

Report on	Mid Ulster Walking and Hillwalking Festival
Date of Meeting	10 September 2020
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	Michael Browne

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 inform the committee of the upcoming walking festival
2.0	Background
2.1	Our Marketing and Communication service developed an outline communications plan in June 2020 to support the work of the Tourism service in its Mid Ulster wide tourism recovery plan. The draft outline communications plan externally prepared in May 2020 suggests targeting initially the domestic, then ROI and GB markets, through the application of an innovative, engaging and unifying communications campaign, which will also provide marketing and communications support for all the tourism businesses in the area. One key aspect of this will see the formation and delivery of an all year walking programme.
	Main Report
3.1	At the July Development Committee meeting Council requested a renewed focus on the promotion of walking product within Mid Ulster, following the recommendation to participate in a WalkNI Marketing Regional Partnership, asking for a report be presented to future committee of strategy to develop and promote walking routes throughout the district, and a promotional campaign on existing walks be commenced. We are proposing Autumn 2020 to kick start events.
3.2	Step one and two of the plan have been actioned and we are now in the position to move to Step 3: Re-activate planning and booking behaviour. People go online to find out more about experiences in the general area and will visit online websites in a broader search initially and then a targeted focus as they delve deeper into what's available. This step involves continuing with Reconnect campaign as above, and also building experiences and content for all search touchpoints, e.g., tripadvisor, Instagram, google pages, Council websites, tourism business websites to which tourism staff will assist Marketing & Communications.

3.3	<p>Tourism have enlisted the services of Brendan Adams and Ita McCrory who are both qualified hillwalking guides and residents of Mid Ulster. Both guides will coordinate and guide the five high level walks which are planned throughout the District.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Carntogher Way (Maghera) 20 September, 10am An Carn 2. Slieve Gallon, date and time TBC 3. Moydamlaght Forest and Eagles Rock, ++ (Moneyneany) Gallon, date and time TBC 4. Crockmore / Crockbrack (Moneyneany), Gallon, date and time TBC 5. Knockmany Forest Ascent (Augher), Gallon, date and time TBC
3.4	<p>The above walks are rated as moderate and aim to attract town walkers who would like to try something more challenging. Current COVID restrictions have capped participation numbers to 15 per walk with social distancing guidelines in place.</p>
3.5	<p>Bookings will be taken via the Bridewell and priced at £10 per person</p>
4.0	<p>Other Considerations</p>
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p>
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>A budget of up to £5,000 (excl Vat) will be required to target the relevant markets as defined in the 'Outline Plan for promotion of walking in the Mid Ulster Area'</p>
	<p>Human: Tourism staff support required.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Risk Assessments will be carried out on each high level walk in addition to outsourcing the delivery of these walks to qualified hillwalking guides</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p>
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p>
	<p>For information only</p>

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	'Outline Plan for promotion of walking in the Mid Ulster Area'