI?

The benefits of ORNI delivering the project are:

- Not-for-profit:** ORNI's not-for-profit status means that all the investment will be retained within this project
- Product Knowledge:** ORNI has significant knowledge of Northern Ireland's walking portfolio gained through its strategic role in walking development, management and promotion since 1999 and more specifically since the launch of WalkNI.com in 2006
- Track Record:** ORNI has been successfully delivering the MountainBikeNI Consortium since 2012 and the WalkNI Marketing Consortium since 2016

For more information on Outdoor Recreation NI see www.outdoorrecreationni.com

Partnership Approach:

Funding from DAERA (NIEA's) Environment Fund ensures that all Councils receive free walk listings on WalkNI.com. Councils that wish to **proactively promote** their walking offer to the local population and tourists can avail of the activity of the WalkNI Marketing Consortium. The two available packages are outlined below:

Regional Partner

Definition:

An area which has a portfolio of walking product, access, infrastructure and supporting tourism services to meet the demands of:

- Local walkers
- Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is a key part of a wider itinerary

National Partner

An area which has a portfolio of walking product, access, infrastructure and supporting tourism services to meet the demands of:

- Local walkers
- Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is key part of a wider itinerary
- Visitors from Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland on either day trips or short breaks of which walking is the primary reason to visit
- Walking Clubs from Republic of Ireland

Marketing Activity

All Councils receive WalkNI.com Website Listings which also includes:

- Annual audit of all route listing information on the website
- Regular content management of the website e.g. news items, events etc.

However, those investing in the WalkNI Marketing Consortium receive proactive inclusion within the following marketing activity. It is this key activity which drives visitors towards specific sections of the website and therefore to visit specific areas of Northern Ireland.

Marketing Activity	Regional	National
<p>Northern Ireland Promotional Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WalkNI Blogs - http://walkni.com/blog/ - min 12 blogs per year ○ WalkNI E-zines - min 12 e-zines per year to 11,677 NI subscribers ○ WalkNI Social Media Posts to an audience of 31,200 followers from NI • PR in Regional and National Press via WalkNI Awards and other initiatives • Liaise with relevant social influencers to raise the profile of WalkNI.com with their followers 	Y	Y
<p>Republic of Ireland Visitors Promotional Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion within <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WalkNI Blogs - http://walkni.com/blog/ - min 12 blogs per year ○ WalkNI E-zines - min 12 e-zines per year to 3,356 ROI subscribers ○ WalkNI Social Media Posts to an audience of 3,883 followers from ROI 	Y	Y*
<p>Walking Club Promotional Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion via the Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs to their 34 walking clubs 	N	Y

* National Partners will receive double the level of inclusion within promotional activity than Regional Partners

Accountability:

The WalkNI.com consortium will be managed by ORNI's Head of Communications and Training who will:

- Agree an annual work programme including KPIs
- Provide Quarterly progress reports
- Hold two meetings per year to report on progress and discuss future promotional activity

Support Required:

Partner Level	2023-2024
National	£6,890
Regional	£3,617

If you have any questions or queries regarding this proposal, please contact:

Beverley Magowan
Head of Communications & Training
Outdoor Recreation NI
beverley@outdoorrecreationni.com
028 90 303 938



WALK

NI

WALKING IN
NORTHERN IRELAND

WALKNI CONSORTIUM – KEY STATS 2022/2023

WEBSITE

- Website Visitors:
 - 366,839 Users
 - **Drop of 37%** on previous year. This can be understood in the context of Covid-19, which led to the largest surge in website visitors WalkNI has ever had. An audience of 1/3 of a million users per year however illustrates the continued power of WalkNI to draw outdoor enthusiasts to the website.

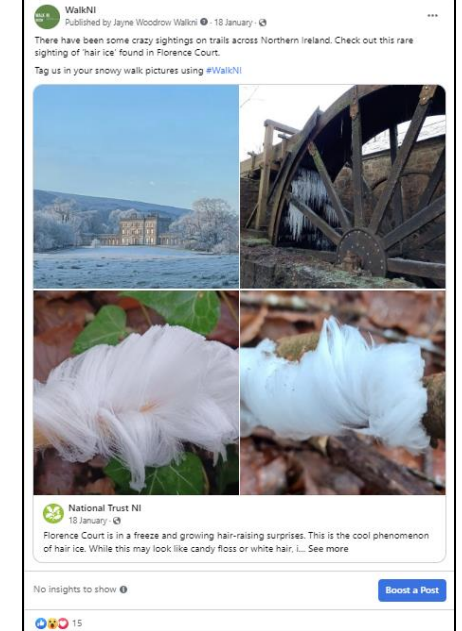
- Website Sessions:
 - 491,380 sessions

- Website visitor by Location:
 - NI – 136,516 users
 - GB – 138,656
 - ROI – 40,639




SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social Media followers:
 - 36,800+ followers across all social channels
 - Increase of 6.4% on previous year
- Following by channel:
 - Facebook – 24,005 followers (increase of 1.7% on previous year)
 - Twitter – 6,759 followers (decrease of 2% on previous year)
 - Instagram – 6,036 followers (increase of 19% on previous year)



E-ZINE DATABASE

- Total subscribers – 23,143 subscribers
- NI Database:
 - 11,427 subscribers
 - Monthly themed e-newsletters including bespoke campaign emails
- ROI Database:
 - 3,282 subscribers



Get your walking boots ready and discover the beauty of the Sperrins

This September 2022 and March 2023 is the perfect opportunity to get out and explore the Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB).

Not only will you enjoy discovering a destination filled with unique tourism experiences, but a great choice of walks ranging from leisurely strolls to more demanding longer walks, all in small groups, guided by experienced leaders.

[Find out more](#)



Mid Ulster Council Launch Dog Foul Campaign at Lough Fea

Mid Ulster Council in partnership with the Dogs Trust and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, recently launched the Walk this Way campaign to tackle dog foul at local beauty spot, Lough Fea. As part of the campaign, the popular dog walking route at Lough Fea now has seen new maps installed to show where bins are placed, new signage highlighting length of the walk and where to find bins as well as the addition of new bins to the route.

[Find out more](#)



Dungannon Park - Something to brighten your walk!

Recent visitors to Dungannon Park may have noticed a brand-new mural brightening up the pathway along their journey! The colourful mural was completed by mother and daughter team, Pat and Elizabeth England. Pat, a Mid Ulster District Council employee, was the driving force behind the project, and was assisted in the design and production of the mural by Elizabeth.




Mid Ulster District Council Support Big Clean Event

Mid Ulster District Council is delighted to support those who wish to take part in the Big Clean Event by loaning litter pickers, providing bin bags and collecting the rubbish after the clean ups.

If you want to follow this great example and organise a Big Spring Clean in your area, please email recycling@midulstercouncil.org or call 03000 132 132.

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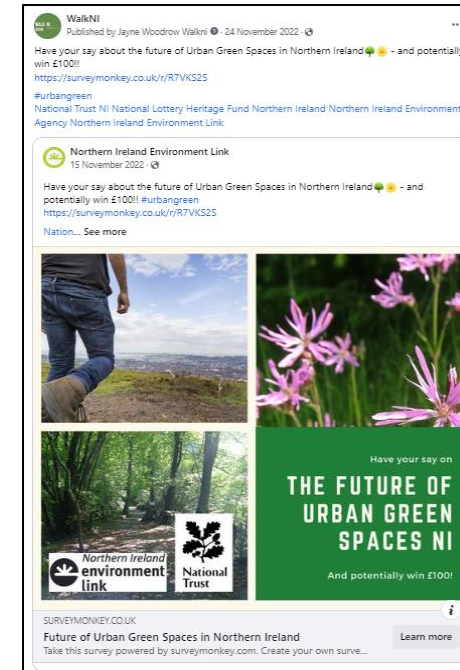
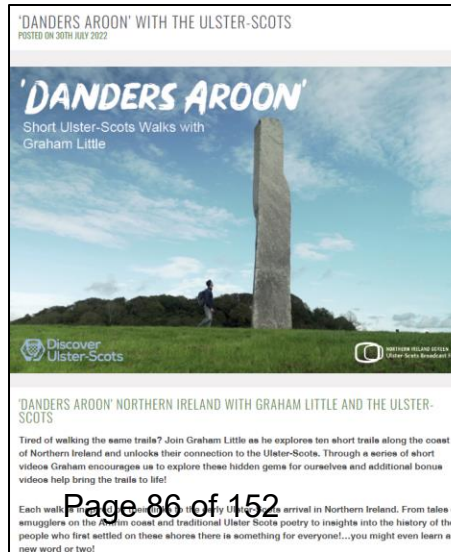
Giant's making their mark on trails in the Sperrins

Have you met the trio of giants of the Sperrins? This interrelated trio of unique art pieces have been created by world acclaimed artist Thomas Dambo.

The art pieces are part of the Sperrin Sculpture Trail being delivered by Derry City and Strabane District Council in partnership with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The aim of this project is to drive rural tourism and investment in the local natural and built heritage.

CAMPAIGNS & SUPPORT

- 📌 WalkNI Awards 2022 – Over 1,300 Public votes
- 📌 ‘Danders Aroon’ Ulster-Scot walks with Graham Little
- 📌 ‘Right Side of Outside’ campaign, 'Live Here Love Here' campaign and NIEA's 'The Future of Greenspaces' campaign
- 📌 Beginning to create downloadable GPX files for walking trails



A photograph of two hikers standing on a wooden bridge, looking out over a lush green forest. In the foreground, a woman with a long braid, wearing a purple jacket and a green backpack, is seen from the side. Behind her, another hiker in a red jacket and a floral backpack is also visible. The background features a waterfall cascading over rocks, surrounded by dense foliage and trees. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

WALK

NI

WALKING IN
NORTHERN IRELAND

Report on	Dog Friendly Park Trial in Dungannon Park
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Paul Bailie Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>Previously in September 2022, Members at the Development Committee requested that Officers investigate the possibility of creating a Dog Friendly Park where owners can take their pets for leisure. This would be a secure area where dog owners can exercise their dogs safely off lead either in a group or on their own.</p> <p>This report provides a proposal to develop a trial Dog Friendly Park at Nunnery Hill in Dungannon Park.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	Recent data indicates 27% of UK adults have a dog, this equates to an estimated population of 10.2 million pet dogs in the UK. Anecdotal feedback suggests that local walks and paths are becoming busier with increasing conflict between the dog owning public and other facility users who may be concerned or frightened by dogs off their lead.
2.2	The aim of this proposed trial is to provide a safe place where dog owners can exercise their dogs off lead, allowing dogs to enjoy interaction with other dogs. Approximately half an acre of Nunnery Hill (which is not identified for any current development purpose) will be set aside to develop this trial park. Dungannon Park has been proposed as the location as it is a staffed site therefore meaning that staff can monitor the trail effectively, deal with any onsite issues and make tweaks where necessary during this proposed trial period.
3.0	Main Report

