



# GREYABBAY

INTEGRATED Village Plan



Ards and  
North Down  
Borough Council

the paulhogarth company



Grey Abbey

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Signage and Planting next to Abbey entrance

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

Ards and North Down Borough Council commissioned The Paul Hogarth Company to produce an Integrated Village Plan for Greyabbey. This Plan forms one of a suite of six Village Plans, covering the neighbouring Villages of Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter, Conlig, Kircubbin and Portaferry.

This Village Plan delivers a shared vision for Greyabbey which builds on its distinctive strengths and qualities, whilst addressing the issues that undermine it. The Village Plan can then become a platform from which to deliver a range of initiatives over the short, medium and long term that will be of benefit to local residents and businesses, the Council, community groups, statutory partners and visitors.

### 1.1 THE NEED FOR A VILLAGE PLAN

The purpose of the Plan is to map out how the community of Greyabbey would like their Village to sustainably evolve and grow over the next 10 to 15 years. It provides a vision and framework for the promotion, implementation and timing of a host of regenerative initiatives. It contains an agreed vision and set of clearly defined aims that provide a strategic direction for these initiatives.

While non-statutory in nature, the Village Plan also plays a vital role in providing strategic direction and context for future funding applications. As there is a growing expectation from potential funding providers that such Plans are in place, it is all the more crucial that the Plan is multi faceted in nature and contains a range of projects that meet immediate and longer term needs.



Upper Main Street



Group Walkabout



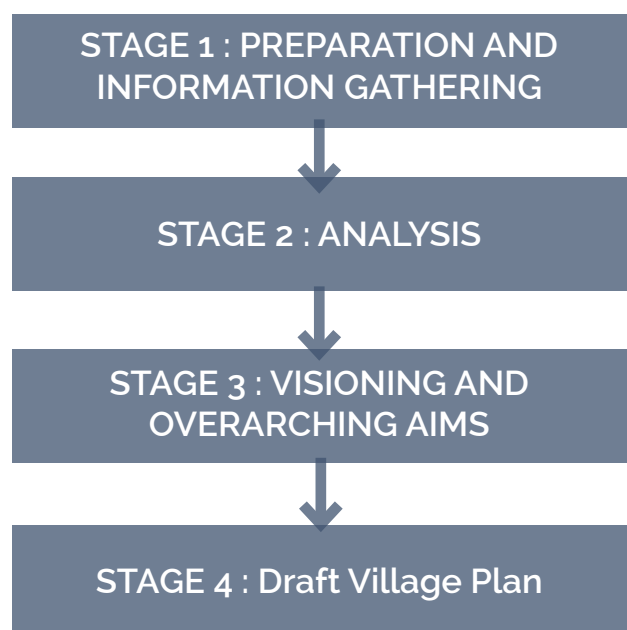
Greyabbey Primary School

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

### A. Baseline Audit

This audit combined a comprehensive site appraisal, which identified land and building uses and qualitative information. This information also helped to define key characteristics such as approaches, gateways, landmarks, vistas, derelict buildings/sites, building uses, quality of environment, parking, access and circulation. Other areas examined included local history alongside the collation of a comprehensive digital photographic record of the Village.

Available statistical information, such as that provided by Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, as well as data that is available through Ards and North Down Borough Council and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, has also been assessed to establish a clear quantitative picture of the Village. The audit also includes a review of current policies, strategies and designations that have a bearing on the Village and the Ards Peninsula as a whole, as well as their potential for change.



### B. Consultation

A day-time forum was held in Greyabbey in November 2015 to provide opportunities for people to share their hopes for the Village as well as to provide an insight into their concerns for the area. Those attending the session engaged with members of the Project Team on those matters that they considered were working well for the Village, as well as those issues that were considered to undermine the functioning of the Village.

The forum was held in conjunction with a 'walk about', which allowed the Project Team to meet with a cross section of people. Local stakeholders were also invited to join the 'walk about' to provide insight into some of the issues in a dynamic way.

A second evening drop-in consultation session was held in March 2016 for the purposes of presenting the Draft Village Plan to the community. This session, which was well attended, enabled members of the community to provide input to the Draft Plan both verbally and via feedback forms.



### **C. Analysis Findings/Workshop**

As part of this stage of the project, the Project Team reviewed information gathered during the consultation sessions, including notes taken during the events, together with feedback from responses. This information was analysed to establish a robust understanding of the existing strengths and factors that undermine the Village and their wider strategic context. This then provided an understanding of those aspects that are considered 'cornerstones' of the area which should be safeguarded for the future, as well as the aspects that should be considered for change.

