



**Mid Ulster  
Community  
Planning**

**Statement of  
Performance  
2023 to 2025  
&  
Four Year Review  
2025**

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## Introduction

The first Mid Ulster Community Plan was launched in May 2017 following a period of public consultation and a detailed quantitative socio-economic analysis. The Mid Ulster Community Plan sets out a shared vision for the district.

*Vision: Mid Ulster ... a welcoming place where our people are content, healthy and safe; educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving; our environment and heritage are sustained; and where our public services excel.*

The Plan is a living, evolving document spanning a period of 10 years with an inbuilt flexibility to adapt as priorities change, problems are resolved, and new challenges emerge.

## Background

The legislation that governs Community Planning is contained in Part 10 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. The Act requires Mid Ulster District Council to initiate, maintain, facilitate and participate with other partners in community planning for the district.

The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 specifies who the statutory community planning partners\* are.

In addition to Mid Ulster District Council, the statutory partners are

Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Education Authority	Police Service of Northern Ireland
Invest NI	Public Health Agency
Libraries NI	Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Northern Health and Social Care Trust	Sport NI
Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service	Tourism NI

\*The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) ceased to be a named statutory partner following its closure on 1 April 2022.

Mid Ulster Community Planning Partnership also includes partners from the business sector (Workspace), the community and voluntary sector (Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network), the two local Further Education colleges (Northern Regional College and South West College) and the NI Government Departments.

The Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership is represented on the Strategic Board by its Chair, and the Department of Health Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) is represented on the Partnership following the formation of new Shadow Area Integrated Partnership Boards in 2024.

## What is Community planning?

Community Planning is a process by which organisations who provide public services, business and voluntary groups and local communities work together to improve people's lives.

Community Planning Partners identify

- long term objectives for improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the district
- long term objectives that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- actions to be delivered that will assist in meeting the long term objectives.

Community Planning is what happens when communities and organisations come together to improve local wellbeing and quality of life. It encourages the integration of plans, strategies, priorities and programmes at all levels. Community Planning strives to improve partnership working, planning, processes and service delivery to achieve value for money and better outcomes for everyone.



The first Mid Ulster 10 Year Community Plan was published in 2017. The community planning process requires a wholly integrated, collaborative approach to the planning and delivery of services that aligns with legislation, legal powers and local and regional systems of government.

## Community Planning Structure (Revised 2022)



### Review and Monitoring of the Community Plan

A Community Planning Statement of Performance is published every two years. The Statement describes the progress that has been made towards achieving Community Plan outcomes. This is the third Mid Ulster Community Planning Statement of Performance and covers the period 2023 to 2025.

Following a comprehensive review of the Community Planning Process in 2022/2023, the Community Plan's objectives and actions were refreshed to keep them relevant and focused on delivering the desired outcomes identified in the original document.

The original Mid Ulster Community Plan 2017-2027, Mid Term Revised Objectives & Actions and other relevant documents can be found on the Mid Ulster District Council website <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council/community-planning>

Following the review, Action Delivery Groups replaced the original Thematic Working Groups, which were too broad in their scope. Each action delivery group now focuses on driving forward specific actions, with key partners working together to gather evidence, analyse problems and develop and deliver solutions that contribute towards overall community planning outcomes.

Within Mid Ulster Community Planning, Action Delivery Groups include groups that have been formed locally by the Community Planning Partnership itself, and other partnerships established regionally by statutory organisations, arms-length bodies and Government Departments (for example, the Labour Market Partnership, Area Integrated Partnership Boards and Policing and Community Safety Partnership).

Any structure that brings partners together to work collaboratively towards the delivery of the Community Plan's outcomes are, within the context of Mid Ulster Community Planning, referred to as Action Delivery Groups and therefore the progress made by these groups is included in this Statement of Performance.

As part of the 2022/2023 review, the Mid Ulster Community Planning Strategic Board decided on to concentrate its efforts on three priority areas going forward. These are

- Lough Neagh
- Community Wealth Building and Inclusive Growth
- Democratising Mental Health.

The Community Planning legislation requires that a review of the Community Plan is undertaken every four years. The first four-year review was undertaken one year early, in 2020, due to the onset of the Covid19 Pandemic.

Due to the comprehensive nature of the review in 2022/2023 and the commitment given by partners at that time to keep the Objectives and Actions under constant review, it has been decided that the current Objectives and Actions (see diagram on page 7) should remain as they are and, considering the long term nature of community planning, continued focus should remain on the three priority areas listed above until the Mid Ulster Community Plan's 10-year term comes to an end in 2027.

# Revised Objectives and Actions 2025



# Programme for Government

In 2025, the NI Executive agreed a Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'. The Plan contains a number of outcomes and priorities for making a difference to people's lives.