3.1	Dog Friendly Parks have become increasingly popular. The council's Outdoor Recreation section has been contacted on several occasions with requests to provide this type of facility. The Outdoor Recreation section also continues to receive complaints from members of the public about dogs off leads. It is anticipated the creation of a trial dog friendly park may help to bring benefits to both issues.
3.2	Dog Friendly Parks allow owners of dogs who are reactive or can't be let off the lead for certain reasons or owners who want to train a puppy to have fun with them and run around with them off the lead.
3.3	An area of Nunnery Hill can be set aside to create the enclosed park. The park will be divided into two separate sections. One for larger dogs and one for smaller dogs. Both areas will be gated to prevent accidental escapes and stop anyone else from entering the area. Seating, signage including rules and a dog foul bin will also be provided.
3.4	Usage will be monitored via a data counter for an initial 12 months to establish if a further roll out across the district will be viable. The creation of this park will also be communicated via the council's usual media channels.
3.5	Legal advice received has confirmed that this trial is in keeping with pre-legacy byelaws which novated upon RPA and remain in force.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Approx. £2,200 inclusive of gates fencing, seating and data counter. This can be funded via existing revenue budgets.
	Human: Within existing staff allocation.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That Members note the contents of the report and grant approval to develop a trial dog friendly park in Dungannon Park.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A

Report on	Sports Representative Grants
Date of Meeting:	14 th September, 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Leigh Gilmore, Health & Wellbeing Manager Joe McGlinchey Grants Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To present to Members the proposed community grant allocations for the range of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Representative Grant – Individuals 44 (September 2023) • Sport Representative Grant- Teams 4 Teams (September 2023)
2.0	Background
2.1	The Sports Representative Grants (Individual and Team) is a continuous rolling programme.
2.2	Previously in April 2023, Members approved the recommendation for the period up to the end of April 23.
2.3	Eligibility criteria compliance was completed by officers followed by grant programme assessment.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Detailed analysis of the proposed grant awards are attached within Appendix A for information.
3.2	Summary detail is as follows: The Sports Representative Grant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44 Individual applications were received during this period. • Proposal to award a total of £9,160.00 in respect of the above 44 eligible applications. • 4 Team awards with a total of £1,450.00
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications

	<p>Financial:</p> <p>The Sports Representative Grant is a continuous rolling programme with an annual allocation for 2023/24 of £15,000. £2,725 was approved in April 23, leaving a balance of £12,275. Should the grant recommendations contained within this report be approved, £1,665.00 remains available to be allocated for the remainder of this financial year until March 2024.</p>
	Human: Officer time.
	Risk Management: In line with Council policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report and give approval for the sports grant allocations as recommended within this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: Grant recipients and amount of grant award.

Appendix A

Grant recipients Individual and amount of grant award. Maximum £250

Ref Number	Name	Event	Request	Award
13	Eamon Quinn	Special Olympics World Summer Games	£1,981.00	£250.00
14	Seamus Kyne	World Short Mat Bowling Championship	£465.00	£225.00
15	Cayden Cummings	Ulster Boxing Championships	£500.00	£200.00
16	Valerie Cappell	O45s Irish Masters Squad	£500.00	£225.00
17	Tanya Scullion	2023 Irish Masters Squash Team home internationals	£240.00	£200.00
18	Conor Whitehouse	Ulster Boxing Championships	£500.00	£200.00
19	Charlie Mulligan	Ulster Boxing Championships	£500.00	£200.00
20	Fionn Kilpatrick	Ulster Boxing Championships	£500.00	£200.00
21	Evie Duncan	Ulster Hockey u17 trip to Cardiff	£423.00	£175.00
22	Alannarose Farley	U18 International Mountain Running Cup being held in Annecy, France	£300.00	£225.00
23	Matthew Neal	National Boxing Championships 2023	£925.00	£175.00
24	Paul Currie	European billiards and Snooker Championships in Albena, Bulgaria	£1,055.00	£250.00
25	Jackie O'Neill	World Cup Darts in Denmark	£300.00	£250.00
26	Kayleigh O'Neill	World Cup Darts in Denmark	£300.00	£250.00
27	Malcolm Graham	Irish National Swimming Championships in Limerick	£250.00	£175.00
28	Rebecca Graham	Irish National Swimming Championships in Dublin	£250.00	£200.00
29	Matas Masauskas	Irish National Swimming Championships in Limerick	£250.00	£175.00
30	Clara Watt	Irish National Swimming Championships in Limerick	£268.00	£200.00
31	Dovydas Petrauskas	Irish National Swimming Championships in Dublin	£250.00	£200.00
32	Caolan Fox	Irish National Swimming Championships in Dublin	£481.00	£200.00
33	Danny White	Irish Summer National Youth and Senior Swimming Championships	£467.00	£200.00
34	Zach Keys	Taekwondo World Championships in Coventry England	£1,253.00	£225.00
35	Patrick McKenna	Taekwondo World Championships in Coventry England	£415.00	£225.00
36	Mark Scullion	CPSA world sporting Clay Pigeon championships	£1,490.77	£225.00
37	Brian Milne	Home Internationals Tournament Billiards and Snooker in Leeds	£361.65	£225.00
38	Matthew Henry	Powerlifting World Championships in Romania	£400.00	£225.00
39	Sarah McKenzie	The Pony Club Regional Championships 2023 in Kirriemuir, Scotland	£250.00	£175.00
40	Lola Henderson	European 8 nations hockey tournament for U16 hockey in Spain	£250.00	£225.00

41	Ella Watters	The Pony Club Regional Championships 2023 in Kirriemuir, Scotland	£250.00	£175.00
42	Sofia Newell	The Pony Club Regional Championships 2023 in Kirriemuir, Scotland	£250.00	£175.00
43	Elen Irwin	The Pony Club Regional Championships 2023 in Kirriemuir, Scotland	£250.00	£175.00
44	Erin Mathieson	European Pony Event Championships in Le Mans, France	£250.00	£250.00
45	Eva Donohue	Irish National Division 1 swimming finals, National Aquatic Centre Dublin	£1,012.00	£200.00
46	Sean Glass	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£483.00	£200.00
47	Desi Stinson	Snooker Home International Snooker in Leeds	£250.00	£225.00
48	Jerome Donnelly	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£483.00	£200.00
49	Bernard McWilliams	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£452.00	£200.00
50	Ronan Kelly	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£625.00	£200.00
51	Eoin Heron	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£625.00	£200.00
52	Sean McWilliams	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£488.00	£200.00
53	Mark Robinson	British and Irish outdoor tug of war championships in Scotland	£583.00	£200.00
54	Rosie McCann	World Masters Weightlifting Championships in Poland	£250.00	£250.00
55	Anne McKiver	British Isles Ladies shortmat bowling championships, Melton Mowbray, England	£160.00	£160
56	Carolyn Burns	World Masters Hockey, European Championship, Valencia, Spain	£1,599.99	£250.00
			£23,136.41	£9,160.00

Grant recipients Team and amount of grant award. Maximum £500.00

	Sports Representative Teams	Competition	Requested	Awarded
1	O'Donovan Rossa GAC Magherafelt	National Feile Competition	£500.00	£350.00
2	Erin's Own GAC Lavey	National Feile Competition	£7,800.00	£350.00
3	Lavey Camogie Club	National Feile Competition	£1,500.00	£350.00
4	Cookstown Swimming Club	National Relay Team in Limerick	£500.00	£400.00
			£10,300	£1,450

Report on	The Department for Communities Evaluation Exercise on Pavement Café Legislation
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director, Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Melanie Patterson, Environmental Health Service Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To agree Council's response to Department of Infrastructure's evaluation exercise on Pavement café legislation.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (NI) 2014, which introduces a statutory licensing scheme for the regulation of pavement cafes by district Councils, came into effect on 1 st October 2016.
2.2	The pavement café licensing scheme facilitates the controlled expansion of suitable premises such as cafes, restaurants, and pubs, in support of the creation of a vibrant daytime and evening economy and for the general wellbeing of communities. The scheme allows Councils to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise a person carrying on a business involving the supply of food and drink to place tables, chairs etc. in a public place • Require the applicant to fix a notice to the premises and submit a plan of the proposed pavement café area • Impose conditions on the licence • Vary, suspend, or revoke the licence • Charge a reasonable fee (although a zero fee was agreed within MUDC) and • Take enforcement action including the removal of facilities in certain circumstances.
3.3	The original aim of the Department for Communities' (DfC) pavement café policy was to facilitate the controlled expansion of suitable premises such as cafés, restaurants, and pubs in support of the creation of a more vibrant daytime and evening economy and for the general well-being of communities.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	Following the commencement of the <i>Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (NI) 2014</i> in 2016 and its subsequent implementation to date, DfC has now written to all Councils (see appendix A) highlighting an evaluation exercise they are undertaking to help them assess how and to what extent the original policy intent of the licensing scheme has been achieved.
3.2	As part of the process of evaluation, DfC wishes to hear the views of the 11 district councils who are responsible for the scheme in their areas, together with those of other relevant stakeholders representing the hospitality, tourism and other sectors who are affected by or have an interest in the licensing arrangements.
3.3	<p>In order to assist DfC in completing its evaluation stakeholders are encouraged to complete an online questionnaire which must be submitted via an online link before 29 September 2023.</p> <p>The evaluation exercise asks for feedback via questions on the following areas of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and content of Council guidance • Extent of application grant and refusals • Arrangements for the publicising of applications and representations • Fee structures • Powers of entry and seizure information • Other issues regarding implementation. <p>Members are asked to review and agree the draft MUDC submission which can be found in Appendix B, which consists of a copy of the relevant questions and suggest response.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A during this current evaluation phase.
	Human: Officer time to prepare and submit a consultation response.
	Risk Management: N/A during this current evaluation phase.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To give approval for the enclosed draft response to be submitted to the Department for Communities' evaluation exercise on pavement café licensing.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A - Letter from Department for Communities Social Policy Unit.
6.2	Appendix B - Draft response to the Evaluation Questionnaire.



Social Policy Unit
Level 4
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG

Tel: 02890 823140

2 August 2023

EVALUATION OF THE LICENSING OF PAVEMENT CAFÉS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2014

As you may be aware, the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) has been in operation since October 2016.

The Department for Communities ('the Department') is undertaking an evaluation to help it assess how and to what extent the original policy intent of the licensing scheme has been achieved. The original policy aim was to facilitate the controlled expansion of suitable premises such as cafés, restaurants and pubs in support of the creation of a more vibrant daytime and evening economy and for the general well-being of communities. As part of the process of evaluation, the Department wishes to hear the views of the 11 district councils who are responsible for the scheme in their areas, and relevant stakeholders representing the hospitality, tourism sectors etc affected or with an interest in the licensing arrangements.

In order to assist the Department in completing its evaluation it would be very helpful if you could arrange for the attached, on-line questionnaire to be completed on behalf of your organisation. This questionnaire should only take approximately 15 minutes to complete and submit via the enclosed link below.

Appendix 1

The link will remain active until 29 September 2023 to allow time for consultation with colleagues, members etc. Hard copies, if required, can be requested from social.policy@communities-ni.gov.uk.

In the meantime, should you have any questions or queries on any aspects of this matter, please feel free to contact Ciarán Mee at DfC Social Policy Unit (e-mail: Ciaran.Mee@communities-ni.gov.uk; tel: 07917233247 or Michael Smyth (e-mail: Michael.Smyth@communities-ni.gov.uk)

Thank you for your support and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Carol Reid
Head of Social Policy Unit

Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Councils

Overview

The Department for Communities is undertaking an evaluation to help determine the broad level of stakeholder awareness of the statutory licensing scheme for the regulation of pavement cafés by district councils, and how successful the legislation which established the scheme has been in delivering its original policy objectives.

The Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) was commenced on 1 October 2016. The Act introduced a statutory licensing scheme for the regulation of pavement cafés by district councils. In effect, the Act makes provision for the regulation by district councils of the placing in public areas of furniture for use for the consumption of food or drink.

The aim of the legislation is to facilitate the controlled expansion of suitable premises, such as cafés, restaurants and pubs, in support of the creation of a vibrant daytime and evening economy and for the general well-being of communities.

Why your views matter

In order to help the Department to complete the evaluation of the Act, we would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions on behalf of your organisation.

The survey should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Introduction

1. Please confirm which Council you are replying on behalf of.

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Ards and North Down Borough Council
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
- Belfast City Council
- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
- Derry City and Strabane District Council
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
- Mid Ulster District Council

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

2. Please confirm your name?

(Required)

3. Please confirm your work email address.

(Required)

4. What is your job title?

(Required)

Awareness and guidance

5. Has your Council produced any guidance in relation to pavement cafés licensing in your area?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Guidance material

Draft Response

Appendix 2

5a How has this guidance been made available? (Tick all that apply)

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- Online - through Council website
- Printed guidance
- Advice sessions
- Other - please specify below

No guidance material

5a Is there a reason for this? N/A

Awareness and guidance

6. Since October 2016, has your Council carried out any promotion of pavement cafés licensing law to make stakeholders, retailers or the general public aware of its implications?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Promotion of the Act

6a How has this been done? (Tick all that apply)

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- Online - through Council website / social media
- Advert in local / national press
- Printed promotional material
- In person promotional events
- Other - please specify below

Ans: A series of in person advisory visits to places where promotional materials were provided.

No promotion of Act

6b Is there a reason for this? N/A

Applications

7. Since the introduction of the Act, has your Council received any applications for a pavement café licence?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Applications received

7a How many pavement café licences have been issued by your Council since 1 October 2016 to date?

(Required)

Draft Response

Appendix 2

Ans: 15

Applications refused

7b Has your Council refused any pavement café licences since 1 October 2016?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No

Refusal of licences

7c How many pavement café licences has your Council refused since 1 October 2016?

(Required)

Ans: 2

7d Which parts of section 4(2) of the Act have been applied when refusing any licence applications? (Tick all that apply)

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- The area proposed in the application is unsuitable.
 The area proposed in the application would be likely to result in undue interference or inconvenience to persons or vehicles in the vicinity, or in disorder.
 The applicant made a knowingly false statement in a material area or failed to comply with Section 11 of the Act.
 The applicant has previously been granted a pavement café licence which was revoked, or could have been revoked, for reasons within the applicant's control.

7e Has your Council received any appeals against refusing pavement café licence applications since 1 October 2016?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No

Refusal of licence - Appeals

7f Have any appeals been successful? N/A

(Required)

Successful appeals

7g Please briefly summarise the main grounds for any successful appeals? N/A

28 day notice

Section 11(2) of the Act requires that, where an application for the grant, renewal or variation of a pavement café licence is made, the applicant must ensure that, on the day when the application is sent to the council, the required notice is fixed to the premises specified in the application so as to be easily visible and legible to the public from outside the premises. This notice must also remain in position and be visible and legible until the end of the period allowed for representations. The period allowed for representations is specified in Section 10(5) of the Act as meaning 28 days beginning with the first working day after the date when the application is received by the Council. The Council is also required to make applications available to be viewed by the public until the end of the period allowed for representations.

8.Does your council guidance inform applicants of the requirement to make notices of application visible to public?

(Required)

Draft Response

Appendix 2

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- N/A (No guidance produced)

9. Does your Council make applications for pavement café licences available to be viewed by the public for the full period allowed for representations?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- N/A - No applications received

28 day notice for public

9a How do you do this?

Ans: Interested parties are invited to make representations to the Council in respect of an application.

28 day notice for public

9a Is there any reason for this?

Ans: In accordance with the legal requirement MUDC ensure applications are available to be viewed by the public for the full period allowed for representations.

9b As this is a requirement of the Act, how do you intend on doing this going forward?

Ans: As stated above MUDC are already in compliance with this requirement.

28 day notice - Objections

10. Have you received any objections to applications?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- N/A - No applications received

28 day notice - Objections

10a Have any objections been successful? N/A

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

28 day notice - Reasons for successful objections

10b Please advise on the key grounds on which the objections have been successful. (Tick all that apply) N/A

(Required)

Please select all that apply

Draft Response

Appendix 2

- That all or any part of the public area to which the application applies is unsuitable
- That granting the application would be likely to result in undue interference or inconvenience to persons or vehicles in the vicinity, or in disorder
- That the applicant made a knowingly false statement in the application in a material respect or failed to comply with section 11 of the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (NI) 2014
- That the applicant has at any time been granted a pavement café licence by the council which was revoked, or could have been revoked, for reasons within the applicant's control

Fees – please note this relates to the period prior to Covid and the suspension of fees by most/all councils

11. Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, did your Council charge a fee for a pavement café licence?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Fees structure

11a Please provide details of any fees which had been agreed.

Ans: **MUDC's Council Committee proposed a zero fee structure. The proposal was advertised in the local press (seven papers) in line with MUDC policy, prior to its ratification at a meeting of the full council.**

11b Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, did your Council publicise the fees associated with pavement café licences? N/A

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Fees

11c How did your Council publicise the associated fees? (Tick all that apply) N/A

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- Through the Council website
- Within guidance documents
- Newspaper/local or national media
- Letters - mail campaign
- Other – please specify below

Flexibility

The Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 was designed to combine robust regulation of pavement cafés with the necessary flexibility to allow councils to respond to local circumstances and to help with the cost of administration. It was also designed with the intention of limiting burdens on businesses and enabling enforcement action to be proportionate to the risks involved.

*Please note your responses should reflect the views of the Council.

12. In your opinion, has the flexible approach worked well for your Council? N/A

(Required)

Please select only one item

Draft Response

Appendix 2

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

13. What are the main benefits, if any, of the flexible approach to the Act?

Ans: Each application can be considered on a case-by-case basis in response to local circumstances.

14. What are the main drawbacks, if any, of the flexible approach to the Act?

Ans: Can be difficult to maintain consistency particularly in relation to enforcement.

Community well-being

One of the aims of the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 was to support general community well-being by permitting pavement cafés to operate under licence, support the creation of a vibrant daytime and night-time economy whilst also giving local communities opportunities to have a say in the expansion of pavement cafés in their areas should they wish.

*Please note your responses should reflect the views of the Council.

15. In your opinion, does the Act give those within the community a chance to voice their opinion on how licensing decisions might affect them?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

16. In your opinion, does the Act support efforts to improve the economic outlook in your council area?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

ANS: The rise of pavement culture in some areas of the district has assisted businesses to operate in difficult circumstances particularly during the covid recovery. In addition the setting provided another option as an attractive place to use.

17. In your opinion, has having pavement cafés open and operating helped towns and villages within your council area to become more vibrant?

(Required)

Ans: The visual impact of people eating/ relaxing at pavement cafes helps to demonstrate a vibrant town.

18. In your opinion, has having pavement cafés open and operating helped to enhance the appeal of the towns and villages within your council area to visitors and tourists?

(Required)

Draft Response

Appendix 2

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Ans: Pavement cafes can help to create a buzz in the towns and villages and an interest in what's going on both in the venue and town.

19. Are you aware of any negative impacts for the local communities in your council area, as a result of pavement cafés?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes No
- Don't know
-

Community well-being - negative impacts

19a What have these been? (Tick all that apply) N/A

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- Crime
- Nuisance noise
- Anti-social Behaviour
- Other – please specify

Enforcement

20. Since 1 October 2016 has your Council ever had to deal with any enforcement issues, with regards to the Act?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Enforcement issues

20a Which of the following enforcement issues have you had to deal with? (Tick all that apply)

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- Removal of unlicensed furniture from public space.
- Businesses not having adequate Public Liability Insurance.
- Serving alcohol where condition of licence does not allow for this.
- Any other compliance issues when completing an on-site check.

Enforcement

Draft Response

Appendix 2

21 Has your Council had to revoke any pavement café licences at any time since the 1 October 2016?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- N/A - No applications received

Enforcement - revoking of licence

21a How many licences have been revoked since 1 October 2016? N/A

21b What have been the reasons for revoking licences? (Tick all that apply) N/A

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- That the public area where the licence permits the placing of temporary furniture for the consumption of food or drink has become, or is going to become, unsuitable for that purpose.
- That continuing to place such furniture on, or on a particular part of, the permitted area is likely to result in undue interference or inconvenience to persons or vehicles in the vicinity, or in disorder.
- That the licence holder, in connection with an application for the grant, renewal or variation of the licence, made a statement which the applicant knew to be false in a material respect or failed to comply with section 11 of the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (NI) 2014.
- That the licence holder persistently failed to comply with any condition of the licence
- That the licence holder has, without reasonable explanation, failed to pay any fee due to the council under section 12 .

Covid

During the Covid pandemic many councils introduced a temporary process for pavement café licence applications, with no associated fee, to help businesses recover.

* Please note your responses should reflect the views of the Council.

22. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, did your Council introduce a temporary process for pavement café licence applications, with no associated fee?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

23. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic in March 2020, have you noticed an increase in applications for pavement café licences?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes, there has been an increase in applications
- No, there has been a decrease in applications
- No, there has been no noticeable change in the number of applications
- N/A - No applications received

24. In your opinion, did the Act help the Council to support businesses in the hospitality industry throughout the Covid-19 pandemic?

(Required)

Please select only one item

Draft Response

Appendix 2

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

25. In your opinion, did the flexible approach with regards to pavement café licences, make it easier for the Council to support local businesses in the hospitality industry throughout the pandemic?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes, it made things easier
 No, it was the same
 No, it made it more difficult

26. In your opinion, what were the main benefits, if any, of adopting a flexible approach throughout the Covid-19 pandemic?

Ans: Each application can be examined on a case-by-case basis depending on local circumstances.

27. In your opinion, what were the main negatives, if any, of adopting a flexible approach throughout the Covid-19 pandemic?

Ans: As previously stated a flexible approach can lead to difficulties in maintaining consistency particularly in relation to enforcement.⁹

28. Since the easing of restrictions on indoor services in bars, restaurants etc. on 26 July 2021 have you noticed any change in the number of applications for pavement café licences?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes, there has been a downturn in applications
 Yes, there has been an increase in applications
 There has been no change

29. Since the easing of restrictions on indoor services in bars, restaurants etc. on 26 July 2021 have you noticed any change in the number of renewals for pavement café licences?

Please select only one item

- Yes, there has been a downturn in renewals
 Yes, there has been an increase in renewals
 There has been no change

Any other comments

30. Do you have any other comments regarding the pavement café licensing scheme?

Ans: The issue of pavement café licensing has been discussed at Council committee and the agreed zero fee structure has been widely publicised in the press. However, MUDC are considering reviewing the fee structure and will seek to bring a review paper to a future committee meeting for Members consideration.

