Derg
Local Growth Plan
To be reviewed in 2023

SEPTEMBER 2019
Introduction & Welcome

Community Planning is a process led by Derry City & Strabane District Council in conjunction with partners and communities to develop and implement a shared, long-term vision to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Derry City & Strabane District area. It will also guide how our public services will work together locally to plan and deliver better services.

Derry City & Strabane District Council adopted a significant co-design process to develop the Strategic Growth Plan for the Derry & Strabane District. This included engaging with statutory organisations, business, community and voluntary organisations and interested citizens to agree the way in which the plan should be developed.

There are 3 Pillars:

- **Social Well-being** – to improve the quality of life of all our people now and in the future
- **Economic Well-being** – to grow and sustain our economy to create more and better employment opportunities for everyone
- **Environmental Well-being** – to live in a low carbon, sustainably designed and connected region

8 Local Growth Plans have been developed for Strabane Town and the 7 District Electoral Areas (Ballyarnett, Derg, Faughan, Foyleside, Sperrin, The Moor and Waterside). Extensive consultation has been carried out in each of the local community planning areas with 48 workshops held over the 2016 – 2017 period. The local community growth plans will feed into the overarching Strategic Growth Plan and their key purpose will be to develop local actions to address local needs.

‘Cluster Village Plans’ have also been developed across the Council area, to cover all 49 rural settlements, as part of the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. These Plans complement the Local Growth Plans. They identify needs and actions at a village level within each DEA which reflect key priorities emerging from the Local Community Planning process. The approach of ‘clustering’ villages is for the Cluster Village Plans to encourage collaborative working between settlements. The Cluster Village Plans are, therefore, appendices to the Local Growth Plans and will be reviewed at the same time. The final Cluster Village Plans will be available at www.derrystrabane.com/rural.
As a result of our extensive co-design process the following outcomes were agreed and aligned to the three statutory pillars of wellbeing.

These outcomes have also been developed and refined to closely align to those of the Northern Ireland Executive’s Programme for Government.

The key actions have been developed by the thematic working groups, cross referenced and tested against the outcomes and are set out in the following pages.
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The Derg Local Growth Plan area has a population of approximately 16,000 (Census 2011) representing 11% of the Derry City and Strabane District Council total population.

The Derg DEA includes the rural towns and villages of Castlederg, Clady, Glebe, Killeter, Killen, Newtownstewart, Sion Mills and Victoria Bridge.

The Derg DEA has a wealth of natural and built heritage. These include forests, parks, castle sites, former mills, some of the best fishing rivers in Northern Ireland and Europe, archaeological and historical sites.

We are a strong, vibrant and forward thinking community with a commitment to making the most of the present and building a better future.

We are passionate about our culture, history, built and natural heritage and recognise that while we want to enjoy these wonderful assets, our responsibility is to conserve and preserve this for future generations.

Festivals and events such as the Killeter Hillwalking Festival, Castlederg Apple Fair, Newtownstewart Drama Festival, Killeter Fair, Aghyaran Festival, Strawberry Fair, Community Fun days, Halloween and switch on of Christmas lights help to bring the local community together and encourage visitors to spend time in the area sampling the traditional crafts, music and warm hospitality. This in turn boosts the local economy.

We recognise the need for strong leadership and partnership working within our DEA, bringing community and voluntary, business and residents together to engage in decision-making for the future benefit of our area. This will allow us to strategically grow and improve social, economic and environmental wellbeing for all.
Population density of Derg Local Area and associated Wards

Population density
Persons per sq km
200 and above
100 to 200
Up to 100

Derg - This is Our Place
The new Derg Local Growth Plan will provide an opportunity to encourage investment in our surrounding rural towns and villages, building upon the natural/built heritage and picturesque landscapes and environment.

This plan will build upon the Rural Development Programme’s Basic Services and Village Renewal Schemes to deliver new and additional services in the rural areas and work towards the enhancement of rural villages.

It also will expand on the success of the Rural Development Programme’s Business Investment Scheme encouraging businesses from the Derg area to participate.

In the 2011 Census 73% of the population in Derg DEA indicated that their health was either “very good” or “good”. In the Derg DEA there is high demand for investment in additional outdoor recreational facilities such as parks and MUGAs, greenways etc. to challenge health inequalities especially for the most deprived and isolated areas.