The PfG and Community Planning are closely linked. Community planning is designed to be integrated with, and complementary to, the PfG outcomes, ensuring local strategic planning aligns with broader regional goals. Departments in The Executive are required to promote and encourage community planning and consider community plans when exercising their functions.

## PfG Outcomes

We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment

We have a more equal society

We enjoy long, healthy, active lives

We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential

We have more people working in better jobs

We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other

We care for others and we help those in need

We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity

We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest

We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

We give our children and young people the best start in life



## Programme for Government Wellbeing Framework

A Wellbeing Framework of ten strategic domains has been developed to accompany the Programme for Government. This Framework is supported by a set of high-quality official statistics, known as indicators. Wellbeing is a combination of social, environmental, economic, and democratic factors which are essential for society to flourish. The Wellbeing Framework will tell us if the indicators within the domains are improving, staying the same or getting worse and will help inform future iterations of the Programme for Government.

### Mid Ulster Domains and Indicators

<b>Domain: Stronger Economy</b>
In 2025, 14.4% of people aged 16-64 (excluding students) were economically inactive, a decrease from 15.2% in 2022
In 2025, 74.9% of people aged 16-64 were in employment, an increase from 73.8% in 2022
The proportion of business selling outside NI increased to 28.8% in 2025 from 23.6% in 2022
67.1% of employees (16-64) were in good jobs (meeting 3 good jobs criteria) in 2024, an increase from 65.7% in 2025
75.8% of the population (16-64) had qualifications at level 2 and above in 2025, a decrease from 76.3% in 2022
<b>Domain: Cleaner Environment</b>
In 2024, 21.5% of households had accessible outdoor natural space within 400 metres
In 23/24, 58.6% of household waste was reused, recycled or composted

**Domain: Brighter Futures**

In 23/24, 77% of the population engaged in arts & cultural activities, an increase from 76% in the previous year

The average Life Satisfaction score was 8 out of 10 in 23/24, an increase from 7.8 in 22/23

The attainment gap between school leavers in receipt of Free School Meals and Non-FSME was 20ppts in 22/23

19.2% of the population had low self-efficacy in 23/24, a decrease from 21.7% in 22/23

**Domain: Thriving Children**

Between 20/21 and 22/23, 59% of care leavers aged 19 were in education, training or employment

In 2022, young people in Years 9 -12 gave an average score of 7 out of 10 for Life Satisfaction

In 2022, 52% of Year 9-12 pupils expressed low self-efficacy

**Domain: Healthier Lives**

Between 2018 and 2022, the age standardised death rate for preventable causes (per 100k population) was 160

67% of the population participated in sport and physical activity in 23/24, a decrease from 68% in 22/23

**Domain: Caring Society**

In 2025/24, 11.7% of the population felt lonely often, always or some of the time, a decrease from 16% in 22/23

In 22/23, 20% of the population were involved in volunteering

**Domain: Equal Society**

Between 19/20 and 22/23, 14% of the population lived in absolute poverty (before housing costs)

Between 19/20 and 22/23, 18% of the population lived in relative poverty (before housing costs)

**Domain: Safer Communities**

In 2022/23, 6% of survey respondents stated they had been victims of crime (any NI Safe Community Survey)

**Domain: Better Homes**

95% of households were very or fairly satisfied with their house or flat in 2025/24, an increase from 91% in 22/23

There were 505 homeless households in 2025/24, compared to 466 in 22/23

Between 2019/20 and 2022/23, 7% of households spent more than 30% of their income on housing

1,465 households were in housing stress in 2025/24, an increase from 1,380 in 22/23

## Mid Ulster Community Plan Action Progress Reports 2023 – 2025

The next section of this Statement of Performance contains a series of reports setting out how Community Planning actions have progressed during the period 2023 to 2025 under the four broad themes of Economic Growth and Infrastructure; Education and Skills; Health and Wellbeing; and Vibrant and Safe Communities. Each report provides an assessment of progress for the objectives and actions that contribute towards achieving the Community Plan outcomes.

Many of the actions are reflective of long-term objectives that will take years to realise, potentially crossing over into the term of the next Community Plan and beyond. The colour-coded system below indicates the status of progress for each action. This enables the Strategic Board to monitor and review how actions are progressing and recommend remedial action when necessary.