The following option is voluntary, please be advised that the security of emails in transit across the internet cannot be guaranteed, as we are not in control over what security protocols are in place with your email provider once the email has been sent.

Report on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christmas Off Street, Car Parking Charges - Dungannon and Magherafelt. 2. TV Christmas Promotional Campaign for Retail and Hospitality. 3. Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events 2023/2024 4. Project Gigabit – Public Review 5. ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages
Date of Meeting	14 September 2023
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes.

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Christmas Off Street Car Parking Charges Dungannon & Magherafelt</p> <p>For the past eight years, a Christmas car parking scheme has been implemented in Dungannon and Magherafelt town centres to boost trading during the key Christmas period.</p> <p>Following positive feedback from businesses and the public, it is proposed to bring into effect a similar scheme this Christmas to support the local retail sector.</p>
2.2	<p>TV Christmas Promotional Campaign for Retail and Hospitality</p> <p>Council wishes to support our vibrant retail and hospitality businesses during the festive period and therefore, wish to develop an engaging and high profile TV Christmas Promotional Campaign to attract footfall to our town centres.</p>

<p>2.3</p>	<p>Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events 2023/2024</p> <p>The tourism team continue to work in association with Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland and other strategic partners to maximise tourism promotion of our key attractions, experiences and businesses targeting core ROI, UK, European and US markets.</p> <p>In the aftermath of the covid pandemic, most promotions and events are now back to a fully in-person model, with little to no virtual events. Through research, experience, and stakeholder engagement, the MUDC tourism team have identified key promotions and shows that are important to attend.</p>
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Project Gigabit – Public Review</p> <p>The Department for the Economy (DfE) recently undertook a public review on the broadband intervention project known as Project Gigabit, which launched on 5 June and ended on 6 July 2023.</p>
<p>2.5</p>	<p>ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages</p> <p>The Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) is currently working with partner Councils to develop and submit a major funding bid under the Peace Plus Investment Area 2.4: Smart Towns and Villages, which is anticipated to open in November 2023.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Christmas Off Street Car Parking Charges Dungannon and Magherafelt</p> <p>As part of this year’s Christmas Promotional Campaign, officers have considered options for a car-parking scheme in Dungannon and Magherafelt town centres. The proposed pricing arrangements are aimed at encouraging footfall and spend, boosting town centre trade during the critical festive trading period – one of the busiest times of the year. Following positive feedback from trader groups, it is proposed to implement a similar scheme to last year as follows:</p> <p>The first three hours parking for 10 pence in <u>all</u> Pay & Display Car Parks for a six-week period from Saturday 25 November 2023 to Saturday 6 January 2024. Total cost to Council of implementation is approximately £24,000.</p> <p>The normal tariff is 40p for 1 hour (except for Central in Magherafelt, which has a tariff of 40p per three hours) and the proposed pricing arrangements are intended to boost town centre trade at one of the busiest times of the year. The very nominal fee of 10p for the first three hours is being charged to prevent “all day parkers” and ensure town centre car parks are available to visitors and shoppers.</p>

Car parks included in the scheme are:

- Dungannon - Ann Street East, Castle Hill, Perry Street West and Scotch Street North
- Magherafelt - Rainey Street, Union Road and Central.

3.2 TV Christmas Promotional Campaign for Retail and Hospitality

Council wishes to procure the services of a professional company to design and deliver a Christmas promotional video suitable for TV and other social media channels. This will involve investigating and securing TV advertising and YouTube pay per click for the Christmas Promotional Video. The promotional video will be used in marketing campaigns during this period. The TV campaign will enhance the profile of the retail and hospitality offering in Mid Ulster as a must visit experience destination this Christmas.

3.3 Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events 2023/2024

The key shows and events the tourism team have/plan to attend are as follows:

- [Clogher Valley Show](#), 26 July 2023 - **£1,000** (completed).
- [Flavours of Ireland, London](#), 5 October 2023 - The full cost of participation at this event is €520/£452 plus VAT, however, Tourism Ireland will support 75% of the participation fee, therefore the cost to participate is £113 plus VAT per industry member. Flights approx.: £45pp. Hotel approx: £300 (1 night). **Total cost: £500 approx – recommended one member of tourism staff attends.**
- [Irish Tour Operators Association \(ITOA\) workshop, Armagh City Hotel](#) - 15 November 2023 - **£240 – recommend one member of tourism staff attends.**
- [World Travel Market, London](#), 6 – 8 November 2023 – cost of stand £2,500 approx. Flights approx. £60pp. Hotel approx., £1,200 for one room 4 nights. **Total costs: £3,760 approx – recommend one member of staff attends.**
- [Holiday World, Dublin](#), 26 – 28 January 2024 – **€2,154 approx – recommend two members of staff attend.**
- [Travel News Market, The Nordics, Sweden](#), February 2024 – cost of stand £344 +VAT, flights: £103pp approx., Hotel: £350 approx. **Total spend: approx. £797 – recommend one member of staff attends.**
- [Meet The Buyer, Belfast](#), March 2024 – **Price TBC (staff mileage/expenses) – recommend two members of staff attend.**

The tourism team will continue to host familiarisation trips for media, influencers, and tour operators to promote our current and new products and newly developed tourism experiences.

Outcomes from Tourism staff attendance at Events and Shows in the last financial year;

World Travel Market (London November 2022)

- Launched the new Loughinsholin Cluster in London (previously known as Seamus Heaney Cluster)
- El Travel (US Tour Operator) - hosted a joint familiarisation visit with Loughinsholin Cluster and Visit Mid Ulster – Friday 24 Feb 2023

Meet the Buyer (Belfast March 2023)

- Holiday Ireland Hotels - “New Year’s” tour scheduled for OM in December 2023
- Prime Tours (Dubai) - tour scheduled at OM, Beaghmore and Embrace Tours October 2023
- Pursuing new Photography Tour Group at OM - group series commencing 2024.
- Alainn Tours (Sligo) - Hosting familiarisation visit to OM 26 August 2023
- Prime Tours (Dubai) hoping to add Mid Ulster to future tour series.

Clogher Valley Show (July 2023)

- Launch of the new Visit Mid Ulster tourism map.
- Data capture for tourism ezine.

Nordics Workshop (Copenhagen February 2023)

- Mid Ulster Tourism featured on Tourism Ireland travel podcast.
- Familiarization Trip organised from this workshop in March 2023 – 12 Tour Operators from Nordics Region visited Mid Ulster.
- To date one confirmed Tour Operator – Claus Hebor - has added Mid Ulster to their Tour series as a result of Mid Ulster attendance at event.
- International influencer trips have taken place in Mid Ulster with social media coverage and a new audience reached as an outcome.
- Increased awareness of Mid Ulster Tourism offering in the Nordics market.

3.4

Project Gigabit – Public Review

The Department for the Economy (DfE) had previously asked all Councils for assistance to support awareness raising of their Public Review on the broadband intervention project known as Project Gigabit. The public review was open for one month only from 5 June 2023 until 6 July 2023. This new intervention is designed to pick up any premises that could not avail of Project Stratum.

Council's Economic Development Team did raise awareness of this Public Review across our district, via social media channels, business and community networks/databases/newsletters, etc.

Members and Officers were not satisfied that the review timeframe was long enough and also wished to have sight of the datasets to allow Council Officers to examine if there were still going to be gaps in provision.

Members recommended previously that the Council Chair write to DfE to seek a two-month extension to the consultation period, until 6 September 2023, to allow time for greater awareness raising to take place about the Project Gigabit consultation.

Members further recommended that Council request from DfE the recent information they had collected from broadband infrastructure providers to help identify and map the addresses/postcodes where remaining gaps in broadband provision still exist.

DfE responded to the Chair's letter to say they were unable to provide an extension period to the consultation, however, they would accept from MUDC any ongoing issues raised.

One such issue has been raised a Council Officer regarding the Clogher Valley area, post the closing date of 6 July 2023 and was forwarded to DfE. DfE have since advised they have added these premises to the Project Gigabit list.

Correspondence has been issued to all Council Members to make them aware that if there are any ongoing issues related to Project Gigabit they should contact Council's Economic Regeneration Services Manager.

DfE has supplied Council with a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) to sign prior to releasing the Project Gigabit datasets. The NDA (**Appendix 1**) is currently being reviewed by Council Legal Services team. Once this is completed, delegated authority is sought for the Chief Executive to sign and return the NDA to DfE, which will then enable DfE to release the Project Gigabit datasets to Council.

3.5 ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages

ICBAN staff is currently developing a funding bid in association with partner Councils, Southern Regional College, Western Development Commission and International Centre for Local & Regional Development, under Investment Area 2.4: Smart Towns and Villages, which is anticipated will open to applications in November 2023.

The application aims to strategically invest in digital services, digital supports and digital spaces (DS³) to modernise, grow and future-proof a cluster of challenged towns and villages in the Central Border Region. The six themes currently under consideration for inclusion at this development stage (and still

	<p>subject to change) are:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Investment and Monitoring Platform 2. Investing in new digital hubs and enhancing the offering and experience of existing hub facilities 3. Enhancing the Urban / Village Centre Experience 4. Twin Transition towards Greener and Smarter Centres 5. Digital Mentoring Programme 6. Learning and Sharing <p>ICBAN holds regular meetings with all partners.</p> <p>ICBAN now wishes to procure the services of a contractor to assist in co-ordinating the final submission to Peace Plus under Investment Area 2.4, which is anticipated to open November 2023.</p> <p>Mid Ulster Council has been asked to provide a partner funding contribution of up to £1,500 (sterling) towards costs associated with employment of a contractor to coordinate a major funding bid (circ. €6 million) on behalf of the ICBAN region.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p>
	<p>Financial</p> <p>Christmas Off Street Car Parking Charges Dungannon and Magherafelt - £24,000 available within the Economic Development Budget this financial year.</p> <p>TV Christmas Promotional Campaign for Retail and Hospitality - The estimated cost for the TV Christmas promotion is approximately £35,000 which has been earmarked in the Economic Development budget.</p> <p>Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events 2023/2024 – Approx tourism budget of £10,000 earmarked to cover all costs including stand hire, travel, overnight accommodation, and relevant expenses related to staff travelling.</p> <p>ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages - Funding contribution of up to £1,500 (sterling) towards costs associated with employment of a contractor to coordinate a major funding bid (circ. €6 million) on behalf of the ICBAN region.</p>
	<p>Human - Officer time</p>

	Risk Management – Officers will manage delivery of programmes in line with current Governance arrangements.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications
	Rural Needs Implications
5.0	Recommendation(s)
	It is recommended that Members:
5.1	<p>Christmas Off Street, Car Parking Charges Dungannon and Magherafelt</p> <p>Approve the temporary reduced tariff for the First 3 Hours of 10 pence in all Off Street Pay and Display Car Parks in Dungannon and Magherafelt from Saturday 25 November 2023 to Saturday 6 January 2024 (6-week period) at a cost to Council of £24,000.</p>
5.2	<p>TV Christmas Promotional Campaign for Retail and Hospitality</p> <p>Approve the development of a high profile Christmas Promotional Campaign (involving TV and other social media channels) to support the Retail and Hospitality sectors during the festive period at an approximate cost of £35,000 with funding from Council’s Economic Development budget.</p>
5.3	<p>Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events 2023/2024</p> <p>Approve officer attendance at the various Tourism Trade and Consumer Shows/Events in 2023/2024 as detailed in the report, at a cost of circa. £10,000 from Council’s Tourism budget.</p>
5.4	<p>Project Gigabit – Public Review</p> <p>5.4.1 Note update on Project Gigabit.</p> <p>5.4.2 Approve delegated authority be given to Council’s Chief Executive to sign and return the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) to the Department for the Economy to enable release of Project Gigabit datasets, upon Council’s legal team having satisfactorily completed their review of the NDA.</p>
5.5	<p>ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages</p> <p>5.5.1 Note progress of funding bid.</p>

	<p>5.5.2 Approve a partner funding contribution to the Irish Central Border Area Network of up to £1,500 (sterling) towards costs associated with employment of a contractor to coordinate a major funding bid (circ. €6 million) on behalf of the ICBAN region, related to Smart Towns and Villages.</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Documents Attached & References</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - DfE Digital Infrastructure – Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)</p>

Appendix 1 – Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA)

DATED 3 July 2023

(1) DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY

AND

(2) [MID ULSTER COUNCIL]

NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

**IN RESPECT OF INFORMATION DISCLOSED IN CONNECTION WITH DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES**

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THIS AGREEMENT is made on

2021

BETWEEN:

- (1) **DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY** of Adelaide House, 39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FD (the "**Authority**"); and
- (2) **[MID ULSTER COUNCIL]** of [insert] (the "**Council**").

