Community Planning is here: Get Involved!
Public Forums Carrickfergus

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Area
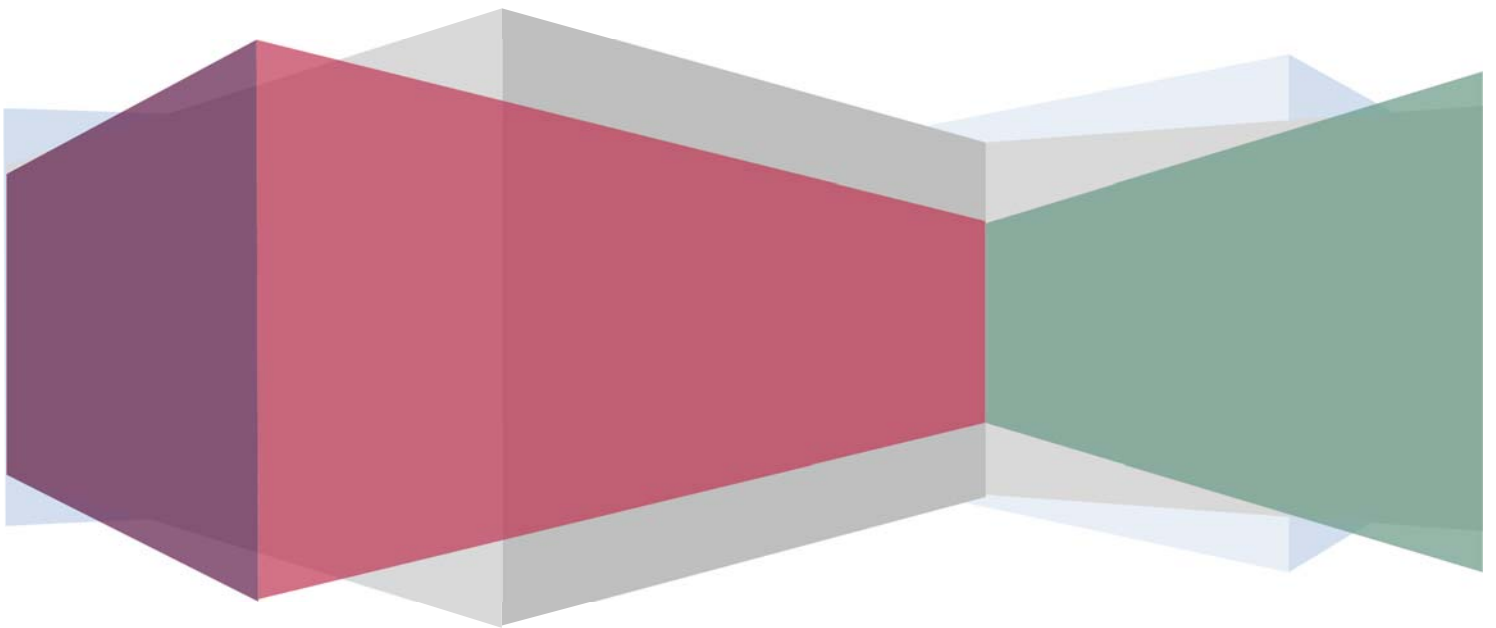
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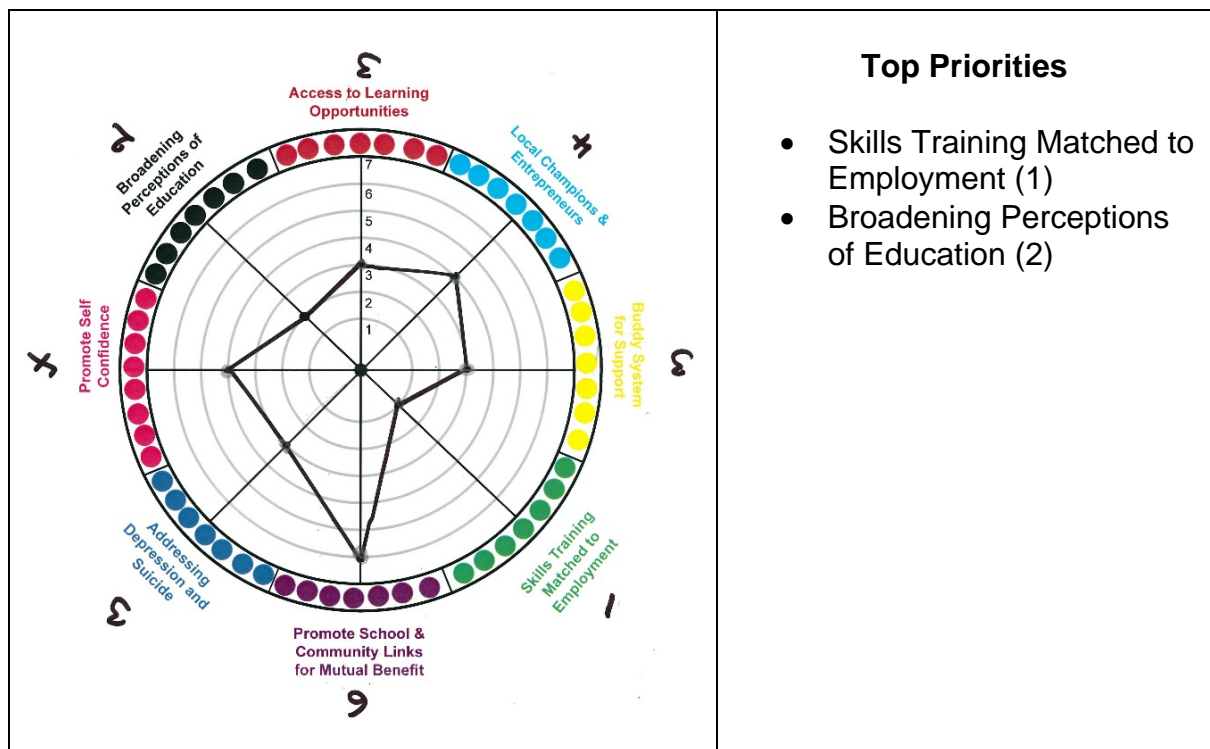
Introduction