An analysis workshop was also held with Council Officers, community representatives, elected representatives and statutory partners to review the overarching and Village specific analysis. This workshop provided an opportunity for the community to have a shared and collective sense of shaping the direction of the Plan. Through the workshop the Project Team was able to test and refine the analysis and establish a clear understanding of the attributes and concerns that were common to the Village.

### **D. Developing Overarching Aims**

Based on the agreed analysis, the Project Team developed a range of overarching and Village specific aims that comprehensively address the emerging issues.

The aims address a range of physical, social and economic issues and provide points of reference as the shared vision was developed. It is against these aims that all initiatives within the Plan were tested.

### **E. Draft Integrated Village Plan**

Based on the findings of previous stages, a Draft Integrated Village Plan for Greyabbey was developed. This Plan was distinctive to the place, strengthened the qualities of the Village and recognised the specific role that it should be fulfilling. The Plan included a clear vision of how the Village can develop, capturing the benefits associated with existing assets and addressing areas of under performance, socially, economically and physically.

The Draft Village Plan was used as the basis for discussion, at a second public consultation drop in session held in March 2016. At this session the Draft Plan was tested and refined as necessary to reflect the views of the stakeholders.

### **F. Final Draft Village Plan**

Based on feedback received from the community at the second public consultation and following agreement with the Council, refinements were made to the Draft Plan.

The final Draft Plan was then presented to the community at a third session held within the Village in June 2016. At this event members of the community were given the opportunity to provide any final comments on the Plan.

### **G. Final Integrated Village Plan/Report**

Based on feedback received from the community at the third public presentation and following agreement with the Council, a report was produced containing the final Village Plan and accompanying Action Plan.



Grey Abbey and graveyard

## THE VILLAGE OF GREYABBEY

### 2.1 LOCATION

Greyabbey is a small Village and townland located on the eastern shores of Strangford Lough on the Ards Peninsula. It is located some seven miles south of Newtownards and four miles north of Kircubbin.

According to the 2011 Census Greyabbey had a recorded population of 939 people (406 households). Further statistical information in relation to Greyabbey can be found within section 2.3 overleaf.

The lower part of Greyabbey, along Main Street, contains a number of the Village's older Georgian buildings. Many of these are now in commercial use with a number contributing to the flourishing antiques offer. The majority of more recent residential development has occurred along the Newtownards Road to the north of the Village. The Village contains a number of shops and restaurants, a Village Hall, three churches, a primary school, Orange Hall and several specialist antique shops.



## 2.2 HISTORY

Greyabbey takes its name from one of the best preserved Cistercian Abbeys in Ireland, which was founded in 1193 by Affreca wife of John de Courcey, the Anglo-Norman conquerer of Ulster. Legend has it that Affreca founded the Abbey as a sign of thanksgiving for a safe landing following a difficult journey by sea.

Greyabbey was one of the many Abbeys burned down by the O'Neills in 1572 in an effort to prevent Sir Thomas Smith's planned English colony from using the building. The Abbey lay in ruins until 1606 when lowland Scottish settlers, led by Sir Hugh Montgomery (later 1st Viscount Montgomery of The Ards), acquired land in a deal with Con O'Neill. The Abbey was then restored and used as a parish church until 1778.

The old graveyard for Greyabbey Parish was originally the burial ground for the medieval monastery and includes a number of headstones dating from the 18th century. One of the most famous headstones is that of the Rev. James Porter the Presbyterian Minister of Greyabbey. Originally from County Donegal and educated in Scotland, Rev. James Porter, a close family friend of the Stewarts, was accused of playing an active part in the Irish Rebellion of 1798. He was quickly tried and hanged from a tree located half way between the manse and church, so that it was in view of both places.

The top end of Greyabbey, which followed the line of North Street along Church Street up to the Abbey entrance, was known locally as the 'tap o' the toon', reflecting the strong Ulster Scots influence during this time. This route was also the ancient approach road to the Abbey with some of the older buildings dating back to the 1700s.

Originally both sides of North Street were the location for the numerous handloom weavers in the Village, however the handsome Georgian house at No 1 North Street was built by a linen merchant. An original water pump is located at the top of North Street where it meets Cardy Road, which served the blacksmith's forge and surrounding homes. In 2015 the local community realised the value of the pump and restored it to its former glory.