WHEREAS:

- (A) The Parties may disclose Confidential Information to each other in connection with the Authority Programmes.
- (B) The terms of this Agreement apply to the treatment of Confidential Information.

IT IS AGREED as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 In this Agreement unless the context otherwise requires the following words shall have the following meanings:

Agreement	means the Clauses in and the Schedules to this agreement;
Authority	has the meaning given to that term on page 1 of this Agreement;
Authority Programmes	means the digital infrastructure policy initiatives and/or programmes of the Authority from time to time (including Project Gigabit;
Confidential Information	means the relevant information described in the second column of the table in Schedule 1 to this Agreement, in whatever medium or form (including information conveyed in writing, orally, visually or electronically);
Discloser	means the Party which discloses the relevant Confidential Information;
FOI Legislation	means FOIA and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, together with any relevant guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or any relevant central government body;
FOIA	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under that Act from time to time;
Information Request	means a request for information within the meaning of section 8 of FOIA;
Party	means a party to this Agreement;
Premise Level Data	has the meaning given in paragraph 1.1 of Schedule 2;

Purpose	means any purposes necessary in connection with the Authority Programmes;
Receiver	means the Party which receives the relevant Confidential Information from the Discloser;
Council	has the meaning given to that term on page 1 of this Agreement.

1.2 In this Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1.2.1 the singular shall include the plural and vice versa and one gender shall include the other;
- 1.2.2 a reference to any law shall include a reference to such law as amended, extended, consolidated or re-enacted from time to time, including any law as amended or repealed to deal with the UK's exit from the European Union;
- 1.2.3 any phrase introduced by the words 'including', 'includes', 'in particular', 'for example' or similar shall be construed as illustrative and without limitation to the generality of the related general words; and
- 1.2.4 references to Clauses and Schedules shall, unless otherwise expressly provided, mean references to clauses in, and schedules to, this Agreement.

2. **CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKINGS**

2.1 In consideration of the Parties agreeing to the terms of this Agreement and to disclose Confidential Information, the Receiver undertakes to the Discloser that, with respect to any and all Confidential Information disclosed to the Receiver (or to any person on behalf of the Receiver or by any person on behalf of the Discloser), the Receiver shall:

- 2.1.1 treat all Confidential Information as strictly confidential and keep it in safe and secure custody (as is appropriate depending upon the form in which such information is recorded and stored and the nature of the Confidential Information);
- 2.1.2 not disclose, copy, reproduce, publish or distribute the Confidential Information (or any part) to any person save to the extent expressly permitted under this Agreement or otherwise authorised by the Discloser in writing;
- 2.1.3 respect any existing proprietary rights in the Confidential Information;
- 2.1.4 use the Confidential Information solely and exclusively for the Purpose; and
- 2.1.5 inform the other Party immediately upon becoming aware or suspecting any unauthorised access, copying, use or disclosure in any form of Confidential Information.

2.2 Clause 2.1 shall not, or shall cease to, apply to the extent that any Confidential Information:

- 2.2.1 is or becomes generally known or available to the public (other than as a direct or indirect result of a disclosure in breach of this Agreement or any confidentiality undertaking given by any other person);
- 2.2.2 is already known to the Receiver prior to disclosure by the Discloser or any other person on behalf of the Discloser and such prior knowledge can be evidenced by the written records of the Receiver;

- 2.2.3 is or becomes known to the Receiver by disclosure from a third party (other than where such disclosure is itself subject to an obligation of confidentiality);
 - 2.2.4 is not required to be treated as Confidential Information, as expressly confirmed by the Discloser in writing; or
 - 2.2.5 is required to be disclosed by any applicable law or governmental or regulatory authority (including the National Audit Office and in respect of any parliamentary reporting requirement), provided that Clause 4 shall apply in respect of disclosures required by the FOI Legislation.
- 2.3 Schedule 2 contains certain additional terms in relation to specific Confidential Information.

3. **DISCLOSURE RIGHTS**

- 3.1 Unless provided otherwise in Schedule 1 in respect of specific Confidential Information:
- 3.1.1 each Party shall be entitled to disclose Confidential Information to:
 - (a) its directors, officers, employees, agents, consultants and contractors who are directly involved with the Purpose and need to know the Confidential Information for that purpose;
 - (b) its professional advisers for the purpose of obtaining advice in connection with the Purpose or this Agreement;
 - 3.1.2 the Authority shall be entitled to disclose Confidential Information disclosed by the Council:
 - (a) subject to Clause 2.2.5, to any UK central government body (including their professional advisers and consultants) for the Purpose;
 - (b) to other public bodies (including BDUK/DCMS) who are involved with the Purpose; and
 - 3.1.3 the Council shall be entitled to disclose Confidential Information disclosed by the Authority to the Council's sub-contractors (including relevant sub-contractor personnel) who are directly involved with the Purpose and need to know the Confidential Information for the Purpose,

provided that for the purpose of this Clause 3.1 the Party which discloses the Confidential Information under Clause 3.1.1, 3.1.2 or 3.1.3 (as the case may be) shall remain responsible and liable for compliance with the confidentiality obligations set out in this Agreement by the persons to whom the disclosure has been made as if those persons are parties to this Agreement.

4. **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Council acknowledges that the Authority is subject to the FOI Legislation and agrees to assist and co-operate with the Authority to enable the Authority to comply with its obligations under the FOI Legislation.
- 4.2 The Council shall promptly:
- 4.2.1 give the Authority notice of any Information Request it receives relating to the disclosure of information relevant to the Authority and/or the relevant Authority Programme (including any relevant Confidential Information);

- 4.2.2 where requested by the Authority, provide the Authority with any information necessary to enable the Authority to respond to an Information Request received by the Authority; and
 - 4.2.3 where requested by the Authority and subject to Clause 4.3, agree with the Authority whether and what information is to be disclosed, and the basis upon which any exemptions under the FOI Legislation are to be applied.
- 4.3 The Authority may be obliged under the FOI Legislation to disclose Confidential Information provided by the Council without consulting with the Council provided that in such circumstances the Authority shall take reasonable steps, where appropriate, to give the Council advance notice of the disclosure, or failing that, to draw the disclosure to the Council's attention after the disclosure.
- 4.4 This Clause 4 shall survive the expiry or earlier termination of this Agreement.

5. **TERM**

Unless the Parties agree otherwise in Schedule 1 in respect of specific Confidential Information, this Agreement shall remain in force for so long as the relevant Confidential Information remains of a confidential nature.

6. **RETURN/DESTRUCTION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Upon the Discloser's reasonable written request, the Receiver shall promptly:
- 6.1.1 return or destroy relevant Confidential Information (including any copies), including any documents or other materials which incorporate the relevant Confidential Information; and
 - 6.1.2 provide written confirmation to the Discloser that the relevant Confidential Information has been destroyed and/or that no copies of the relevant Confidential Information have been retained by the Receiver.

7. **LIABILITY**

- 7.1 Neither Party shall be liable to the other Party for any indirect, special or consequential loss (of any kind).
- 7.2 Nothing in this Agreement shall limit or exclude either Party's liability which cannot be excluded or limited by law.
- 7.3 Subject to Clauses 7.1 and 7.2, the liability of each Party to the other Party for all losses under or in relation to this Agreement, whether arising in contract, tort (including negligence) or otherwise, shall not exceed £5,000,000 (five million pounds sterling) in aggregate.

8. **EQUITABLE REMEDIES**

The Parties acknowledge that damages alone may not be an adequate remedy for breaches of this Agreement. Accordingly, the affected Party shall be entitled to the remedies of injunction, specific performance and other equitable relief, or any combination of these remedies, for any threatened or actual breach of this Agreement, and no proof of special damages will be necessary to enforce this Agreement.

9. **ASSIGNMENT**

The Council shall not assign or otherwise transfer any of its rights or obligations under this Agreement without the written consent of the Authority.

10. **THIRD PARTY RIGHTS**

Nothing in this Agreement shall confer on any third party any benefits under the provisions of the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999. This does not affect any Party's rights or remedies, or the rights of any other person, which may exist or are available other than by virtue of that Act.

11. **WAIVER AND INVALIDITY**

11.1 A waiver by any Party of any breach of, or default in, any term or condition of this Agreement shall not constitute a waiver of or any assent to any succeeding breach of, or default in, the same or any other term or condition.

11.2 If any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable for any reason by any court of competent jurisdiction, such provision shall be severed and the remainder of the provisions will continue in full force and effect as if the relevant provision had been deleted.

12. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding between the Parties in respect of the matters relating to the treatment of Confidential Information contained within this Agreement. Each Party acknowledges and agrees that it does not rely on and shall have not have any remedy in respect of any statement, representation, warranty or undertaking other than as expressly set out in this Agreement, provided that nothing in this Agreement shall operate to exclude any liability for fraud.

13. **VARIATION**

This Agreement may only be amended or varied by agreement of the Parties in writing.

14. **COUNTERPARTS**

This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which when executed and delivered will be an original, and all the counterparts together will constitute one and the same instrument. Transmission of a signed counterpart of this Agreement by email in PDF format shall take effect as delivery of a signed counterpart of this Agreement. If this method of delivery is adopted, without prejudice to the validity of the agreement so made, the Parties shall provide each other with the original of such counterpart as soon as is reasonably practicable

15. **GOVERNING LAW AND JURISDICTION**

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with Northern Ireland law and the Parties irrevocably submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Northern Ireland courts in relation to any matters arising out of, or in connection, with this Agreement.

This Agreement has been entered into on the date stated at the beginning of it.