**Progressing  
as expected**



**On track but  
with some issues**



**Not progressing  
as expected**



**Complete**

# Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

## Theme 1: Economic Growth and Infrastructure

### Our Community Planning Objective: 1.1

Ensure that our economy is thriving, robust and able to withstand economic pressures

#### Programme for Government Domain: Stronger Economy

In 2025, 14.4% of people aged 16-64 (excluding students) were economically inactive, a decrease from 15.2% in 2022

In 2025, 74.9% of people aged 16-64 were in employment, an increase from 73.8% in 2022

The proportion of business selling outside NI increased to 28.8% in 2025 from 23.6% in 2022

67.1% of employees (16-64) were in good jobs (meeting 3 good jobs criteria) in 2024, an increase from 65.7% in 2025

75.8% of the population (16-64) had qualifications at level 2 and above in 2025, a decrease from 76.3% in 2022

**Action 1.1a: Develop and implement a strategy and plan to increase employability and labour market conditions in Mid Ulster (Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership)**

**SRO: Fiona McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes MUDC**

**Sub Action:** Deliver the Labour Market Partnership Action Plan

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**



All programmes are on track to achieve their targets

- Mid Ulster LMP Employability Programme – 56 participants completed the programme, 41 participants (73%) gained employment and 36 participants (64%) gained qualifications as a result of taking part in the programme.
- Seven Registered Child Minder/Approved Home Childcare Academy participants delivered by NICMA gained new employment or moved into self-employment. Work is ongoing with the Health Trust's Early Years Teams to progress the full registration process
- HGV/Coach Driver Training & Licensing Academy - 100% of completers gained their licence with 96% (23) gaining new employment
- Six employers on the Employer Support Programme created work placements and use the Employer Toolkit for forward planning
- Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering Upskilling Academy – 11 employees gained a qualification in Power BI and 69 participants gained certificates in MS Excel
- Nine participants completed the Clean Tech/Green Energy Academies, of which five have moved into higher paid employment. All 9 gained at least one accredited qualification
- 11 participants on the Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme gained employment. Participants and employers continue to receive support to sustain employability outcomes
- Nine individuals on the NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Workwell Programme achieved positive outcomes, including reduced social isolation, increased confidence and team-work.

**Action 1.1b: Identify and assist economic sectors which need support to develop and grow, become entrepreneurial and resilient and secure investment**

**SRO: Fiona McKeown, MUDC Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

**Sub Action:** Support the Small Business Sector to overcome financial barriers, develop and grow through digital innovation and transformation

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

**Digital Innovation and Transformation**



Funding secured from PeacePlus Programme, Measure 2.4, for the implementation of a **DS3 (Digital Spaces, Support and Services) Programme**, led by the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), with Mid Ulster District Council acting as an Associate Partner. A dedicated work package within the programme will support SME businesses through targeted training and access to trial digital technologies. These activities are scheduled to be delivered across the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years.

The Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) is led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council on behalf of the 11 Councils, using the processes agreed for the regional FFNI Consortium Agreement. It was launched in November 2023, with Call One opening for Applications from businesses in late November. The Fund is managed on a cross-council basis utilising governance structures created through the existing Full Fibre NI Consortium, led by Newry, Mourne & Down District Council. The DTFF aims to address the financial barrier that micro and small businesses face when seeking to digitally transform by providing a capital grant to support investment in the types of capital equipment considered critical to their strategic digital transformation ambitions. It offers a unique intervention rate of 70% (or up to £20,000) of total eligible project costs towards the purchase of capital equipment aligned to advanced digital technologies (to include: smart technologies (Internet of Things), process automation, big data and analytics, immersive technologies, artificial intelligence and blockchain technologies). By March 2025 there had been three calls for Applications, with Call 4 opened and set to close in April 2025. In Mid Ulster, Calls 1-3 have resulted in 23 businesses being awarded funding of £378,393.68, and with private sector match of £249,039.31, this has resulted in overall investment of £627,439.98. Calls 4 to 7 will be rolled out before the end of the funding period of March 2026.

**SRO: Fiona McKeown, MUDC Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

**Sub Action:** Help the small business sector (micro businesses <49 employees) in Mid Ulster to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and ideas, be enabled and encouraged to establish, grow and accelerate through delivery of the NI Entrepreneurship Support Service (ESS) Project (DHUCLC Shared Prosperity Fund)

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The new Service (NI Enterprise Support Service) was branded as 'Go Succeed' and was launched in November 2023. Since commencement, in the Mid Ulster District Council area the Service has supported:



- 536 entrepreneurs (through the Engage and Foundation stages) on their start-up journey with advice and guidance and, where required, a Business Plan

- 435 businesses have received mentoring support to take forward their plans for growth (through the Growth and Scaling stages)
- 153 businesses (from the Foundation and Growth stages of the Service) accessed grants of up to 70% totalling £517,650.76 to support their growth ambitions (with private sector match funding of £263,952.40 this resulted in a total economic impact of £781,603.16)

Additionally, Council Officers have signposted businesses to other supports available (e.g. Digital Transformation Flexible Fund) to further drive their business growth plans.

## Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

### Theme: Economic Growth and Infrastructure

#### Our Community Planning Objective: 2.1

##### Improve our infrastructure and connectivity

**Action 2.1a: Support strategic schemes which deliver improved infrastructure, connectivity, travel and transport**

**SRO: Fiona McKeown, MUDC Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

**Sub Action: Deliver the Mid South-West Growth Deal Projects**

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Three Growth Deal Strategic Outline Cases have been completed. Heads of Terms were signed in November 2024 to allow the projects to move to Outline Business Case stage. The A29 Cookstown Bypass progressed to Public Inquiry stage in October 2024 CAFRE has commenced internal work to develop an Outline Business Case for the RAPIC project. Invest NI has agreed to lead Outline Business Case development for a Green Innovation Business Park.



**SRO: Fiona McKeown, MUDC Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

**Sub Action: Deliver the Bypass for Dungannon**

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Mid Ulster District Council continues to lobby for a Dungannon bypass to be included in the Department of Infrastructure's Regional Strategic Transport Plan.



**SRO: Anne-Marie Campbell, MUDC Strategic Director of Environment & Fiona McKeown, MUDC Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes**

**Sub Action: Support and participate in initiatives which will help to sustain and protect Lough Neagh**

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Mid Ulster Community Planning Partnership has identified Lough Neagh as a priority due to its significance as a natural resource, the economic value it has for those who rely on it for drinking water, fishing and eel industries, and its importance for recreation and tourism. The Community Planning Partnership is committed to working collectively to help deliver sustainable solutions to address the issues facing Lough Neagh and has been engaging with DAERA and the Lough Neagh Partnership to bring partners together to discuss how they can support delivery of the actions within DAERA's Lough Neagh report, particularly around raising awareness of education and enforcement practices.



## Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

### Theme 1 & 2: Economic Growth and Infrastructure

**Our Community Planning Objective: 2.2**  
Improve the quality and sustainability of our environment for our citizens and future generations

#### Programme for Government Domain: Cleaner Environment

In 2024, 21.5% of households had accessible outdoor natural space within 400 metres

In 2023/24, 58.6% of household waste was reused, recycled or composted

**Action 2.2a: Mitigate against the impacts of climate change by developing opportunities to work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions**

**SRO: Anne-Marie Campbell, MUDC Strategic Director of Environment**

**Sub Action:** Work towards the NI Climate Bill commitment to a net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050 through proposals and policies to adapt or mitigate the effects of climate change

#### Progress Year End 2024/2025

The statutory Community Planning Partners have developed their own organisational climate change and sustainable development strategies and plans which aim to reduce the environmental impacts of their activities and contribute to the overall effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. DAERA has implemented a new platform for public bodies to report on their Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plans with the first reports due in late 2025.



**Action 2.2b: Work in partnership to reduce dependency on landfill through increased recycling and recovery**

**SRO: Anne-Marie Campbell, MUDC Strategic Director of Environment**

**Sub Action:** Increase recycling and recovery

#### Progress Year End 2024/2025

All statutory waste indicators have been met. During the 2024 calendar year, 57.8% of municipal waste was recycled.



**Action: 2.2c Work in partnership with local communities to participate in place making, planning and regeneration initiatives**

**SRO: Melvin Bowman, MUDC Planning Service Lead – Strategic Planning**

**Sub Action:** Develop the Mid Ulster Local Development Plan 2030 (Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan) which sets out Council's vision for planning land use up to 2030.

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Mid Ulster District Council is awaiting a decision from DfI on whether or not Council can move to Independent Examination of the submitted draft Plan Strategy.

**SRO: Conor Corr, Network Manager Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network**

**Sub Action:** Deliver the Clogher Valley Collaborative Test and Learn Initiative

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

In 2023/2024, the Department for Communities undertook a pilot Test and Learn initiative in Aghnacloy to identify barriers restricting collaboration. The findings were evaluated and as a result, the initiative was extended to a wider geographical area, Mid Ulster's Clogher Valley DEA. The overall focus of DFC's Test and Learn initiative is to tackle disadvantage through improved collaboration and integration. Learning from the pilot will help inform the ongoing review of the People and Place Strategy. Cookstown and Western Shares Area Network (CWSAN) was appointed to lead the Test and Learn process in the Clogher Valley. A Scoping Report was undertaken by Venturei on behalf of CWSAN to capture the level of existing service provision from public bodies and service providers. This complemented the community engagement and village planning process which is currently underway and is led by CWSAN. Caledon Regeneration Partnership is now working with Venturei to integrate the process they started in 2022 with the King's Foundation to develop a community plan designed and owned by the local community into the overall Test and Learn project.



## Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

### Theme 3: Education and Skills

#### Our Community Planning Objective: 3.1

Ensure that our citizens receive an education that helps them to reach their full potential, make the right career choices and participate in lifelong learning as they progress through life

#### Domain: Brighter Futures

In 23/24, 77% of the population engaged in arts & cultural activities, an increase from 76% in the previous year

The average Life Satisfaction score was 8 out of 10 in 23/24, an increase from 7.8 in 22/23

The attainment gap between school leavers in receipt of Free School Meals and Non-FSME was 20ppts in 22/23

19.2% of the population had low self-efficacy in 23/24, a decrease from 21/7% in 22/23

**Action 3.1b:** Work in partnership to develop and link skills to sustainable employment opportunities, support people to prepare for work and promote opportunities for lifelong learning

**SRO:** Pdraig McNamee, Director of Curriculum, South West College

**Sub Action:** Adapt to the changing needs of further education

#### Progress Year End 2024/2025

South West College continues to deliver the Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP) funded through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). REAP aims to engage economically inactive beneficiaries from Mid Ulster and Fermanagh Omagh District Council, moving at least 20% into employment using a three-phase employability model. Alongside this, 720 beneficiaries will benefit from multiply adult numeracy support within a community setting as an integral part of the REAP economic inactivity offer.



**SRO:** Helen Hampsey, Assistant Curriculum Director at Northern Regional College

**Sub Action:** Support the expansion of the Northern Regional College Campus

#### Progress Year End 2024/2025

The Northern Regional College's Estates Strategy has been approved and includes proposals for significant investment at the Magherafelt campus over the next ten years (subject to business case approval and receipt of capital funding).



## Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

### Theme 4: Health and Wellbeing

#### Our Community Planning Objective: 4.1

#### Enable our citizens to live longer, healthier and more independent lives

##### Domain: Thriving Children

Between 20/21 and 22/23, 59% of care leavers aged 19 were in education, training or employment

In 2022, young people in Years 9 -12 gave an average score of 7 out of 10 for Life Satisfaction

In 2022, 52% of Year 9-12 pupils expressed low self-efficacy

##### Domain: Healthier Lives

Between 2018 and 2022, the age standardised death rate for preventable causes (per 100k population) was 160

67% of the population participated in sport and physical activity in 23/24, a decrease from 68% in 22/23

##### Domain: Caring Society

In 2025/24, 11.7% of the population felt lonely often, always or some of the time, a decrease from 16% in 22/23

In 22/23, 20% of the population were involved in volunteering

**Action 4.1a:** Work in partnership to identify and address areas for improvement in children and young people's wellbeing and resilience (Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership)

**SRO:** Colm McCafferty, Director of Children, Young People and Women's Services / Executive Director of Social Work, Southern HSC Trust

**Sub Action:** Deliver the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Northern and Southern Area Outcomes Groups Action Plans for the current planning cycle

##### Progress Year End 2024/2025

The Northern and Southern Area Outcomes Groups continue to encourage partners to work together to deliver better outcomes for children and young people based on the priority areas of early intervention, early help, family support for all, early intervention for mental health and emotional wellbeing, school disruption and poverty/cost of living. Links to the outcome reports can be found at:



<https://cypsp.hscni.net/outcomes-groups/northern-area-outcomes-group/>

<https://cypsp.hscni.net/outcomes-groups/southern-area-outcomes-group/>

**Action 4.1b:** Deliver and improve safe, accessible and equitable high quality health and social care services which meet the needs of Mid Ulster's citizens

**SRO:** Colm McCafferty, Director of Children, Young People and Women's Services / Executive Director of Social Work, Southern HSC Trust

**Sub Action:** Develop and deliver the Dungannon Community Treatment and Care Centre, bringing together a wide range of health services, such as GP practices, physiotherapists, mental health professionals, pharmacy and allied health services, in modern and suitable accommodation.

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Dungannon Community Treatment and Care Centre is the last one of four CTCCs to be progressed by the Southern Trust. It has been on the Department of Health's 10-year Regional Plan Priority Primary Care list since 2014 but is not profiled to start for a number of years to come.



**SRO:** Colm McCafferty, Director of Children, Young People and Women's Services / Executive Director of Social Work, Southern HSC Trust

**Sub Action:** Explore the potential for the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, the Education Authority and Mid Ulster District Council to work together in planning green space development at the new build facilities in Dungannon for Oakridge Social Education Centre, Sperrinview Special School

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Southern Trust is working on the Business Case to secure the capital funding for Oakridge. Plans for the expansion of the Sperrinview Special School site in Dungannon have been approved by EA in principle. Channels of communication between the partners remain open for collaboration when the opportunity arises.