Most of the surviving Georgian buildings are located along lower Main Street around The Square and include the single storey Old Court House, Greyabbey Primary School and the picturesque two-storey gate lodge built for the Greyabbey Estate between 1860 and 1879.

The Montgomery family still reside at Greyabbey House and Rosemount Estate. The present Greyabbey House, built in 1762, is the third residence to be built on the estate and Rosemount Estate is thought to be one of the first landscaped gardens in Ireland. The Abbey, which formed part of the estate, was bequeathed to the Commissioners of Public Work in 1907 by Major-General W.E. Montgomery and has been in public ownership ever since.



Grey Abbey and graveyard

### 2.3 SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE

The following statistical information for Greyabbey has been generated from a combination of four Small Areas namely N00000153 (Ballywalter Ward), N00000154 (Ballywalter Ward), N00000155 (Ballywalter Ward) and N00000156 (Ballywalter Ward) as per the Census data recorded on 27 March 2011 by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). There are a total of 4,537 Small Areas (SAs) in Northern Ireland and these areas were generally created by amalgamating 2001 Census Output Areas (OAs) which were built from clusters of adjacent postcodes.

The geographical extents of the four SAs are annotated below. While the extents of these combined SAs expand well beyond Greyabbey's defined settlement limit, it is noted that this outerlying area contains a nominal amount of additional housing.



The following figures reflect collective information gathered on Census Day 27 March 2011 for the N00000153 (Ballywalter Ward), N00000154 (Ballywalter Ward), N00000155 (Ballywalter Ward) and N00000156 (Ballywalter Ward) Small Areas;

#### Population

1147 (0.06% of the NI total)

#### Households

474

#### Age Profile

17.7% under 16 years (NI - 20.95%)

25.7% over 65 (NI - 14.6%)

#### Religion

84.4% Protestant / Other Christian (NI - 48.4%)

7% Catholic (NI - 45.1%)

#### Languages (population aged 3 years+)

2.3% - some knowledge of Irish (NI - 10.65%)

25.45% - some knowledge of Ulster-Scots (NI - 8.1%)

0.5% did not have English as first language (NI - 3.1%)

#### Qualifications

944 residents aged 16+ of which;

18.2% had degree/higher qualification (NI - 23.65%)

44.7% had no/low (Level 1\*) qualifications (NI-40.6%)

\*Level 1 is 1-4 O Levels/CSE/GCSE (any grades) or equivalent

#### Labour Market

60.5% were economically active, (NI - 66.2%)

39.4% were economically inactive; (NI - 33.8%)

#### Health

23.4% reported long-term health problem or disability (NI - 20.7%)

77.5% reported good or very good health (NI - 79.5%)

13.9% reported they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others (NI - 11.8%)



## CONSULTATION

### 3.1 FIRST CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

An initial consultation workshop was held at Trinity Presbyterian Church Hall in Greyabbey on Tuesday 24 November 2015 between 10.30am and 1.00pm. A flyer was produced to advertise the session throughout the community.

Facilitated by the Project Team, the workshop took the form of an informal presentation followed by a group discussion and Village walkabout. A large proportion of the session was devoted to discussions around residents' views on how Greyabbey presently functioned, which raised a number of key issues under a range of thematic areas including dereliction, heritage, traffic speeds and initial impressions.

### 3.2 FIRST FEEDBACK FORM

A feedback form was produced as part of the initial consultation workshop. The purpose of the feedback form was to gain information on what people liked and disliked about their Village, as well as touching on the type of place they would like Greyabbey to be. These forms were distributed throughout the Village and feedback was channelled through a community representative.

A summary of the feedback received from completed forms can be found in Section 4.1.



Flyer advertising initial consultation workshop

#### Greyabbey Village Plan - Public Feedback Form

Ards and North Down Borough Council has commissioned consultants The Paul Hogarth Company to prepare an Integrated Village Plan for Greyabbey. Once finalised, this plan will set out a vision for the future of Greyabbey and will include a set of local regeneration initiatives for implementation over the next 15 to 20 years.

This is your opportunity to get involved at this early stage and we would encourage you to complete this short feedback form so that your valuable feedback can be used to inform the development of the draft village plan.

1. What **three words** would you use to describe Greyabbey?  
.....  
.....
2. What do you **like** most about Greyabbey?  
.....  
.....
3. What areas do you think need to be **addressed** in Greyabbey?  
.....  
.....
4. What **kind of place** would you like Greyabbey to be in the future?  
.....  
.....
5. Would you like to be **kept informed** of the project (optional)?  
Name .....  
Email .....