SIGNED for the **DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY** by

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

who is authorised in that regard

SIGNED for and on behalf of **[MID ULSTER COUNCIL]** by

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

SCHEDULE 1 – SPECIFIC CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION (OVERVIEW)

Discloser	Confidential Information	Purpose of Disclosure (see the definition of Purpose)	Disclosure Rights (see Clause 3)	Period of Confidentiality (see Clause 5)
Council	Premise Level Data	As set out in paragraph 1.2.2 of Schedule 2	As set out in Clause 3.1 and paragraph 1.2 of Schedule 2	As set out in Clause 5

SCHEDULE 2 – SPECIFIC CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION (TERMS)

This Schedule contains certain terms that are applicable to specific Confidential Information.

1. PREMISE LEVEL DATA

- 1.1 In this Agreement, "**Premise Level Data**" means data covering England, Wales and NI, relating to current and planned coverage. This will extend three years into the future, and include data on current and future technology, speeds available, and the date of any future rollout, provided that the data shall be at UPRN level.
- 1.2 The Council acknowledges and agrees that:
 - 1.2.1 the Premise Level Data is treated as Confidential Information of the Authority under this Agreement;
 - 1.2.2 the Premise Level Data is provided for the sole purpose of enabling the Council to advise on appropriate areas for subsidy intervention which form part of the Government's UK Gigabit Programme;
 - 1.2.3 the Council shall not make any announcement (including, without limitation, any communication to the public, any clients or any representatives of the press, television, radio or other media) regarding the Premise Level Data;
- 1.3 The Council shall immediately notify the Authority upon the occurrence of any suspected or actual breach of its obligations in paragraph 1.2.2 and/or 1.2.3.

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Wednesday 5 July 2023 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor McNamee, Chair

Councillors Bell, W Buchanan, F Burton, Clarke, Corry*, McLernon*, McQuade*, Molloy, Monteith*, Milne*, Quinn, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mr Black, Strategic Director Communities & Place (SD: C&P)

Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W)

Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev)**

Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) **

Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT

Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer

Others in Attendance

Agenda Item 5 – T:BUC Funding Streams

Mr Gardner – Head of Good Relations***

Councillor Robinson***

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes Others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor McNamee in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee in the chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D101/23 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

D102/23 Apologies

Councillors Black, Forde and Gildernew.

D103/23 Declaration of Interests

The Chair, Councillor reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

Councillor W Buchanan declared an interest in agenda item 6 – Development Report – Community Festival Grants – Crossdernott Parish Church.

D104/23 Chair's Business

Councillor Wilson advised that a new Squash Club had been formed in Mid Ulster and the Deputy Chair had attended the launch on Saturday where it was raised about the possibility of using sponsorship signage within or around the courts. The member stated that there was currently no policy in Council to allow them to do that but a policy was in place for outdoor sports at MUSA and various other places. The member asked if it would be possible for Officers to investigate to see if this type of sponsorship could be permitted which would allow the Squash Club or any other type of club to raise funds for themselves.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place advised the member that this would be investigated.

D105/23 Deputation: T:BUC Funding Streams

The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed Mr Gardner from T:BUC to the committee and invited him to address the committee.

Mr Gardner advised members that he was aware that this was a new Council and wished to update members on the Review of the T:BUC Strategy. He stated that T:BUC stood for 'Together: Building a United Community' which was the Executive's wider supported strategy to improve good relations and eradicate sectarianism. It had seven headline actions which is delivered across key nomadic areas including education, housing, engaging young people and interfaces which was approved by Ministers before they left their posts, although it was 10 years old. Mr Gardner stated that out of the seven headline actions, five had successfully been delivered and significant progress had been made in other complex areas including the reduction and removal of interface barriers and the building of shared education campuses. He advised that the approach to good relations was the same as 10 years ago but the issues that society is facing is considerably different within the last 3 years with communities dealing with covid, impact of brexit and the cost of living amongst other things. He stated that the fabric of society has also changed considerably with Northern Ireland becoming a more diverse place with diversity only going to increase moving forward, with age old sectarianism still remaining. Stakeholders have been asked what they would like to see done differently with a number of key themes emerging in the review including: Social Economic Issues, Funding and More Social Inclusion.

The Chair thanked Mr Gardner for his presentation and enquired if T:BUC were planning a review of the current strategy should Stormont Ministers return or just a refresh on what was currently there already.

Mr Gardner advised that potentially there could be a new approach to Good Relations more broadly. He stated that the review has not been finalised yet and should be concluded over the summer months.

Councillor Monteith said that although the presentation alluded to top level things he was curious to know if any of the T:BUC money has been sent to the Mid Ulster area. The member stated that another concern he would have is that it seemed to be very urban based and not a lot of opportunities for rural communities.

Mr Gardner in referring to the Member's queries advised that T:BUC have been working with Rural Community Network to ensure a better spread of areas moving forward. One of the issues within rural areas is that sometimes they are largely single identity and because T:BUC has to fund cross-community work there is often a lack of infrastructure to support that in terms of transport to a venue or a venue to host good relations activities. Mr Gardner agreed that there was a piece of work to do in terms of the wrap-around support to make sure that people in the rural areas can also access and improve the services that are there.

In terms of the breakdown in Mid Ulster, Mr Gardner advised that there was significant delivery across the programmes for central good relations funds including Councils based programmes, T:BUC camps, shared housing which all has aspects of delivery. He advised that their work is mapped and one of the things that T:BUC faces is that some of the larger organisations were based in or around Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, with a lot of the funding streams being merit based and often came down to whoever has the resources to spend the time writing hi-tech application forms which can sometimes put some rural applicants off and being a step behind. He hoped that funding can be targetted more effectively and a place based effect essentially to make sure that each area gets what it needs.

The Chair thanked Mr Gardner for attending the meeting tonight.

Mr Gardner withdrew from the meeting at 7.18 pm.

Matters for Decision

D106/23 Development Report

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report to update members and to seek approval for the following:

- Community Grants Rolling Programme
- Irish Language Bursary and Activity Grants
- Development Update

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation as it was good to see money being distributed through community groups, sports organisations and anything else which do such good work for everyone.

Councillor Corry referred to the Community Wealth Building plan with DTNI and DfC and sought clarification on whether a timeframe has been decided yet and when the next working group meeting will be.

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) advised that quite a bit of detailed work had taken place with DTNI in relation to setting parameters and background work on how it was going to be brought forward. The AD: Dev said it was planned to hold a meeting, with SD: C&P, Social Inclusion Manager and herself to discuss the test and learn plan and getting the working group meeting organised in September. She stated that there had been a recent presentation with SMT.

The AD: Dev stated that Officers would like to see a draft action plan for the Autumn because we are conscious of getting a number of testing pilots in place so to inform the full plan going forward which she anticipated to be the Autumn and the working group up and running again in early September in terms of discussing the next stages.

The SD: C&P agreed that it was hoped to get the working group back together by September. The Test and Learn Action Plan will be pulled together over the summer and its delivery will be used to shape and the full Community Wealth Building framework and action plan for the Council going forward. The SD: C&P said that it was hoped to bring to the meeting in September the completed Test and Learn Action Plan as we see it, based on the engagement which is to be hosted over the summer.

Councillor Molloy said that it was great to see the rolling, community and sports grants all rolled out for the fantastic work which is going on. The member said to see such a broad spectrum of successful applicants was great to see and a good news story for this Council and the Officers which put it together.

Councillor Monteith said he would like to raise two issues.

Firstly, he wished to raise the issue of Social Inclusion – Housing Conference and the key outcomes. The member said that it was not clear how these key outcomes were going to be taken forward and asked if an update could be provided to him within the next week or two. The member advised that there was a lot work to be done and may be unrealistic to think that it may be all done but was conscious that there did not seem to be anything to say who was taking which bit forward. He felt that the bit that was missing from this whole concept of dealing with housing was that there needed to be discussions with people who are living this, there needs to be a way of speaking to the people affected by the housing crisis, people on waiting lists for houses, people in rented accommodation that they cannot afford, people in houses of multiple Occupation (HMO) where there were unacceptable standards. The member said that there needs to be a mechanism put in place but was unsure how this can be achieved here tonight. He said that the conference was great and very enjoyable but there were very few people in that room sitting on a waiting list for a house, the room on the day felt very bureaucratic. The member asked that some thought process be put into how we talk to people who are at the coalface of this, people who were affected on a day to day basis as they needed help now and listened to as there was no-one taking on board what they were saying and our role should be to facilitate them to get their voices heard at these events.

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) advised that the Housing Report was currently being drawn up and would be shared with all Councillors along with the Housing presentation so all members are kept up to date. The AD: Dev advised that a follow up would be taking place with the Housing Working Group and one of the things which would be looked at is putting an action plan in place for who is responsible and there will be things we can potentially look at in the short term and other things which would still be policy based areas. The AD: Dev advised that she was aware that new policies were being investigated at the moment or had started in the last administration and hopefully will be looked at again to take forward. An action plan will be looked at with the Working Group and engagement with the wider Councillor group also which will be built in with doing a session with people with regard to where they are at. The AD: Dev said that she appreciated that everyone was talking from a point of view of Government, Policy and Developer prospective but would try and get the voice of the people who were not represented.

Councillor Monteith referred to his second matter which related to the Hill of The O'Neill over the next couple of years. The Member stated that now the election was over it was time to raise the issue of the British Military mast on the site where the strategic community plan cannot be developed on the site to its full potential whilst the mast is still present.

Councillor Monteith said that it would be beneficial to reignite the meeting which was ongoing a few months back as there was some progress made and although all the answers may not have been acquired that was sought, there were conversations with the people responsible for getting the mast removed.

Councillor Monteith proposed to reignite the meetings with DfI and NI Water regarding the removal of the mast.

The AD: Dev apologised as this was something she should have updated members on. She said the conversation which was proposed by members was brought forward and Officers had met with NI Water and a study started and will arrange to get an update to members on the study. She advised that the study was looking at a range of options such as relocation, potential reduction in size, potential camouflage amongst a range of other things. The AD: Dev advised that NI Water had employed specialist consultants to look at it as there were a lot of issues to take in terms of the range of users which will take a few months to do but will keep members up to date.

Councillor Quinn welcomed the report and looking at the grants and the sheer variety of groups i.e. arts, sports, community groups etc. felt that this should be something the Council should be praised for especially relating to the arts. The member advised that he had been speaking to someone today who stated that Northern Ireland does not invest in the arts compared to the Republic of Ireland and his simple answer was to look at Mid Ulster Council because we actually prioritise which was fantastic to see and commended everyone involved.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Quinn and said that this was always a good news story every year for our Community Grants and a lot of groups out in the community were very happy to avail of this funding every year.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- Agree the rolling community grant allocations
- Approve the annual Regional Minority Language Bursary Awards and Irish Language Activity Funding.
- Note the Development Update

D107/23 Extension of the Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

The Assistant of Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to seek continued approval for the renewal of Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) for the provision of Tobacco Control and Health Inequalities work for the period April 2023 – March 2024.

Proposed by Councillor W Buchanan
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted for the signing of the renewal Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the provision of Tobacco Control and Health Inequalities work for the period April 2023 – March 2024.

D108/23 Health and Wellbeing Programmes

The Assistant of Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to provide an update to Members on the current programmes available to residents within our District through Council's Health, Leisure and Wellbeing service and to seek approval to sign the proposed MUDC/NIFRS Partnership Agreement in relation to the Home Safety Programme Referral pathway.

Councillor Corry said she was happy to propose the recommendation as there were a lot of good programmes which the AD: HL&W alluded to and doing brilliant work throughout the Mid Ulster area and commended the Council team also.