As part of the Community Planning is Here: Get Involved Project three Public Forums were held across the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Area. The forums provided participants with an opportunity to: hear about Community Planning; find out about the progress of Community Planning in their area; explore Community Planning Priorities for the Council area through a Place Standard Exercise; and have their say on the issues which are important to them. The report provides a record of the tailored Place Standard exercise undertaken by participants. This approach enables participants to consider issues and rate those which they think should be prioritised. Issues are rated on a scale from **1 to 7**, where **1** means the issue should be tackled as a high priority and **7** where the issue is still important but of a lower priority.
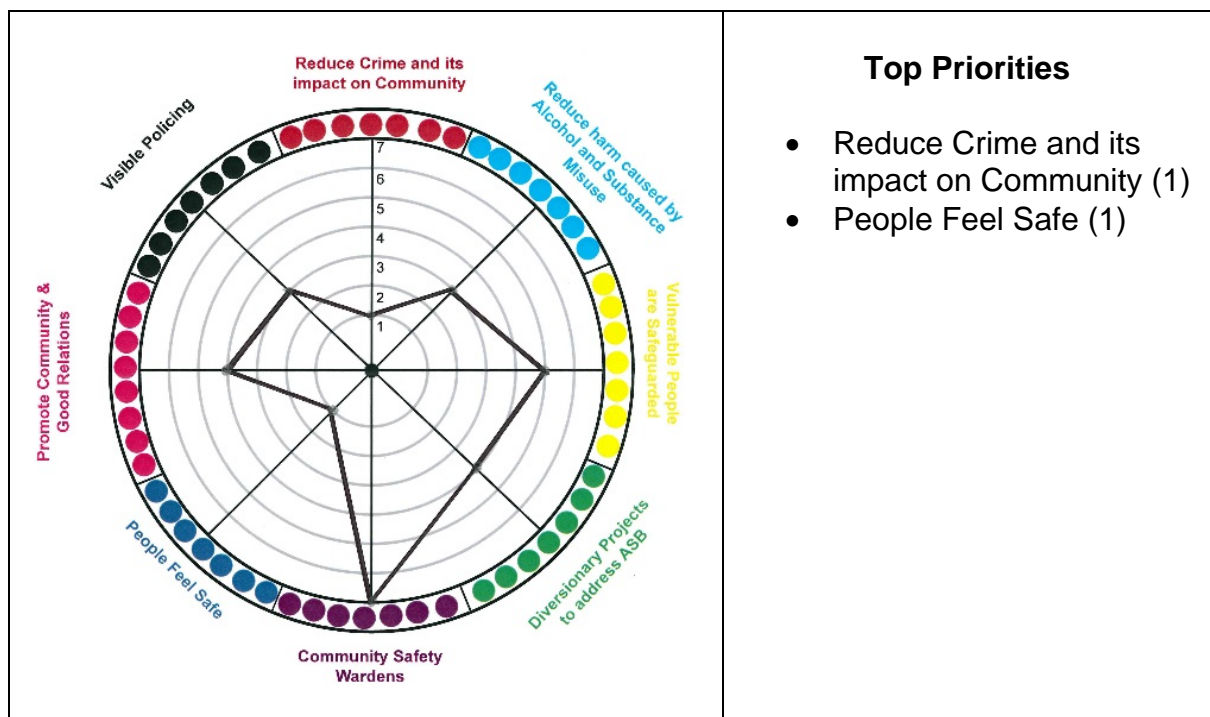