#### Thank You

Please return this form to Janet Hamilton or alternatively post to:

The Paul Hogarth Company,  
3 Potters Quay,  
5 Ravenhill Road,  
Belfast BT6 8DN

Completed forms can also be emailed to [greyabbey@paulhogarth.com](mailto:greyabbey@paulhogarth.com)

### 3.3 GROUP WALKABOUT

The group walkabout took in a number of key sites and discussed several issues including prominent vacant sites along Main Street, traffic levels within the Village Centre and the Abbey itself. The walkabout included representatives from the local community group and provided an opportunity for residents to highlight particular sites that needed to be addressed as well as potential opportunities that could be targeted within the Plan.

Key stop-off points during the walkabout included;

- Main Street - to discuss the impact of a number of vacant sites on the Village;
- Main Street - to discuss the potential to improve particular building frontages;
- The Abbey - issues relating to its setting and management including the recently established 'Friends of the Abbey' initiative.



Group walkabout in Greyabbey

### 3.4 PUBLIC DROP IN SESSION

A public drop in session was held at Trinity Presbyterian Church on Thursday 24 March 2016 between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. A second flyer was produced and distributed throughout the Village in advance of the session.

The purpose of this event was to present the Draft Village Plan to the community, including a Draft shared vision, overarching aims and a range of Draft projects. A copy of an earlier analysis presentation was also available, which provided context to the Draft Plan. The session was well attended and feedback received was collated and used to refine the Plan.

**GREYABBEY VILLAGE PLAN**  
public consultation drop-in session

VENUE: Trinity Presbyterian Church (Minor Hall), Main Street  
DATE: Thursday 24th March 2016  
TIME: Anytime between 6.00pm - 8.00pm

Come and view the draft village plan for Greyabbey and help improve it by sharing your feedback and suggestions

**1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT**

Ards and North Down Borough Council | the paulhogarthcompany | For further information please contact Ards and North Down Borough Council / The Paul Hogarth Company  
Tel: +44 (0)1253 9382 4026 / +44 (0)1253 9073 8590

Flyer advertising public drop-in session

### 3.5 SECOND FEEDBACK FORM

A second feedback form was produced to gauge priorities in relation to the range of projects contained within the Draft Plan. Respondents were also given the opportunity to note any other ideas that they had to improve the area and could provide contact details if they wished to be kept informed about the Village Plan process.

A summary of the feedback received verbally during the drop in session and via completed forms can be found in Section 4.2.

**GREYABBEY INTEGRATED VILLAGE PLAN (DRAFT)**

A) How effective do you think the draft projects will be?  
Please give each a score out of 10 (0 = bad and 10 = good)

PROJECT	SCORE	PROJECT	SCORE	PROJECT	SCORE
<b>1 FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare</b>		<b>3 ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues</b>		<b>5 REAUVIHIVING the village</b>	
1.1 Establish a Greyabbey Business Forum		3.1 Develop a village car parking strategy		5.1 Formulate a strategy to improve public buildings and sites	
1.2 Agree a Marketing Strategy to promote business		3.2 Reorganise the Greyabbey Primary School Car Park		5.2 Identify and enhance selected residential and commercial properties	
1.3 Business start-up opportunities		3.3 Agree improvement to the National Trust Car Park (Portlaffery Road)		5.3 Village branding and promotion scheme	
1.4 Identify social enterprise projects		3.4 Resurfacing Village Hall Car Park		5.4 Develop signage at key village entrance points	
1.5 Lobby to re-establish a GP surgery within the village		3.5 Identify new parking facilities within the village		5.5 Upgrade planting, floral displays and landscaping schemes	
1.6 Encourage partnership building and information sharing		3.6 Secure traffic calming measures at key village entrances		5.6 Lobby for the repair of wall along Newtownards Road	
<b>2 CHAMPIONING history and heritage</b>		<b>4 ENHANCING the built environment</b>		5.7 Eliminate weed growth along key routes	
2.1 Pursue Conservation Area designation		4.1 Improve the footpath network within the village			
2.2 Establish Friends of the Abbey to promote and maintain Abbey		4.2 Environmental improvement schemes			
2.3 Develop property and frontage improvement guidance		4.3 Forge new coastal connections			
2.4 Promote the Greyabbey Heritage Trail		4.4 Seating and picnic area to rear of Village Hall			
2.5 Enhance the setting of the Abbey		4.5 Enhanced play area			
		4.6 Establish a Village Trim Trail			

**FEEDBACK FORM**  
Continued overleaf

Second feedback form

B) What are your **top 3 priorities** for Greyabbey?