**Action 4.1c:** Develop and deliver an Ageing Well and Age Friendly Programme

**SRO:** Ryan Black, MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place

**Sub Action:** Deliver the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Age Friendly Strategic Alliance, established in 2023, maintains active cross-sector engagement and the Over 50s Forum is firmly established as a core mechanism for co-production. Mid Ulster Age Friendly Alliance has strengthened partnerships at local, regional and national level, including the Age Friendly Ireland networks, Centre for Ageing Better and Age Friendly Network NI, helping to bring best practice to Mid Ulster. Collaborative working with community and statutory organisations including the SHSCT, Mid Ulster Agewell, Mid Ulster Loneliness Network, Mid Ulster Disability Forum, Libraries NI, Linking Generations NI and others has resulted in the delivery of a wide range of events, awareness campaigns and intergenerational activities. Initiatives delivered include dementia awareness initiatives with Mid Ulster PCSP, health and wellbeing events and new intergenerational projects. Partner delivery of the Age Friendly Action Plan (2023–2026) continues with additional funding secured from Sport NI, the Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership and the NHSCT to help support older people



and carer groups in the district. Progress includes advancing health and wellbeing programmes, improving communication and collaboration, and expanding the Age Friendly Champions and Age Friendly Workplace Training. Promotional work includes the district-wide distribution of the Live Happy Newsletter and focus on Positive Ageing Month.

**Sub Action:** Continue to deliver the Agewell Good Morning project

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

All targets being met as expected. During 2024/25, 17,250 Good Morning calls were made to service users, and 509 onward referrals were made to other partners or programmes that support older people.



**Action 4.1d:** Plan and prepare for the new Integrated Care System, addressing health inequalities and the wider determinants of health and wellbeing through a population health approach of prevention, early intervention, treatment and end of life care.

**SRO: Merissa McGeary, DoH SPPG Senior Commissioning Manager & Bryan Leonard, PHA Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Manager (Starting Well)**

**Sub Action** Plan and prepare for an Integrated Care System model to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities through collaboration and partnership in the design, delivery and management of sustainable health, social and community services

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Shadow Northern and Southern Trust AIPBs have been established. The Southern AIPB has established a Task and Finish Group to lead on a test project for their first agreed priority, frailty. The project will identify a cohort of patients over 65 who have been stratified as Moderately Frail by their GP. These patients will be referred to an Ageing Well Hub for assessment, advice and sign posting. The Southern AIPB has selected Mental Health and Heart Failure as two other priority areas. The Shadow Northern AIPB has agreed priorities of Smoking Cessation, Adult & Childhood Obesity and a cross-cutting focus on improving outcomes for children and young people. It is anticipated that their Action Plan will be complete in early 2026.



**SRO: Hugh Nelson (Head of Community Wellbeing, Northern HSC Trust)**

**Sub Action:** Consider and develop opportunities to work together to deliver health and wellbeing initiatives that help tackle health inequalities and improve health behaviours and lifestyles

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Health Literacy Group has been wound down as partners agreed that health literacy should be interwoven through all health and wellbeing work.



**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Healthy Eating – the Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership provides funding to the Northern Trust to deliver a wide range of healthy eating and healthy lifestyle programmes targeting children, young people, adults and older people in various settings including schools, after-schools, sports groups and across the community and voluntary sector.



**Progress Year End 2024/2025**



Healthy Workplaces - The NHSCT and Business in the Community operate a Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing for Workforces accreditation scheme which involves seven employers across the Northern Area. The NHSCT, SHSCT, PHA, Council and Chest, Heart and Stroke (North) support businesses to establish healthy workplace practices. CHS offers a bespoke assessment of employee need and puts packages together to support employees' health and wellbeing through a variety of talks, webinars, health checks and programmes.

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Mid Ulster Loneliness Network is supported and funded through a partnership arrangement between the NHSCT, SHSCT and Mid Ulster District Council. Through small grants funding of £9000, the Network of approximately 60 members has delivered a series of events across Mid Ulster, particularly in rural areas, to help combat loneliness and isolation. Initiatives such Chatty Café, Chatty Bench, Chatty Library and Kindness Post Box schemes have been introduced to reduce social isolation and encourage friendly low-pressure interactions within communities. The Network provides a coordinated and consistent approach to preventing and addressing loneliness, raising awareness, sharing good practice, reducing stigma and the barriers to participation and increasing opportunities for socialization. The Network works closely with the Age Friendly Co-ordinator and Age Friendly Alliance to promote a culture of inclusiveness for all.



**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Northern Trust's Thrive Sperrins initiative takes a place-based approach to mental health and wellbeing within schools, workplaces, and the wider community and voluntary sectors in the Sperrins area. Thrive Sperrins partners are the NHSCT, Workspace and Step. While the initiative is at an early stage, a community needs assessment has been carried out in Draperstown which has identified issues around transport, diabetes and emotional wellbeing. The initiative also includes building a Community School model.