Participants discussing priorities in Carrickfergus

Public Forum: Carrickfergus Thursday 11 August 2016

Progress in Education
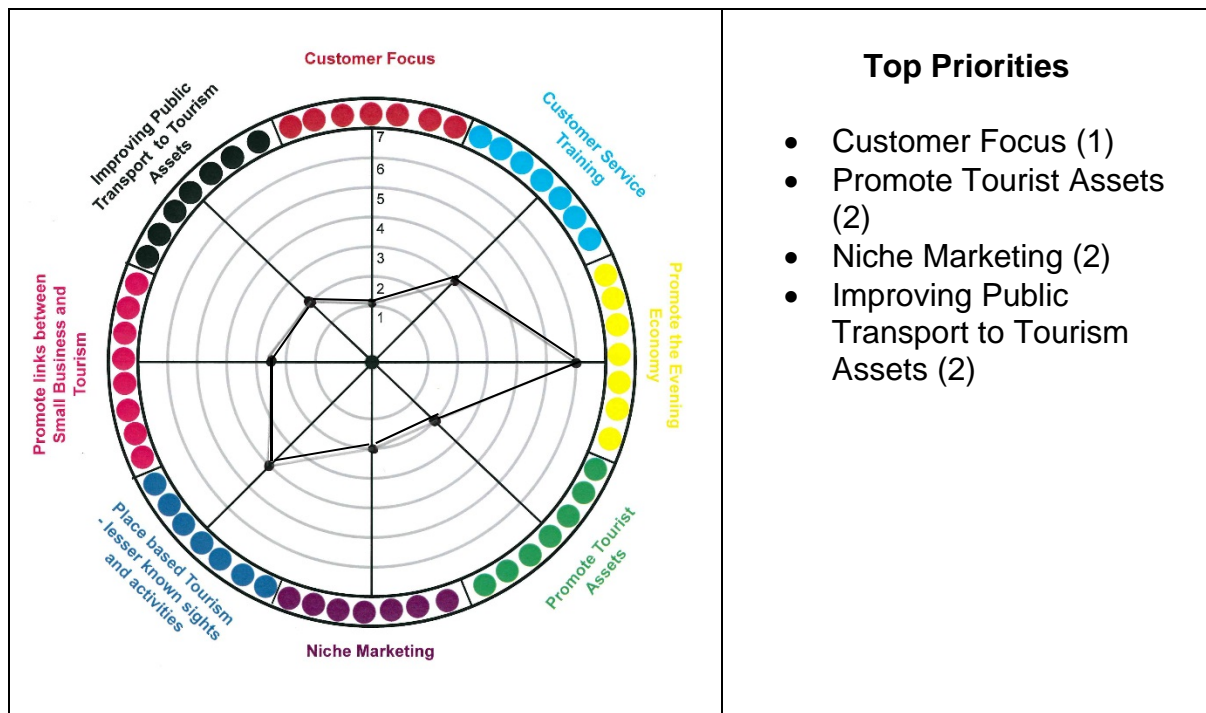

Top Priorities

- Skills Training Matched to Employment (1)
- Broadening Perceptions of Education (2)

Community Safety and Cohesion

Top Priorities

- Reduce Crime and its impact on Community (1)
- People Feel Safe (1)

Tourism

Top Priorities

- Customer Focus (1)
- Promote Tourist Assets (2)
- Niche Marketing (2)
- Improving Public Transport to Tourism Assets (2)

Place Standard – Prioritisation Check: All Results

Community Safety and Cohesion

Community Safety and Cohesion	Larne	Ballymena	Carrickfergus	MEA
Reduce crime and its impact on the Community	1	1	1	1
Reduce harm caused by alcohol and substance misuse	2	3	3	2.5
Vulnerable people are safeguarded	3	2	5	3
Diversionary projects to address ASB	2	4	5	3.5
Community Safety Wardens	6	7	7	6.5
Feeling Safe	1	1	1	1
Community and Good Relations	3	6	4	4.5
Visible Policing	2	4	3	3

Good Health and Well-being

Good Health and Well-being	Larne	Ballymena	Carrickfergus	MEA
Promote and encourage active and healthy living	3	3	-	3
Early Intervention	2	2	-	2
Support People to Live at home	4	1	-	2.5
Support Volunteers and Carers	4	2	-	3
Preventative approaches	2	3	-	2.5
Community based interventions	4	6	-	5
Joined up working between hospitals and community care workers	1	1	-	1
Supporting people with disabilities: access and employment support	3	5	-	4

Progress in Education

Progress in Education	Larne	Ballymena	Carrickfergus	MEA
Access to Learning Opportunities	-	3	3	3