- .....
- .....
- .....

C) Do you have **any other ideas** to improve the area?

.....

.....

.....

.....

D) If you would like to be **kept informed** about the village plan process, please complete below:

Name .....

Tel .....

Email .....

E) Do you have **any other comments**?


.....

.....

Digital copies of the Greyabbey Integrated Village Plan (Draft) alongside a copy of this Feedback Form and an earlier Analysis Workshop Presentation can be viewed online at:  
[www.paulhogarth.com/newsblog/](http://www.paulhogarth.com/newsblog/)

Thank you. Please deposit your completed form in the box provided, or alternatively email/post to:

The Paul Hogarth Company, Potter's Quay  
5 Ravenhill Rd, Belfast BT6 6DN

 [greyabbey@paulhogarth.com](mailto:greyabbey@paulhogarth.com)

### 3.6 PRESENTATION OF FINAL DRAFT PLAN

The consultant team and Council Officers arranged a final presentation at Trinity Presbyterian Church on Monday 20 June 2016 between 7.30pm and 8.30pm. This event was advertised by the Council in the Newtownards Chronicle in the weeks leading up to the session.

The purpose of this session was to present the final Draft Village Plan to the community, primarily to demonstrate that feedback received during the second consultation session had been taken into consideration. This session also presented the community with the opportunity to provide any final comments they had regarding the final Draft Plan.



Presentation of the Final Draft Plan



Residents discussing the Draft Greyabbey Village Plan

## ANALYSIS FINDINGS

### 4.1 FIRST FEEDBACK FORM

A total of 127 completed feedback forms were received (122 by post and 5 by email). The top ten responses in relation to each question within the feedback form are included below;

#### 1. What three words would you use to describe Greyabbey?

53%	01. Friendly	(36)	27%
	02. Historic/historical	(22)	
	03. Community/spirit	(18)	
	04. Neglected/forgotten/overlooked	(18)	
	05. Small/little/compact	(15)	
	06. Welcoming/accepting	(14)	
	07. Quaint	(14)	
	08. Quiet/tranquil	(11)	
	09. Potential/possible	(9)	
	10. Home/homely	(9)	

#### 2. What do you like most about Greyabbey?

58%	01. Sense of community/spirit	(24)	23%
	02. Friendliness	(22)	
	03. Abbey and ruins	(18)	
	04. Shops	(17)	
	05. Location (on Lough)	(16)	
	06. People	(15)	
	07. Church/church community	(15)	
	08. Coffee/tea shops	(11)	
	09. Architecture/buildings	(10)	
	10. History/historic sites	(10)	

#### 3. What areas do you think need to be addressed in Greyabbey?

64%	01. Vacant buildings on Main St	(71)	42%
	02. Car parking (incl Loughshore)	(36)	
	03. Enhanced walks/promenade	(16)	
	04. Repair broken wall (N'ards Road)	(15)	
	05. Improved play facilities	(10)	
	06. Traffic speed through Village	(10)	
	07. Clean and tidier (dog fouling/litter)	(9)	
	08. Roads	(9)	
	09. Business development/opps	(5)	
	10. New housing	(5)	

#### 4. What kind of place would you like Greyabbey to be in the future?

47%	01. Tourist destination/attraction	(24)	23%
	02. Well kept/cleaner/tidier	(22)	
	03. Thriving/buzzing with activity	(14)	
	04. Pretty/colourful (Plants/flowers)	(11)	
	05. Busy (businesses and shops)	(11)	
	06. Vibrant	(10)	
	07. Better/safer walks along shore	(9)	
	08. Diverse range of shops/services	(8)	
	09. Welcoming/open to all	(7)	
	10. More development/businesses	(7)	

#### 5. Would you like to be kept informed of the project (optional)?

A total of **54 respondents** provided contact details comprising name and/or email address.

The digit in brackets after each response represents the number of times that issue was raised with the more popular responses listed in descending order.

Those figures in red represent feedback received in relation to the top three and top ten responses and is given as a percentage of all responses received.

### 4.2 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The following represents a summary of those findings drawn from site analysis work/visits, document review, workshops and group walkabout.