Councillor Corry referred to Macmillan Move More and advised that she engages quite a bit with the users of that programme who find it very beneficial going through their life living with cancer and was aware of the funding last year as being 50/50 between Council and Macmillan up to March 2024. The Member advised that it has been raised with her and was also conscious that the contract ends in 9 month's time and asked if there was any update on that or can any further information can be sought on the engagement with Macmillan to see if the programme would be continuing going forward.

The AD: HL&W said that this was previously 100% funded programme by Macmillan and then the funding mechanism changed last year for all Councils as we contribute on

a 50% basis. The AD: HL&W said that this was something which has been raised with Macmillan right from the outset of last year, there is a steering group meeting with the partnership in August with Macmillan and all the Councils to see what the plans and the approach was going to be after March 2024. He said that after the meeting in August he hoped that he would be in a position to bring back an update around what the programme may look like.

Councillor F Burton declared an interest in Agewell as sits on the Partnership.

Councillor F Burton referred to Home Safety – supported with funding via the Public Health Agency. The Member said that she was aware of the Officers doing a lot of front face work as a lot of people quite often live on their own. She stated that she was speaking to someone quite recently at a Community Transport meeting and one of the things that the Health Trusts were saying is that someone living on their own in isolated areas was that loneliness is having a detrimental affect on their lives and anything that we can do to partner with other agencies to ensure that referrals are made to guarantee people are supported in their own homes. The member referred to Make a Change to encourage people to eat healthier and changing their lifestyle to be more active with 1-2-1 support available and felt that anything that can be done to support this is very worthwhile.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to signing the proposed Partnership Agreement between Mid Ulster District Council and the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service in relation to the Home Safety Programme Referral pathway.

D109/23 Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan

The Assistant of Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to update Members on the progress of the Ageing Well Initiative and to seek approval for the formal adoption of the Mid Ulster District Council Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan.

Proposed by Councillor F Burton
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted for the formal adoption of the enclosed Mid Ulster Council Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan.

D110/23 Funding Offer from Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 2023-2024

The Assistant of Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to inform Council of a potential funding opportunity for the Environmental Health service area from the OPSS for 'The Capacity & Capability

Building Programme in Northern Ireland: Non-Food Products 2023/24'. Funding is for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Councillor Wilson enquired if there was an Officer in place.

The AD: HL&W advised that currently there is recruitment ongoing for vacancy at the moment with interviews due to take place between now and the end of July. It was hoped if Council were able to avail of this funding that a temporary job offer could be made as part of this recruitment to tie Council over to March 2024.

Councillor Wilson said that the reason he raised the issue was because funding was in place last year with an Officer in place and obviously their contract has run out.

The AD: HL&W stated that there was the capacity a number of months ago with a number of changes within the team and Officers moving on meaning that the team were down a resource but was hopeful that this vacancy can now be filled.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to accept the offer of funding from OPPS (up to a maximum of £55,000) in relation to activities undertaken in 2023/2024, and if accepted, that it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to sign and return the funding agreement between Mid Ulster District Council and the Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

D111/23 Economic Development – July 2023 - OBFD

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report to update on key activities as detailed below:

- **Rural Micro Business Development Scheme 2023**

Councillor Molloy said he was aware that the expected start was in September and enquired what was the closing timescale for spend was which he felt could be seen as a tight turnaround. The member enquired if there would be a database available which was previously used as it may not have been relevant at that stage but could provide a heads up in preparation for it.

The AD: EDT&SP referred to the timeline for spend and said that this had to be worked through with the funder (DAERA). She indicated it is expected the application process may be open for approximately one month, however this would be finalised in the coming weeks, as would the timeframe when businesses that were awarded fundings had to submit their final claims. She noted that Council staff require a period of time, prior to the end of March 2024, to complete actions related to programme closure.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that the Programme would be promoted widely using Council's business directory database which includes over 1000 businesses and via Council's social media platforms as well through AD: Dev's team to reach rural communities. She also advised that Members will be notified when the scheme opens to enable them to promote their network to contacts also.

Councillor Burton enquired if this scheme was the one which quite often was oversubscribed and asked if funding was provided last year to an applicant would new applicants this year get first preference. The Member referred to small businesses within the Dungannon Local Farmers Market and enquired if they could apply for this funding.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that Officers had been speaking to businesses involved with the Farmers Market to make them aware of potential funding opportunities, including this scheme. She stated that Council is awaiting a letter of offer from DAERA and when in receipt of such, the scheme criteria will be finalised. She said that her team are familiar with the issues likely to arise and are in regular liaison with DAERA. She advised her staff would enquire whether it was feasible to give preference to new business applicants who hadn't been awarded TRPSI funding before and would report back to the member.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve Council's participation in the 2023 Rural Business Development Grants Scheme and delegate authority to the Chief Executive to sign any forthcoming letter of offer from DAERA related to the Scheme.

- **Covid 19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme**

Proposed by Councillor F Burton
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve authority for the Chief Executive to sign the Covid-19 Recovery Programme Letter of Variance on Appendix 1, dated 21 June 2023 which grants an extension to the period of funding to 31 March 2024, and to return the signed letter to the Department for Communities immediately following the Development Committee to meet the Department's response timeframe.

- **Great Days Out**

Proposed by Councillor F Burton
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve delivery of the Great Days Out event 2023 in the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown on 18 October 2023 at the cost of £2,500.

- **Sperrins Walking Programme**

Councillor F Burton welcomed the fact that this was about publicity and would be important to try and ensure that all the other walking places gets a heads up at that particular time.

Proposed by Councillor Burton
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve delivery of the Sperrins Walking Programme with the four Councils involved in Sperrins Partnership at a cost of £3,000 within Tourism budget constraints.

D112/23 10X Place Based Approach: Call for Evidence

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report to provide Members with an update on 10X Place Based Approach: Call for Evidence.

Councillor Wilson said that this was a vitally important document and stated that the response was excellent. The Member said that for a number of years this area seemed to be disadvantaged by the fact that everything revolved around Belfast or Londonderry and now we have an opportunity for local input in this and have a key role in developing a strategy has to be welcomed. His concern would be what the Department would make of this as it takes away power from them.

Proposed by Councillor Bell
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve Council's draft response to the 10X - Call for Evidence which is to be submitted by Friday 7 July 2023 (deadline is Sunday 9 July 2023). If any Member has further comments they wish to add, these should be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes by **12noon on Friday 28 July 2023**.

Matters for Information

D113/23 Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 June 2023

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 June 2023.

D114/23 Minutes of Development Committee held on 19 June 2023

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 19 June 2023.

D115/23 Update on Gambling Reform/Legislation

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the reform of gambling legislation within Northern Ireland.

Councillor Monteith advised that Council were very restricted in the remit of gambling and what we have responsibility for and what we are looking at but felt it would be remiss of us as a Council not to take this opportunity to raise the very real problems that are going on within our communities with the issue of online gambling and the legislation that is proposed. He said that he would accept that it is very hard to keep up but the reality is that the vast majority of betting which takes place does so online. It is impossible to watch any major sporting event, particularly the large soccer matches without being bombarded with advertising for ingame gambling and whilst there are rules around advertising for alcohol where it cannot be advertised at a time where young people will be watching, this is the similar sort of approach that is needed for gambling advertising as well. The member said that this was a very real issue and any youth organisations will state that young people at very young ages are becoming involved in online gambling, more so than betting in bookie shops and amusements, as normally the first point of entry for young people gambling is online and in order to deal with that we need to look and promote those issues otherwise it's a huge elephant in the room which is ignored.

The Chair said that he totally agreed with Councillor Monteith's comments and hoped one day to see gambling being treated the same as alcohol misuse and the message is out there on how dangerous it can be.

D116/23 Economic Development and Tourism Achievements 2022 – 2023

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on key activities relating to Economic Development and Tourism Achievements 2022 – 2023 as detailed below:

- Levelling Up Fund
- Business Start Programme
- ESF Programme
- Four Business Programmes
- Village Projects
- Public Realm Scheme
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (14-17 November 2022)
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)
- DAERA Rural Tourism Scheme
- Tourism NI (TNI) Market Led Programme
- Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund
- Summer/Winter Marketing Campaign 2022
- Spring Marketing Campaign 2023
- Business Engagement

Councillor Wilson said that whilst reading this report, staff need to be congratulated on the vast amount of hard work and effort they have put into delivering these programmes.

Councillor Burton concurred with previous comments as Chair of Tourism group as staff really punch above their weight here and all the hard work they carry out behind the scenes.

D117/23 Sliabh Beagh Engagement Consultation

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on Sliabh Beagh Engagement Consultation.

Councillor F Burton advised that she had attended the Sliabh Beagh Partnership meeting on the 20th June which is a partnership between 3 different Councils Fermanagh & Omagh, Monaghan County Council and Mid Ulster. The member stated that the partnership had been taking part in a feasibility study and wished to pay tribute to our staff who try and engage to get the best for Mid Ulster out of this partnership working. She referred to Lumfords Glen which was currently sitting at RIBA stage 2 as part of the feasibility study and quite a bit of discussion on the night taking place and in order to reach RIBA stage 3 where it needs to be as a Council, there will need to be additional studies such as ecology and further engineering studies taking place also. The Member said that this was a beautiful place in the Clogher Valley area and this was an ideal opportunity to get something done as part of this partnership, our staff has worked really hard to ensure the map went out wide enough to ensure that this was included in it and considerable lobbying done in the past. During Covid people who lived beside it were in walking through it and as it is an open glen, there is a requirement to have it as safe as possible and it's right on the doorstep of Knockmany where Council public toilets are.

Councillor F Burton proposed that Officers proceed in trying to get the additional studies in order to get it onto RIBA stage 3. Would encourage Officers to advertise on Council's social media platforms this consultation to try and ensure that Knockmany Runners and people in that area feed into it.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) in response to Member's query advised that the piece of work which is currently being carried out is a feasibility study, funded by the Shared Island Initiative. She advised the feasibility study when complete will provide a comprehensive document and will provide opportunities for the Sliabh Beagh Partnership to make future bids for capital funding. She said that moving projects beyond the scope of the currently feasibility study would require a conversation with Council's SMT and Communities & Place team in terms of Council's future recreation plans and suggested a separate meeting with the respective teams involved in the first instance.

Councillor Burton said that she was well aware that this was part of the feasibility study as it was stated on the night that Mid Ulster was going to have to put money into this and would be confident that there was funding within Tourism or elsewhere to get these studies done and stood by her original proposal to look at this and try and progress it if at all possible.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) agreed with what what the AD: EDT&SP alluded to and felt that it would be more useful for Officers to have a more detailed conversation offline and if necessary and appropriate a further report would be brought back to committee. The SD: C&P said that he was aware of the aspirations around other projects in the area.

Councillor W Buchanan seconded Councillor F Burton's proposal.

The Chair referred to what SD: C&P alluded to stating that a paper with substance was needed in order to progress this matter forward as this was only on tonight for information and we need a paper with a recommendation.