Local Champions and Entrepreneurs	-	5	4	4.5
Buddy System for Support	-	7	3	5
Skills Training matched to Employment	-	2	1	1.5
Promote School and Community Links for Mutual Benefit	-	1	6	3.5
Addressing Depression and Suicide	-	1.5	3	2
Promote Self Confidence	-	4	4	4
Broadening perceptions of Education	-	5	2	3.5

Additional: Integrated ethos of Education	-	2		2

Sustainable Jobs

Sustainable Jobs	Larne	Ballymena	Carrickfergus	MEA
Tailor skills training to needs of employers	1	1	-	1
Promote entrepreneurship / start ups	2	2	-	2
Small business grants	5	5	-	5
Business supported to grow	1	5	-	3
Creative career advice – e.g. local entrepreneurs	2	7	-	4.5
Social clauses in procurement	2.5	7	-	5
Support Social Economy	3	2	-	2.5
Promote Apprenticeships	4	4	-	4

Tourism

Tourism	Larne	Ballymena	Carrickfergus	MEA
Customer Focus	1	-	1	1
Customer Service Training	3	-	3	3
Promote the Evening Economy	4	-	6	5
Promote Tourist Assets	2	-	2	2
Niche Marketing	4	-	2	3
Place-based Tourism -lesser known sights and activities	4	-	4	4
Promote links between Small business and Tourism	5	-	2.5	4
Improving Public Transport to Tourism Assets	5	-	2	3.5

Place Standard – Prioritisation and Actions Progress in Education

The issues presented below have been developed from a number of processes including the 'Putting People First' Conference; Base-line evidence gathering; and 'Strategic Conversations' with statutory and support partners.

Access to Learning Opportunities (3)

What **actions** could be taken to provide better access to learning opportunities, for example: Lifelong Learning, Vocational Training, Occupational Learning?