A number of prime derelict sites exist within the Derg DEA including the former Castlederg PSNI Station and the former Derg Valley Hospital which may provide the opportunity for new private or community enterprises or additional housing development.

Building on recent developments such as the Peace IV Shared Space project in Castlederg and the development of community centres in Glebe and Victoria Bridge.

Our Community is making the commitment to building peace, good relations and recognising cultural diversity.

The people from the Derg area have a strong work ethic and are keen to be employed. The 2011 census estimated that 49% of the Derg population were in employment which equalled the DCSDC average of 49%.

Adoption of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 places a new requirement on central government and public authorities, including Councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies or plans and designing and delivering public services.
Derg: This is Our Time – a time of Opportunity
The unprecedented flooding in August 2017 had a detrimental impact on many of the rural areas, including Castlederg and Newtownstewart. This impacted on residential properties, recreational and community facilities. Need for review of flood defences at the affected sites including Vaughans Holm and Castle Brae.

Young people often have to leave the rural area to find suitable, well paid work with many travelling to Dublin or England on a weekly basis.

We need to address the high levels of health inequalities regarding access to services that exists in our most deprived and isolated rural areas. 16% of the population indicated that they had a health problem or disability that ‘limited a lot’ their day to day activities.

It is estimated that 43% of resident in the Derg area do not have any qualifications. 18% of young people aged 16-24 in the Derg local area do not have any qualifications. There is a strong need for investment in education to enhance the skills and employment potential of our youth. Outreach services in community hubs need financial support so that these services can be provided to rural communities locally.

Census 2011 data indicates that Derg DEA has 51% of its population aged 25-64 years and 15% of its population aged 65 plus. This means that we have an ageing population, in some cases on low incomes and therefore we need to invest in additional health care initiatives including dementia awareness, domiciliary care and nursing homes.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing society today. In the North West the consequences include severe weather events; heatwaves, storms and flooding as well as gradual changes such as rising sea levels.

Our rural businesses are participating in a very competitive and politically unstable environment, dealing with currency fluctuations, increasing fuel and tax levies and often operating in areas surrounded by a large number of derelict buildings.

Need for an audit of mobile and broadband connectivity across the Derg DEA. Lobby for investment for the provision of 100% FTTP (Fibre to the Premises) broadband connectivity and 100% 4G/5G mobile phone coverage across the entire Derg DEA to support rural communities, businesses and individuals and investment opportunities in the social, knowledge and digital economies.

Through joint co-operation and partnership working we need to signpost and market the Derg DEA to make people aware of what the Derg DEA has to offer.
What matters is how we respond to these opportunities, challenges and key issues. This local growth plan is the beginning of a new story that has emerged from the community planning consultations. We want to tell a new story about how we would like the future to look.

Local Community Planning and Village Renewal consultations have initiated a process of communication and networking between rural towns and villages thus enabling people to ascertain and value what they have already and examine options to build upon this.

- Development of new DERG Local Growth Plan Partnership

Rural Development Programme - Village Renewal - Cluster Village Plans

- Newtownstewart, Ardstraw, Drumlegagh, Victoria Bridge, Douglas Bridge (Sperrin DEA)
- Sion Mills, Glebe, Clady
- Castlederg, Spamount, Killeter, Killen, Aghyaran, Garvetagh, Erganagh

Rural Development Programme - Rural Basic Services Scheme

- Five community organisations awarded a total of £20,653 for feasibility studies;
- Two community organisations awarded total of £226,656 for capital projects
- Total DERG = £247,308

Rural Development Programme – Rural Business Investment Scheme

- (up to June 2019) 21 businesses supported -£962,167 - creating 55 new jobs.
Derg – Key Capital Projects

- New Victoria Bridge Community centre
- New Glebe Community Centre
- Castlederg Shared Space Peace IV Project - £240,000 + (£53,000 revenue)

Social Investment Fund – Community Premises Support
- Newtownstewart Leisure Complex: £16,450 - Replacement of heating system
- Two Castles ABC: £21,549 - Installation of toilets, changing rooms, new kitchen facilities and signage.
- Derry & Raphoe Action Ltd – Somme Memorial Hall: £20,808 - Refurbishment of toilet block and creation of new kitchen space
- Bridgetown Hall: £19,944.90 - Refurbishment of kitchen and toilets
- Churchtown Community Association: £15,184 - Refurbishment of unit including installation of heating system, windows and kitchen area.
- Garvagh & District Community Hall: £9,450 - Installation of energy efficient lighting in hall and flood lights in play area and car park