**Sub Action:** Develop, deliver and extend the Connect North Social Prescribing Service and Portal across Mid Ulster

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Connect North has eight Link Workers who help connect people to the right services and initiatives in the local community. There are 714 registered clients. The Northern Trust and Libraries NI have come together in partnership to promote Connect North through a series of drop-in information sessions in local libraries.



## Mid Ulster Community Planning Progress 2023 – 2025

### Theme 5: Vibrant and Safe Communities

#### Our Community Planning Objective: 5.1

#### Reduce poverty and deprivation by targeting resources to the most vulnerable in Mid Ulster

##### Domain: Equal Society

Between 19/20 and 22/23, 14% of the population lived in absolute poverty (before housing costs)

Between 19/20 and 22/23, 18% of the population lived in relative poverty (before housing costs)

##### Domain: Safer Communities

In 2022/23, 6% of survey respondents stated they had been victims of crime (any NI Safe Community Survey)

##### Domain: Better Homes

95% of households were very or fairly satisfied with their house or flat in 2025/24, an increase from 91% in 22/23

There were 505 homeless households in 2025/24, compared to 466 in 22/23

Between 2019/20 and 2022/23, 7% of households spent more than 30% of their income on housing

1,465 households were in housing stress in 2025/24, an increase from 1,380 in 22/23

**Action 5.1a: Develop opportunities to work together to reduce poverty and disadvantage and improve social inclusion by identifying gaps in service delivery, pooling resources and directing support to the most vulnerable people in our District**

**SRO: Ryan Black (MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place)**

**Sub Action:** Work in partnership to reduce poverty and the impact of poverty through delivery of the actions contained in the 'Towards Alleviating Poverty in Mid Ulster': Poverty Paper

##### Progress Year End 2024/2025

A Social Supermarket programme has been established partnering the Mid Ulster Foodbank Network with Mid Ulster Advice Services to provide one-to-one wraparound support for foodbank clients. This includes advice on debt, budgeting housing and health and wellbeing.



**SRO: Ryan Black (MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place)**

**Sub Action:** Develop a Mid Ulster Community Wealth Building Framework with the aim of empowering community organisations, non-profits, social enterprise and co-operatives to establish or expand with the ambition of creating employment and growing local economies

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Mid Ulster Community Wealth Building Working Group is in the process of finalising a draft CWB Framework and Action Plan. Mid Ulster District Council has developed a draft Community Asset Transfer policy with pilot CAT projects for Knockloughrim Pitch and Draperstown Courthouse at Stage 1 EoI and Stage 2 Business Case. Council also developed a Good Employment Charter, setting out its commitment to the principles of good employment. Mid Ulster LMP promotes the Charter in their Employer of Choice Toolkit, encouraging local businesses to adopt the principles and develop their own Charter, including paying the Real Living Wage to all employees. Council has purchased software to calculate the social value of new Council investments and has provided software licences to three social partners.



**SRO: Ryan Black (MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place)**

**Sub Action:** Continue to deliver the DFC-funded Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership programme targeting disadvantage and deprivation in the identified areas of Coalisland and Dungannon.

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Gortgonis Community Health Hub in Coalisland is part of the physical regeneration and renewal of the Gortgonis area and will contribute to improved health and wellbeing by providing a modern, safe and sustainable space for leisure and community activities. The development is progressing with construction due to commence on site in 2026.



**Action 5.1b: Support the provision of social and affordable homes to address housing need and demand in Mid Ulster.**

**SRO: Sinead Collins, NIHE Head of South PlaceShaping**

**Sub Action:** Work in partnership through the Mid Ulster Housing Forum to develop and deliver a Housing Action Plan

The Dungannon PlaceShaping Plan, which comprises a set of principles and design guide for the development of social and affordable housing in Dungannon Town Centre is almost complete. Once finalised, the Plan will be shared with Housing Associations.



**SRO: Sinead Collins, NIHE Head of South Place Shaping**

**Sub Action:** Support the provision of social and affordable 'homes-for-life' which meet the needs of our residents

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

The Mid Ulster Housing Forum has brought key stakeholders (elected representatives, statutory agencies, housing associations, NIHE, the community and voluntary sector) together to discuss thematic housing issues that impact the District, including Water and Sewerage, Rural Needs and Dereliction.