- Role of schools (and after-school clubs)– vocational subjects offered, not all academic. This has started and is good but not all school offer it. Learning communities- sharing resources etc.
- Access to FE colleges is an issue and the cost of taking up some courses – not all courses are accessible in local colleges.
- Access to local primary and secondary schools for access to further learning.
- Older people keeping up with technology -community classes in local area.
- Intergenerational learning – older teaching younger and vice versa.
- Adapting the learning environment to suit the needs of the learner.
- Schools/ FE colleges does not suit everyone – want to learn locally in own environment.
- Learning trades – need for apprenticeships.
- Essential Skills.

Participants undertaking Place Standard Process

Local Champions and Entrepreneurs (4)

What **actions** could be taken to make the most of local champions and entrepreneurs?

- Creating opportunities for the local champions to tell their story – to inspire others,
- Success is not all about the high profile characters but can be local people who still have the ability to influence others by showing the success they have had.
- Local projects need to be supported to be their own local champions- not always financial support but promotion and recognition of groups/ individuals/ projects that are already happening.
- Tap into local people who have time to give (retired/ older) who have skills to share
- Innovate, be creative about the approaches.
- Richard Tee 'I feel good campaign' social enterprise- very successful.

Buddy System for Support (3)

What **actions** could be taken to develop the buddy system? e.g. where older pupils are paired with a new or younger pupil to provide support, a friendly ear to listen and to help build confidence.

- Schools doing it already?
- Good system to introduce to training projects / community networks.
- Register of skills/ expertise that ca be tapped into be other groups/ projects or individuals that need support on certain themes/issues e.g. 2 groups linking up to learn from one another. Need sign-posters.
- Connect buddy system to the local champions – central register/source.
- Proactive approach where 'buddy' would connect with school leavers who leave prior to qualification.
- Business in the community.

Skills Training Matched to Employment (1)

What actions could be taken to better match skills training to the needs of employers?

- Need a process to continually assess the needs of local employers- what employment is available and what skills are required?
- Schools career advice needs to be better – link with local employers matching skills of young people to potential jobs.
- 'Learn to Earn' programme – young enterprise – schools cutting back because they can't afford to run the programmes.
- Work with Invest NI to predict skills needs in local area for potential investors and employers.

Promote School and Community Links for Mutual Benefit (6)

What actions could be taken to develop links between schools and the community for their mutual benefit? e.g. extended school programmes provide for a range of services or activities outside of the normal school day to help meet the needs of nursery, primary, secondary and special school children as well as their parents, families and local community.

- Programmes to broaden horizons for kids- community projects.
- Joint programmes- community accessing funding that isn't available to schools to broaden programmes available to children and parents.
- School open to community events as venue- joint events.
- Programmes for parents – literacy, numeracy, offered locally to support parents to support children's learning.
- Volunteering opportunities.
- Shared libraries.
- Programmes to promote family support networks – encouraging the parents to be actively involved in their children's learning.
- Link community volunteers to school based educational programmes -older people/ retired people – reading support e.g. Could mature students sit in on GCSE /A-level classes in local schools?

Addressing Depression and Suicide (3)

What actions could be taken to address depression and suicide for younger people?

- Availability and access to talking therapies and support.
- Awareness raising of the impact on families / wider community.
- Educational programmes in schools/ strong campaigns.
- Education for parents on how to deal with mental health of children.
- *This does impact on this theme but it is perhaps a higher priority for health.

Promote Self Confidence (4)

What actions could be taken to promote self- confidence? e.g. amongst younger and older learners; those who are interested in returning to education or training; those not in education, employment or training

- Buddy system will help build confidence.
- Not only about confidence to get back into education but also about confidence to get into appropriate employment opportunities when you have educational qualifications.
- Encourage programmes that works on people's strengths.

Broadening Perceptions of Education (2)

What actions could be taken to broaden people's perceptions of education? e.g. intergenerational learning between younger and older people, community based learning which connects with local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural environments.