Sustainability Plans - Progress the Sustainability Plans commissioned by Derry City and Strabane District Council in 2016 with the view to implementing actions for the following areas:
- Killeter and District Development Trust
- Churchtown Community Association

RDP Village Renewal Capital Projects – Strategic Projects (grants of £183,000):
- Castlederg - access & environmental improvements at Castle site;
- Newtownstewart - regeneration of site for new play area at Mourne Park;
- Sion Mills - regeneration of site for new play area

Grants of £35,000
- Ardstraw - enhancement of play area;
- Clady - gateway features & environmental improvements;
- Killeter - new civic space with feature clock/street furniture.

RDP - Rural Basic Services Capital Grants:
Basic Services Scheme:
- Aghyaran St Davog’s GAC: £178,619 - Extension to building to provide a health and wellbeing hub kitchen and equipment (pending Letter of Offer);
- Two Castle's Boxing Club (Newtownstewart CIC): £48,037 - Capital works to create a kitchen area and space as a health and wellbeing hub (pending Letter of Offer).

Basic Services Technical Grants (Feasibility Studies):
- Aghyaran St Davog’s GFC
- Two Castle’s Boxing Club
- Derg Valley Care
- Sion Mills Building Preservation Trust
- Dergview Football Club
Key Strategic Capital Projects
to be delivered or substantially progressed

- Parks & Play Projects
- Urban & Rural Conservation
- Villages enhancement & Rural Development Programme
- Sion Mills & Newtownstewart conservation projects
- A5 Strabane to Ballygawley
- Major regional park project at Castlederg Castle Site
**Outcomes & Actions: Community & Social**

**Community Development**

**Outcome**  
We live in a shared, equal and safe community

Refers to Programme for Government outcomes: 3, 7, 8 & 9

**Key actions include:**

- Establish a Local Community Planning Partnership to take the lead in helping to develop and regenerate the Derg DEA
- Promote and support opportunities for local volunteering in line with the Volunteer Strategy for Northern Ireland, assisting with training and recruitment and encouraging participation from older/retired people and young people
- Develop and Implement a communications/engagement structure to ensure effective dialogue between all local stakeholders
- Government Departments to explore revenue funding for rural groups similar to Neighbourhood Renewal funding in the urban areas
- Support local communities to upgrade existing facilities and identify need for additional community/sports facilities to include scoping the need for the development of Community Hubs
- Promote and assist residents to access support services such as Women’s Aid

**We are more actively engaged and can influence decisions which affect us**

**We have safer communities**

**We have access to quality facilities and services**

**Our Community and Voluntary sector is more resilient and sustainable**

- Consult with statutory agencies to develop and Implement a strategy to ensure that services and facilities available across the Derg DEA are accessible especially for older people and people with disabilities
- Develop programmes and initiatives that promote diversity across communities and within communities and strengthen the whole community as a welcoming and inclusive place for all
- Establishment of a rural Community Safety forum and scope need for Neighbourhood Watch Scheme/Community Champion service ensuring joint working to reduce and deter crime
- Develop diversionary interventions and initiatives around times of community tension and support communities to defuse tensions. Reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and address any local issues around political demarcation of territory
- Promote “Lawfulness” by creating a society where lawfulness is promoted and valued and where law enforcement and the justice system are able to tackle harm and criminality in partnership with empowered and confident communities
- Deliver a befriending service for rural and isolated elderly residents
Outcomes & Actions: Community & Social

- Work with local partners and statutory agencies on the provision of improved signage, lighting and traffic calming measures to ensure safer walking and driving conditions
- Local Community Planning partnership to work closely with Council’s Good Relations team and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) to scope and deliver initiatives promoting equality, integration and inclusion for all section 75 groupings
- Build the capacity of groups through training, empowering them to get involved in decision making and encourage networking and sharing of resources. Establishing a community database with contacts for all groups in a format that is accessible to all
- Support rural communities across the Derg DEA to access finance to recruit paid community and youth workers empowering these local communities to reduce rural isolation, improve health & wellbeing, enhance cultural traditions and increase the overall capacity of local groups
- Build the capacity of local groups to explore and develop social capital and empower their communities to make the most of their assets in line with the new Community Asset Transfer Strategy
- Promote awareness of and encourage rural participation in initiatives under the Rural Development Programme (including Basic Services & Village Renewal) and the Peace IV programme (covering Children & Young People, Shared Spaces & Services and Building Positive Relations and any successor or replacement programmes)
- Appoint a Good Relations Champion for the DEA and deliver sustained cross-community local reconciliation programmes under Peace IV
- Promote in partnership with other departments a high standard of health, safety and well-being at public events
- Ensure resilience of our community to the effects of climate change

Investment in strong communications systems where information is made accessible to all. This will ensure our communities are empowered and involved in decision-making at all levels for the betterment of the Derg DEA.