Councillor F Burton advised that she had no issue with that but what she was proposing was to look at it and that we try and progress it because if we don't progress it as part of Mid Ulster Tourism, it's not going to be progressed and sit at RIBA stage 2. The Member referred back to the minutes where Lumfords Glen was first mentioned it was probably before the SD: C&P commenced employment in Mid Ulster District Council and was really adamant that this needs to be pushed on. She commended staff who have tried to do everything to get it included in the feasibility study and look forward to that report coming back.

The SD: C&P stated that he was comfortable with the proposal that we progress this further in terms of the conversation and report back to committee.

The Chair said that he would be happy to see this progressed but that a paper was needed with some substance to bring this forward.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that Officers engage around the projects identified as part of the Sliabh Beagh feasibility study, specifically in relation to Lumfords Glen, and consider options available to progress this project. Consultation to be advertised on Council's social media platforms to try and ensure that Knockmany Runners and people in that area feed into it.

The AD: EDT&SP referred to page 312 where it refers to the Sliabh Beagh consultation event on 27th July 2023 and stated that she had just been notified yesterday that the date has changed to Tuesday 1st August from 6pm - 9pm, same venue as listed. She advised that this is a public event, and all elected members will be invited and anyone who wishes to attend is encouraged to do so. There will also be an online survey for those who cannot attend and details of this will be issued to Members also.

D118/23 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) 2023-24 Funding

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) 2023-24 funding.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that at a previous meeting Members were made aware that as a result of DfC funding cuts, funding for Mid Ulster LMP for 2023/24 had been reduced from £368K to £92K (a funding reduction of 75%). She said that further to this, DfC carried out an equality impact assessment consultation on their reduced budget

proposals and had received 185 responses, including a significant number on the impact of the pause in LMP funding. As a result of this, she updated Members that DfC had written to the Chair of Mid Ulster LMP on 21 June 2023, to advise that LMP funding for 2023/24 will be sustained as per the original offer, i.e. £368K.

Councillor Molloy said it was good news but was in similar vein to other programmes which has happened to Department for Education and Department for Economy and different things that has financed projects. At the bottom of all this, people are employed in jobs where people and programmes are set out and these groups are trying to set budgets for incoming years to protect employees and when people do not have that security of employment they do go and look elsewhere because they have to put bread on the table. We have seen through the budgetary cuts which have been imposed by the Secretary of State and down through the departments because of a non functioning executive that people are being forced away and programmes being lost and then comes back to say 'here is the money now' and felt that there needed to be security for people with some sort of tenure for the employed.

The live broadcast ended at 8.04 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst members consider items D119/23 to D120/23.

Matters for Decision

Matters for Information

D119/23 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 19 June 2023

D120/23 SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Literary Residential Proposal

D121/23 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.10 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Dungannon/Magherafelt] and virtually.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I let you know before this happens.

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening I will ask each member to confirm whether they are for or against the proposal or abstaining
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted

Thank you and we will now move to the first item on the agenda

Report on	Affordable Warmth Scheme
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Leigh Gilmore, Health and Wellbeing Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members on the ending of Councils involvement with the Affordable Warmth Scheme.
2.0	Background
2.1	Members may be aware that officers within Council have been delivering the Affordable Warmth service within the Mid Ulster District Council area on behalf of the Department for Communities (DfC) since 2014.
2.2	The Council worked in Partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and DfC to deliver the scheme via a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The Councils role was to identify, assess eligibility and refer to the NIHE any households that would be eligible for the scheme.
2.3	The Affordable Warmth Scheme targets low-income households who experience the effects of fuel poverty and energy inefficiency. It is a targeted scheme aimed at those areas where levels of fuel poverty are highest. The scheme is available to homeowners, those who have their day / life interest in the house and those who privately rent their home. It is not available for tenants living in the social (Housing Executive or housing association) sector.
2.4	Once eligibility checks had been carried out by Council officers, an onwards referral to the NIHE was made and the NIHE subsequently considered and where eligible, provided grant aid to improve energy efficiency measures within the home. From 1 July 2021 the income threshold for the Affordable Warmth Scheme rose to £23,000 and at the same time Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Carer's Allowance was removed from the calculation of income.
2.5	As highlighted to Members at June 2023 Development Committee, on the 1 st of June 2023 the Director of Housing Supply Policy for DfC wrote to all Council Chief Executives informing them of their position on the Affordable Warmth Scheme and their decision to end all Councils involvement in the Affordable Warmth Scheme on the 31 st August 2023 with the NIHE taking on sole responsibility.

	<p>It was therefore resolved by Members at June 2023 Development Committee that DfC and NIHE officials be invited for a meeting for further discussions with Councillors and officers and to understand further the arrangements for the scheme from 1st September 2023 onwards.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>A meeting took place on 31st July 2023 with DfC and NIHE and an invite was extended to all Councillors and relevant council officers. All Members in attendance sought assurances that there would be a smooth transition over to this NIHE led programme and the most vulnerable constituents would not be adversely affected by this changeover. In essence it was explained that the scheme is by and large the same minus the involvement of Council officers during the advice/application stage.</p>
3.2	<p>Following the meeting, queries regarding existing waiting lists began to surface and Councils sought clarification. DfC and NIHE had advised that they had sought advice with regards to handover of waiting list by Council and potential GDPR issues around consent (or the absence of) transferring of personal data. The DfC advice was that under current regulations Councils could not share waiting lists with NIHE.</p> <p>As a result, DfC advised that any applicant that was not fully processed by Council officers would now need to restart the application process direct with the NIHE. NIHE advised that all those on waiting lists would need to reapply to their free phone telephone number from the first September 2023.</p>
3.3	<p>All applicants that Council officers have been dealing with have been telephoned and provided with the information below. This information will also be provided to all future applicants who make an enquiry to Council from the 1st of September onwards – additionally this message will be available on the council website:</p> <p><i>Following a decision taken by the Department for Communities (DfC) to change the referral process to the Affordable Warmth Scheme via local councils to applications through a single provider Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), please be advised that Mid Ulster District Council are no longer able to accept referrals as council's role in delivering the scheme in partnership with NIHE will end on 31 August 2023.</i></p> <p><i>All enquiries relating to the scheme can be directed to the NI Energy Advice line from 1 September 2023 by;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Calling 0800 111 4455 during office hours</i> • <i>emailing Nlenergyadvice@nihe.gov.uk</i> • <i>or visiting The Housing Executive - Community (nihe.gov.uk)</i>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications

	Financial: As previously reported within June 2023 Development Committee reports.
	Human: As previously reported within June 2023 Development Committee reports.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with Council Policies and Procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	N/A

Report on	<p>1. Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Action Plan 2023-24</p> <p>2. Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023</p>
Date of Meeting	14 September 2023
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Action Plan 2023-24</p> <p>The Council previously agreed to participate in the development and delivery of a Local Labour Market Partnership (LMP), under the Employability NI Programme, led by the Department for Communities (DfC).</p> <p>The Mid Ulster LMP aims to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally by working through coordinated, collaborative, multiagency partnerships. The LMP provides a unique opportunity to greatly impact Council's priorities for skills and employability ensuring that an appropriate skills pipeline is available to local industry both now and in the future.</p> <p>Following restoration of LMP funding and further to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on DfC's budget proposals 2023-24, Council received a letter of offer (dated 27 July 2023) for £369,005.21 from DfC to support delivery of the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24.</p>
2.2	<p>Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023</p> <p>The Rural Business Development Grants Scheme offers rural based micro businesses capital grants (last year of up to £4,999) for actions, which aid business sustainability, recovery and development.</p>

3.0	Main Report						
3.1	<p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Action Plan 2023-24</p> <p>Mid Ulster LMP’s Action Plan 2023-24 was approved by the Regional LMP Board on 25 July 2023 and Council received a letter of offer (dated 27 July 2023) – Appendix 1 for £369,005.21 from the Department of Communities (DfC) to support delivery of the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24.</p> <p>The LMP funding amount covers both administration and operational/programme costs as detailed below: -</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 627 821 750"> <tr> <td>Administration</td> <td>£93,928.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operational/Programme</td> <td>£275,076.61</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>£369,005.21</td> </tr> </table> <p>As delegated authority was approved prior to the local elections, the letter of offer was signed by the Chief Executive and returned to DfC in August 2023.</p> <p>Work is now on-going regarding procurement to expedite the appointment of delivery agents for each of the projects given the reduced timeline for delivery.</p> <p>A summary version of the approved Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 is included at Appendix 2. Copies of the full Action Plan are available upon request from the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership Secretariat.</p>	Administration	£93,928.60	Operational/Programme	£275,076.61	TOTAL	£369,005.21
Administration	£93,928.60						
Operational/Programme	£275,076.61						
TOTAL	£369,005.21						
3.2	<p>Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023</p> <p>Council has been notified by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) that the Rural Business Development Grants Scheme (RBDGS) 2023 has been further delayed. It was anticipated that there would be a new grant scheme in early Spring 2023.</p> <p>On 17 August 2023, DAERA informed Council that policy development work is still ongoing and finalisation of a business case to provide the necessary evidence to inform the decision to support a further RBDGS. Mid Ulster Council was working to an indicative launch of the scheme in our district on 5th September 2023, however this wasn’t possible due to the current delays advised by DAERA.</p> <p>DAERA are unable to provide any further clarity around when they may be able to open the scheme, however they’ve committed to communicating their decision to Council as soon as they possibly can.</p> <p>If this scheme is given approval, then mandatory pre-application funding workshops will be organised by Council. Council on behalf of DAERA will administer the Rural Business Development Grants Scheme. This is done through</p>						

	<p>a contract for funding which sets out delivery milestones for completion of key phases of the Scheme.</p> <p>The pre-application will again be promoted widely using the Council's business directory database, which includes over 1000 businesses and via Council's social media platforms as well through Council's Community Development databases. Members will also be notified when the scheme opens to enable them to promote it to their networks also.</p> <p>If funding is approved by DAERA, it is anticipated that the RBDGS will be delivered along similar lines as previous years which means that businesses that received funding last year are not eligible for funding this year.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership – Action Plan 2023-24 Council is in receipt of a letter of offer for £369,005.21 from the Department for Communities (DfC) to support the work of the LMP up to 31 March 2024.</p> <p>Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023</p> <p>Previously Council received resource funding from DAERA equal to 10% of the value of letters of offer issued to successful applicants.</p> <p>Human</p> <p>Officer time</p> <p>Risk Management</p> <p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership – Action Plan 2023-23</p> <p>The risk level is mitigated as LMP activity is 100% externally funded. LMP staff will manage delivery of the Action Plan in line with current governance arrangements.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications</p> <p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership – Action Plan 2023-24 One of the key advantages of the LMP approach to improving employability is that it targets resources on specific groups, including those with access issues and barriers, which currently prevent them from accessing training and employment opportunities.</p>

	<p>Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023 Equality and Good Relations screening will be carried out prior to commencement of the Scheme.</p>
	Rural Needs Implications:
5.0	Recommendation(s)
	It is recommended that Members:
5.1	<p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership – Action Plan 2023-24</p> <p>Note content of the report.</p>
5.2	<p>Rural Business Development Grants Scheme 2023</p> <p>Note a further briefing will be brought to a future Development Committee Meeting to keep Members updated on whether DAERA can support and fund this year's RBDG Scheme.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1 – Mid Ulster LMP Letter of Offer 2023-24 Appendix 2 – Summary Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24</p>