- This has been discussed across each of the previous issues- this is very often a way back to learning for people. Building confidence, promoting positive mental health, building skills and giving appropriate access to learning- also good community and schools links.
- The learning environment is very important to the level of success – people feeling comfortable in their learning environment is central to keeping them connected to and willing to continue with their learning.

Safety and Cohesion

Reduce Crime and its impact on the Community (1)

What **actions** could be taken to help reduce crime and its impact on the Community?

- Paramilitary Feud in Carrickfergus which is having a huge impact on the community.
- PSNI have deployed stop and search approach while necessary this is a major inconvenience to the community.
- Tensions are very high.
- Fairly good engagement with the PSNI.
- Community workers are trying to negotiate and mediate with individuals involved however there is little appetite for this.
- It is important to protect older and vulnerable groups of people.
- A lot of fear amongst older people.

Reduce Harm caused by Alcohol and Substance Misuse (3)

What **actions** could be taken to reduce harm caused by Alcohol and Substance Misuse?

- Diversionary activities can play a role.
- Education- raise awareness of the issues and consequences.
- Highlight and draw on sporting role models.
- Work with parents.
- Young parents with poor parenting skills- need support.
- Sure Start- fantastic resource for the area but under used.
- Low self-esteem and confidence.
- Misuse of substances including prescription drugs. Drug issue in the town.
- Projects based on prevention with younger children are needed.
- More directed and targeted resources – target smaller local groups on the ground.
- Holistic support and therapies.

Vulnerable People are Safeguarded (5)

What **actions** could be taken to safeguard vulnerable people?

- In particular, older people and people with special needs should be focus.

- Living skills/ independent living/ Kilcreggan Farm excellent example. It is a Social Economy business which initially received Lottery Funding.
- Promotion and funding and support for projects which are having an impact.
- Concern for older people who don't attend clubs /groups or churches they can be isolated.
- Rise in need for Foodbanks.
- Door step lending / paramilitaries and gangs.
- Woodburn should be classified as an area at risk.
- Groups have quite low capacity – they need support and confidence.

Diversionary Projects to address Anti-Social Behaviour (4)

What actions could be taken to develop diversionary projects?

- Halloween and over July holiday – key periods when diversionary activities are important. However, make work better if they have longer life spans- part of a programme of events rather than one off.
- School leavers to 24 years' age group need training and employment.
- Training should be provided on a local basis – to reduce barriers like access/ transport.
- Prince's Trust.
- Access to services – a lot of money spent in Belfast currently.
- High tensions at present.
- Recreational rioting- younger people need to be made aware of the impact and consequences of getting involved.

Community Safety Wardens (7)

What actions could be taken to support Community Safety Wardens?

- Good idea but they need to be introduced by community gate keepers.
- Closer working relationship – set working rotas.
- Concentrate in town centre at weekends.
- Train station.
- Evenings and weekends.
- Social enterprise for local employment / volunteer experience.

People Feel Safe (1)

What actions could be taken to help people to feel safe?

- Timely communication.
- Education.
- Breaking down perceptions.
- Positive use of the media.
- More visible policing.
- Security/ crime prevention scheme.
- Raising awareness.
- Social media awareness.
- Fear of reporting crime.

- Address Domestic violence – campaign.

Promote Community and Good Relations (4)

What actions could be taken to promote better community and good relations?

- Good relations in PL communities.
- Good relations not cross community necessarily.
- Intra community conflict and tension.
- Ethnic minorities.
- People rehoused following loyalist feuds in Belfast.
- Family feuds.
- Paramilitarism.
- Eden- people have moved in from other areas.
- High incidences of anti-social behaviour- drugs/ alcohol misuse.

Participants exploring priorities

Visible Policing (3)

What actions could be taken to help make policing more visible?

- Currently very high police presences – due to feud. Helicopters overhead nightly.
- Stop and Searches – inconvenience and can be provoking.
- Better communication / relationships to be built.
- Police personnel /changes in local policing.
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams appearing in Technical Support Units which can damage relationship building.
- Good relationships with neighbourhood policing.