Working in partnership with local communities to audit existing assets/facilities and planning for future investment to improve and build upon these ensuring high quality provision of services and facilities that are accessible to all.

Joint working with statutory partners will help to establish support services such as Befriending and Neighbourhood Watch schemes to enable residents and the most vulnerable people in our area to live in safer communities.
Health & Wellbeing

Outcome: We live long, healthy and fulfilling lives
Refers to Programme for Government Outcomes 4

Key actions include:

- Work with health service providers and local community organisations to establish shared family support hubs/day centres and health and wellbeing hubs within community facilities enabling provision of outreach services to address physical and mental health issues at a local level
- Scope out the feasibility for the development of a Health & Wellbeing Hub in Newtownstewart and progress the options
- Support health service providers to design and deliver health intervention programmes to improve communication/engagement with residents with a view to improving services
- Consult with statutory agencies to develop and implement a strategy to ensure that services and facilities available across the Derg DEA are accessible, especially for older people and people with disabilities
- Promote an awareness raising campaign on dementia and support local groups to ensure that services and facilities become dementia friendly
- Deliver positive ageing programmes for youth and older people and people with a disability
- Promote early intervention and health awareness through education programmes within schools
- Design and develop new programmes to enable children and adults with disabilities to participate in sports
- Establish with local partners a series of walking and cycling routes around villages and towns for use by residents and visitors
- Design and develop an accessible information/signposting system to ensure easy transfer of health information using a range of written and digital mediums
- Develop an age friendly region through an integrated programme of action, based on a rights based approach and on the eight World Health Organisations’ key themes
- Support the development of assisted housing schemes for the elderly and adults with learning disabilities, enabling independent living
- Support, with Council, the delivery of a “Compassionate Communities” programme to assist people with chronic or end of life conditions to remain in their home
- Work towards obtaining Compassionate Communities City and District Charter
- Provision of support for carers living in isolated rural areas
Investment in outreach health care services and provision of accessible health information will help to tackle inequalities for residents living in rural areas and support people to live independently.

Provision of new and improved healthcare, sports and recreational facilities across the Derg DEA will support people to lead healthier lives, enabling them to age well and benefit from improved physical and mental wellbeing.

Development of early intervention and health educational programmes in conjunction with schools and community and voluntary groups will ensure that our most vulnerable citizens are supported to live long healthy lives.

Outcomes & Actions: Community & Social

- Deliver a befriending service for rural and isolated elderly/learning disabled residents
- Promote health, safety and well-being, and safeguard the environment by supporting communities and businesses
- Continue to promote/support and participate in range of health and wellbeing initiatives linked to Making Life Better Strategy
- Develop the role and function of Home Accident Prevention services
- Develop Community Crisis Intervention Service
- Lobby statutory partners such as Northern Ireland Ambulance Service for improved accessibility to rural communities across the DEA, reduction in response times and retention of the ambulance base in Castlederg. Also lobby for the retention of the fire station services in Castlederg and Newtownstewart, ensuring the safety of the residents of the Derg DEA
- Work in partnership through the Civic Forum to address community concerns with alcohol/drugs/ mental health/ emotional wellbeing and homelessness
- Work with partners to improve housing standards including those in the private rented sector
- Promote affordable warmth and associated schemes to combat fuel poverty within district
- Facilitate public to make healthy lifestyle choices
- Work in partnership with local communities to increase environmental awareness and responsibility including waste management and promoting responsible dog ownership

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Children & Young People

Outcome
Our children and young people have the best start in life

Key actions include:

- Support the development of a District wide Youth Council through the Community Planning process, enabling young people from the Derg DEA to have their voices heard and involving these young people in decision making on issues that impact on them
- Engage and empower young people from Derg DEA through their participation and involvement in the development and delivery of an inclusive programme of events and initiatives for Year of Youth 2019
- Consult with statutory agencies to develop youth services and facilities that are accessible to children and young people with disabilities ensuring participation and integration with their peers in recreational programmes and activities including pre-school play
- Support groups to access finance to recruit shared youth workers to develop youth services across the Derg DEA
- Work with Government and statutory partners to eliminate barriers to education by ensuring provision of properly resourced, nursery and primary schools across the Derg DEA, in line with rural proofing
- Develop transition programmes between key life stages for children and young people (through engaging, befriending, motivating, peer support etc.)
- Design and deliver a range of educational programmes exploring mental health and physical wellbeing of children and young people including issues such as suicide, self-harm, unhealthy eating, drug and alcohol abuse
- Work in partnership with agencies including Council's Good Relations team and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership to design and deliver diversionary activities/programmes to engage hard to reach young people and youths at risk of becoming marginalised and disaffected
- Support community led initiatives for the development of recreational space to encourage children and young people to participate in recreational activities such as play, music, art, drama, physical activity and sport. Engaging young people in positive community activities and encouraging the use and promotion of the NI Family Support Directory
- Involve local statutory, voluntary and community sector partners in training for the UNICEF Child Rights Framework

Our children and young people are safer, healthier, more respected and included

Our children and young people are better able to fully realise their potential and become active, responsible citizens
To ensure that our children and young people have the best start in life it is important that actions are delivered as part of a strong partnership approach including statutory agencies, families, schools and community.

Putting in place education awareness and early intervention health programmes will enable children and young people to deal with challenging issues and cope with external influences.

Respecting young people, enabling them to have their voice heard and get involved in decision making for their future will build confidence and assure them of their value within our society.

Investment in accessible physical indoor and outdoor recreational facilities will encourage increased physical activity and social interaction with their peers and reduce isolation.
4 Outcomes and actions: Economy

Education & Skills

We are better skilled and educated

Our young people have improved attainment levels

We have a better skilled and educated workforce

As a North West Learning Region we have increased training and learning opportunities

Key actions include:

- Design and implement programmes aimed at children and young people who are under-achieving at school e.g. one to one mentoring, tuition and nurture units.
- Scope feasibility of a rural music factory to improve skills set associated with the industry.
- Provision of Life Skills education accessible to all, to include confidence building, motivation and interviewing skills.
- Provision of adult education programmes for those furthest away from the workplace including up-skilling, basic literacy/numeracy, employability, care skills, IT, creative writing.
- Work in partnership with employers and education providers to deliver tailored courses, future proofing employment opportunities for the next 10-15 years.

- Introducing practical training and financial incentives to encourage young people to stay on in education.
- Sharing current best practice e.g. up-cycling projects, community work programmes and ‘coderdojo’ programmes and clubs in rural locations and ILM initiatives supporting young people into employment.
- Partnership working across statutory agencies to ensure rural access to services e.g. NI Libraries.
- Work in partnership with statutory partners and private enterprises to provide supported employment opportunities tailored for people with physical or learning disabilities.
- Provision of Shared community education space including homework clubs, utilising retired teachers as volunteers.
- Provision of recreational and intergenerational courses e.g. sports, crafts.
- Audit current barriers to education including provision of accessible and affordable childcare and rural transport.
- Assist and work towards securing UNESCO Learning City and Region status, promote and accelerate the practice of life-long learning, develop an active, creative and inclusive learning culture from early education in families, the workplace and communities.
Recognise the importance of partnership working with education providers and employers to provide the opportunity for work experience, apprenticeships and upskilling, ensuring core employability skills are available in our region to meet future job demands.

Need for financial investment in shared education facilities including rural schools, colleges and community hubs, ensuring lifelong learning and access to education is available for all.

Working in partnership to identify and remove barriers to education and learning in our rural areas including the provision of accessible and affordable transport and childcare.
Outcomes and actions: Economy

Enterprise & the Economy

We prosper though a strong, competitive entrepreneurial and innovative economy

Refers to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 5, 6 & 12

Meaningful and rewarding employment is available to everyone
Our economy is better connected and more prosperous
We are more entrepreneurial, creative and business ready and have grown our economic base
We are more specialised and innovative and have competitive advantage

Key actions include:

- Deliver a local business improvement programme to include shop frontage, branding, ‘buy local’ campaigns, business development and training and joint marketing
- Provision of tailored programmes to improve equality of employment opportunities e.g. people with disabilities
- Complete an audit of mobile and broadband connectivity and lobby for provision of improved broadband connectivity and mobile phone coverage to support rural businesses, addressing geographical gaps
- Encourage participation in the Rural Development Programme’s Rural Business Investment Scheme providing primarily capital support for micro, small and social enterprises in non-agriculture/non-food business

- Support the growth of Local Micro and SMEs through participation in Council’s Business Boost and Export focused Mentoring Programmes
- Provide support for partnership development and co-design in tendering processes including training on regulations to promote business competitiveness
- Explore options for re-zoning of land for industrial use across the DEA
- Promote and improve partnership arrangements with statutory, community, voluntary and businesses
- Support the local economy and businesses through clear advice, guidance & good regulation
- Encourage and support local people to start their own businesses through participation on Council’s Business Start Up (Go For It) Programme
Outcomes and Actions: Economy

- Support the growth of vibrant social economy sector through targeted support programmes including auditing demand for additional business units within community facilities.

Recognising the importance of tailored business mentoring and financial support programmes encouraging new business start-ups and social enterprises and promoting growth within our more established small to medium enterprises.

Maximising job creation and business development opportunities within the rural areas and encouraging rural businesses to participate in programmes such as the Rural Development Programme’s Rural Business Investment Scheme.

Essential investment needed in mobile connectivity and broadband infrastructure to encourage development of businesses in rural areas, enabling them to operate in a highly competitive environment.
Outcomes and actions: Economy

Tourism, Arts & Culture

We live in the cultural destination of choice

Refers to Programme for Government outcomes: 10 & 12

We are the cultural destination of choice and offer world-class visitor experiences

Key actions include:

- Support tourism product development and marketing opportunities in line with the tourism strategy for the City and District and as part of the Future Search exercise for the Sperrins including training. This will highlight the built and natural heritage of the area and address the need for accommodation provision including camper van and camping provision.

- Support continued development of accessibility to all festivals and events.

- Promote Investment in cultural events, walking trails, village fairs, crafts, food markets and festivals as a means of promoting the area and attracting visitors.

- Promote investment in infrastructure, creating improved access points, signage and improving the quality of facilities enabling elderly and people with disabilities to participate in sporting and tourism activities.

- Support the development of community led cultural summer educational camps to promote the language, culture and heritage of the area.

- Support the development of walkways, greenways, blueways and in particular, the International Appalachian Trail as part of the Rural Development Programme's cross border Co-operation Scheme and the tourism strategy.

- Support the development of Cultural hubs across the Derg DEA including Sion Mills and Killeter as key providers of art, culture, music, heritage and events.

- Support the development of Killeter Forest as an outdoor activity centre and promote development of green areas including zip lining, wall climbing, treetop walks, rambling, mountain biking, walking including site specific signage.

- Support the development and delivery of an extensive expansion and improvement programme of walking and cycling routes through villages and in the open countryside across the Derg DEA. This combined with the provision of shared recreational spaces will encourage increased physical activity. It will help to maintain mobility and fitness and reduce rural isolation e.g. heritage trails, mountain trails, riverside trails, country parks, forest trails, angling, canoeing, horse-riding, off road mountain biking etc. and supporting progression of projects that have undergone feasibility studies e.g. International Appalachian Trail.
We live in an area that has a wealth of history, culture and natural and built heritage and recognise that while we want to enjoy these wonderful assets and promote our area as a vibrant tourist attraction, we are also responsible for conserving and preserving this for future generations.

We are passionate about our culture including music, song, art and dance and recognise the need for partnership, working with statutory partners to encourage financial investment in the delivery of our festivals and events, enabling us to provide an enhanced cultural experience for local and international visitors coming to our area, increasing overnight stays and benefiting our community economically.
Key actions include:

- Identify and scope the potential for development of abandoned buildings – conserve/refurbish/develop. Also address maintenance of statutory listed buildings whilst respecting the built heritage and appropriate related policies.

- Assess options for the future of Castlederg PSNI station, old hospital, ambulance station and other community assets.

- Work with relevant agencies including Council’s Planning Department and emerging Local Development Plan to consider the development of new housing schemes to provide a range of affordable mixed tenure units.

- Work with relevant agencies to support independent living e.g. making adaptations to improve accessibility and provide supportive training e.g. cookery.