**Objective 5.2: Ensure that Mid Ulster is safe, encourages respect for diversity and values community spirit**

**Action 5.2a: Work in partnership to keep people safe and prevent and reduce the impact that crime and anti-social behaviour has on individuals and communities**

**SRO: Ryan Black, MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place**

**Sub Action:** Work through the Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership to deliver programmes that prevent and reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour on individuals and communities

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

In 2024/25, total recorded crime dropped by nearly 6.6% and there was a 13% reduction in anti-social behaviour. A comprehensive Domestic Violence Awareness campaign ran across 41 advertising sites in Mid Ulster. Three Domestic Violence awareness-raising events were attended by 121 participants and 26 people received support through the Domestic Violence High Risk scheme. The PCSP also worked to address and reduce domestic and sexual violence through EVAWG funding from the Executive Office to Mid Ulster Council. Momentum funding of £50k was used to raise awareness of the EVAWG Strategy and £115K was distributed in grant funding to 12 community and voluntary sector groups to deliver a wide range of domestic violence awareness raising programmes at grass roots level.



**Action 5.2b: Work in partnership to promote and create opportunities to build peace in communities through the Mid Ulster Peace Plus Plan**

**SRO: Ryan Black, MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place**

**Sub Action:** Establish the Mid Ulster Peace Plus Partnership, develop and deliver the Peace Plus Local Community Action Plan to support peace and prosperity.

**Progress Year End 2024/2025**

Strand 1: Thriving and Peaceful Communities (3-year programmes)

- Procurement ongoing for an Anti-Poverty programme promoting healthy eating, nutrition and wellbeing, holistic wraparound support and multi-sports activities
- Commencing in January 2026, CWSAN in partnership with Fresh Minds and Shop Mobility will deliver a Health and Wellbeing programme tackling isolation and loneliness focusing on men's/women's sheds, learning and physical disability support, and youth resilience building
- Commencing in January 2026, Dungannon Enterprise in partnership with NIRWN will deliver a Female Entrepreneurship, Empowerment & Leadership programme
- In December 2025, Dungannon Enterprise Centre in partnership with BEAM will commence delivery of a Youth Entrepreneurship programme to build Mid Ulster Post Primary Year 8's knowledge and understanding of social enterprise and business sectors
- In December 2025, Ulster Wildlife will commence delivery of an Environmental Reimaging and Biodiversity Programme with 20 local horticultural/ environmental groups

Strand 2: Building Respect for all Cultural Identities (3-year programmes)

- In January 2026, Wheelworks in partnership with Sentinus will deliver an experiential and interactive Culture, Arts and Heritage programme for P6/P7 pupils across the District
- In November 2025, First Steps Women's Centre will commence an Ethnic Minority programme to enhance awareness, understanding, respect and tolerance for difference, developing positive cultural expression and promoting diversity



- In November 2025, the Rural Centre will commence delivery of a Cross Border Heritage programme promoting cross-border, cross community and peacebuilding initiatives through the shared history linkages of the O'Neill and O'Donnell clans

**Action 5.2c:** Shape and develop a capacity building programme for the community and voluntary sector

**SRO:** Ryan Black, MUDC Strategic Director of Communities and Place

### **Progress Year End 2024/2025**



Mid Ulster District Council has undertaken a transformative approach to collaboration between central and local government by using a place based, bottom-up approach to systemically change how it supports community-based organisations and how it engages with central government to secure investment for the District. The Council, in partnership with central government departments and agencies, delivers a range of support to the community and voluntary sector across Mid Ulster. This includes financial investment, support for group development and capacity building, facilitation of networking, delivery of a range of programmes to support groups and communities to become more diverse, inclusive and safer, and for the most marginalized communities to experience less disadvantage, poverty and social exclusion.

The new approach aims to

- create a unified, outcomes-focused policy framework that aligns departmental strategies under one overarching plan with shared goals and consistent measurement
- create a single, outcomes-based reporting system with clear accountability and comprehensive monitoring that captures the full scope of community activity while strengthening organisational capacity for locally designed solutions
- simplify and streamline resource investments (financial, human, and knowledge-based) through coordinated allocation, shared staffing arrangements, and collaborative funding approaches between Council and Central Government
- build high-quality, collaborative relationships across all sectors through place-based working, thematic networks, and two-way communication that fosters mutual understanding and reduces duplication
- shift from traditional funder-recipient relationships to genuine partnership through co-design processes, co-delivery approaches, and fair funding principles and challenge and change deeply held assumptions that perpetuate inefficient practices and undervalue community contributions, ensuring that addressing prejudice and discrimination becomes integral to all programming.

In 2025, following a period of extensive co design with the community, strategic community development groups and partner funding departments (Department for Communities, the Executive Office, Department of Justice and Northern Ireland Policing Board), Council developed and agreed a Strategy and Action Plan entitled 'Transforming Community Support and Involvement in Mid Ulster 2025 – 2030'. The Strategy's ambition is to have one plan, one budget and one report for community support. This innovative approach will facilitate collective ownership of outcomes, increase the measurable return to government departments for their investment and streamline support to the community and voluntary sector. Officers will now proceed to establish the enabling infrastructure to support implementation of the Integrated Annual Action Plan and Community Investment Policy (Grants).