Are there any other issues which you think could help to deliver better Community Safety and Cohesion?

What **actions** could be taken to address these issues?

- Investment in community development to build community capacity in this area.
- Long term solutions to problems.
- Investment in Carrickfergus, particularly pockets of deprivation.

Tourism Potential

Customer Focus (1)

What **actions** could help to improve customer focus?

- Tourism and Marketing Strategy.
- Joined up approach- flexible opening times.
- Work with coach tour operators and local tour companies.
- Look at different groups of customers and identify needs.
- Identify niche markets.
- Quality accommodation needs.
- NIEA built heritage – involved as Community Planning partner.

Customer Service Training (3)

What **actions** could be taken to improve customer service training?

- Offer welcome host training on a local basis – not sector based.
- Increase language skills.
- Customer service to be improved- across the board.
- Career opportunities in tourism.
- Skills gap- needs higher profile to attract people into the industry.
- Translation service- link to colleges/ schools promoting tourism as home based industry- career opportunity.

Promote the Evening Economy (6)

How important do you think it is to promote the evening economy e.g. late night shopping, café culture, the arts:

What **actions** could be taken to promote the evening economy?

- Evidence- no evening economy – restaurants/ café in town centre.
- Promote more café culture- meeting places.
- Arts – small scale events/ theatres/ plays.
- Ice rink/ activities to bring people to the area.
- Link rates to business turnover rather than space occupied.

Promote Tourist Assets (2)

What actions could be taken to promote Tourist Assets? What do you consider to be Tourist Assets?

- Sea fishing trips/ business.
- Boat trips/ sea safari.
- How to promote and brand assets – joined up approach with statutory partners (Tourism NI) and local business and transport providers.
- Promote area to bring people from bugger cities.
- Steam train tours.
- Recognise lesser known areas.
- Infrastructure- public transport to sites.
- Removal of boarded up buildings, poor public toilets, dereliction, rubbish waste.
- Protect tourist assets (castle/coastline from inappropriate development) reclaim assets.
- Links with sister cities – more in-depth engagement.

Niche Marketing (2)

How important do you think Niche Marketing is: *a specialised corner of the tourism market e.g. golf, outdoor pursuits, adventure activities, wildlife and nature-based tourism, heritage and cultural tours.*
What actions could be taken to develop Niche Marketing? What do you think could be marketed in this way?

- Ask local groups how they can promote tourism.
- Fishing- Council role to support business start-up.
- Ambassadors to promote the activities.
- Golf- promote through clubs and societies.
- History of the area.
- Ancestry tourism- genealogy/ Libraries NI/ PRONI
- Church tours.
- Folklore – witches and fairies
- Film/ TV tours.
- Caravanning and camping opportunities.
- Real ale/ beer festivals/ microbreweries.
- English language schools.
- Create honey pots to keep people there.

Place based Tourism – lesser known sights and activities (4)

What actions could be taken to develop place based tourism? Can you think of some lesser known sights and activities?

- Market for 'home' domestic tourism.
- Carnlough Town Hall Heritage Centre.
- Industrial heritage of the Glens- interpretation.
- Waterfalls and Walks.
- Advertise in toilets.

- Joined up approach of plans to create tourism trails.
- Church tours.
- History tours.
- Ancestry/ Genealogy.

Promote links between Small Business and Tourism (2.5)

What actions could be taken to promote better links between small business and tourism? Can you identify any examples?

- Sea fishing, boat trips and sea safaris.
- Business to create tourism.
- Promote self-employment – link to education and sustainable jobs.
- Conferences.
- Business units for local crafts. Eglinton Yard, Glenarm to promote local business.
- Raceview Mill, Broughshane.
- Promote independent shops.

Improving Public Transport to Tourism Assets (2)

What actions could be taken to improve public transport links and access to Tourism Assets?

- Public transport needs to support tourism assets.
- Improved services to key tourism sites where infrastructure exists.
- Links from ports to Belfast- improved services.
- Emergency support for tourism.
- Information sharing between ports -onward journey information- tourists stranded.
- Private transport links.