- Encourage participation in the Rural Development Programme’s Cluster Village Plan process (development & implementation of plans). Village Renewal capital projects to be implemented in selected settlements to contribute to regeneration through environmental improvements, heritage conservation, derelict/vacant site enhancements, shop front schemes or gateway/signage projects (Newtownstewart, Sion Mills, Castlederg, Killeter, Clady, Ardstraw).

- Development of accessible communal green spaces/allotments and play areas providing a range of facilities for different age groups and people with disabilities including a review of current provision and possible upgrade aligned to the Play Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan.

- Work with stakeholders to monitor, manage and improve Local Air Quality.

- Seek to explore ways in which the Local Development Plan could address green spaces and play areas etc.

- Promote with the assistance of local partners and statutory agencies the development of local river and railway greenways to celebrate history, culture and heritage of the area. Also access issues need to be addressed – footpaths, lighting, cycle paths.
Outcomes and Actions: Environment and Regeneration

- Develop a series of linked information points and panels promoting the area’s natural and built heritage including renovations to historic sites e.g. Newtownstewart Castle and Avery’s Castle and celebrate ancestral heritage.
- Regeneration master plan required for Derg towns and villages including the implementation of Sion Mills Strategic Heritage-Led Regeneration Masterplan.
- Work with local partners and statutory agencies on the provision of adequate flood defences and development of a conservation plan for the area.
- Implement Peace IV Shared Space for Castlederg including the development of a green space masterplan.
- Support local groups to develop shared recreational spaces to encourage increased physical activity and reduce isolation e.g. trails, allotments, community gardens, men’s sheds, parks, multi-use games areas, outdoor gyms.
- The Local Development Plan team to ensure that the Council’s new Local Development Plan shall consider the level of development pressures in the Derg DEA and make provision for houses and economic development of an appropriate scale, nature and location.

Recognise the importance of working in partnership with statutory partners to protect and promote our natural and built heritage whilst also ensuring that these assets are preserved for the benefit of future generations.

Support investment in the regeneration of our rural towns and villages through provision of enhanced physical and green infrastructure and by encouraging participation in programmes such as the Rural Development Programme’s Village Renewal Scheme.

Work in partnership with the Local Development Plan team and statutory partners to provide opportunities for the development of rural housing and rural business. Recognising the importance of making provision for people to live, work and visit our rural area, ensuring its sustainability for the long-term future.

- The Local Development Plan team to ensure that the Council’s new Local Development Plan shall consider the level of development pressures in the Derg DEA and make provision for houses and economic development of an appropriate scale, nature and location.

Promote the development of Green Infrastructure projects to contribute to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change.
Outcomes and actions: Environment and Regeneration

Infrastructure: Energy, Waste, Transport & Water

We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

Refers to Programme for Government Outcome 13

Key actions include:

- Work with relevant Departments to implement a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding the natural landscape to ensure that any further development of wind turbines is sympathetic to the environment and has demonstrable benefits.

- Lobby for the extension of gas link to the west, beyond Strabane and explore other renewable options.

- In partnership with key stakeholders identify suitable sites for shared outdoor public space and provide animation programmes to maximize usage and attract people from all communities to the area.

- Promote the upgrade of social housing stock – insulation, heating etc.

- Review Translink services and Community transport provision across the Derg DEA to identify areas for route harmonisation, improvement and development. Also provision on new bus shelters across the DEA.

- Promote the provision of accessible transport for all, in particular older people and people with disabilities; including the promotion and development of existing volunteer car scheme.

- Work with local partners and statutory agencies to ensure that rural roads are snow-ploughed and gritted where necessary.

- Liaise with the relevant departments in order to implement a better and more frequent system for hedge cutting and maintenance of verges.

- Consider the expansion of the volunteering programme to develop a community mobilization programme.

We have a secure and affordable energy supply

We have moved towards a Zero Waste circular economy

We have more integrated, sustainable and accessible transport

Our water is cleaner and more effectively managed
Recognise the need for investment in road infrastructure and provision of transport in rural areas. This would ensure rural residents have improved accessibility to essential services and opportunities for integration with other communities. It will reduce rural isolation, leading to improved social, physical and mental wellbeing.

Work in partnership with relevant statutory partners to encourage extension of accessible and affordable renewable energy sources to the rural areas, having a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding the natural landscape, whilst also sustaining our environment.
This information is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audio formats (CD, MP3, DAISY) and minority languages.

For further information on alternative formats please contact:

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