Once collated, findings could collectively be grouped under broad thematic areas including;

- Business growth;
- The history of the Village;
- Car parking and traffic congestion;
- Wider connections;
- Quality of the environment;
- Village promotion;
- General condition/cleanliness of the Village;

These broad thematic headings were then expanded on to form the overarching aims under which the range of Draft projects could then be formulated.

### BUSINESS GROWTH

- Businesses generally performing well
- Appetite for additional business space
- Unified business 'voice' required
- Vacant sites offer potential
- Potential to test 'meanwhile' uses
- Smaller 'start up' units desirable
- Thriving antiques market

### HISTORY

- Village steeped in history
- Strong sense of community
- Abbey and ruins
- Friends of the Abbey
- Abbey and grounds not always open
- Richness of architecture
- Lack of Conservation Area designation
- Stretches of 'poor' streetscape/frontages
- Range of shop signage approaches
- Overhead cabling an issue
- Lack of heritage trail information
- Montgomery Estate / Grey Abbey House
- Trinity Presbyterian Church

### PARKING AND TRAFFIC

- Traffic a key issue throughout Village
- Lack of central parking facilities
- Through traffic along Main Street
- Traffic speeds along Portaferry Road
- Lack of spaces for businesses/staff
- National Trust car park potential

### PROMOTION

- Village branding
- Need for uniform signage approach
- Consistent lighting approach required
- Quality of Village approaches
- Need to retain high quality Village offer
- Unique location with access to Lough

### CONNECTIVITY

- Informal pathways around Village Hall
- Lack of connection to sloebushes
- Pinchpoint at Main Street/N'ards Road
- Coastal connections potential
- Disconnect between playing fields/hall
- Condition of footpaths

### STEWARDSHIP

- Condition of wall on N'ards road
- Great examples of Council planting
- Areas that could benefit from planting
- Weed growth and general upkeep
- Landscape improvement potential
- Lack of roadside planting (N'ards Road)

### ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Junction of Main Street/N'ards Rd poor
- 'The Square' historically significant
- Play park is small and dated
- Noticeboard now redundant
- Primary School car park uninspiring
- Prominent derelict sites/buildings

## VISION AND OVERARCHING AIMS

### 5.1 SHARED VISION STATEMENT

The statement below represents a shared vision for the future of Greyabbey. The formulation of this vision statement has been a continued and evolving element of the project and its final wording has been agreed collaboratively with input from local residents, businesses and stakeholders.

It portrays a confident outlook and represents where the community of Greyabbey see their Village in the future. The vision provides a focussed goal that builds on Greyabbey's unique characteristics and one which allows the Village to define its priorities so that it can reach its full potential.

“As one of the most **historic Villages** on the Ards Peninsula, Greyabbey, with its **Cistercian abbey monastery ruins**, will build on its growing reputation as a must see **tourist destination**.

It's **thriving business community**, renowned for its **high quality antiques offer** within the backdrop of some of Northern Ireland's finest **Georgian and Victorian architecture**, presents a **confident** and **welcoming** Village and one that's **open to all**.

**Improved pedestrian access** along the Portaferry Road will **strengthen the relationship** between the Village, the Lough and it's unique wildlife setting.”

## 5.2 OVERARCHING AIMS

The five overarching aims listed below represent the means by which the shared vision can be achieved. These aims represent those key thematic areas under which earlier analysis findings and conclusions could be grouped.

While not listed in any order of preference, collectively these aims represent the broad structuring principles under which a range of projects can then be derived.

The structuring role of these aims is also key in the assessment of future projects and whether their addition to the Plan will help Greyabbey achieve its vision.

1  
**FACILITATING**  
business growth,  
community enterprise  
and social welfare

2  
**CHAMPIONING**  
history and  
heritage

3  
**ADDRESSING**  
car parking and  
traffic issues

4  
**ENHANCING**  
the built  
environment

5  
**BEAUTIFYING**  
the Village

# Village PROJECTS

## 1 FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare

### 1.1 ESTABLISH A GREYABBEY BUSINESS FORUM

A Greyabbey business forum would establish formalised group meetings of a wide catchment of businesses from the local area, as well as representatives from Ards and North Down Borough Council. Regular meetings would ensure continued commitment to high customer service, thereby maintaining the levels already prevalent within the Village. The forum would help businesses to grow by providing access to a shared wealth of business experience and support. It would also open up the opportunity to connect with other forums across Northern Ireland, as well as providing access to networking and event opportunities across the country.

The business forum would provide the perfect platform for business to discuss and plan existing and new events, such as markets, fairs and festivals, while also setting up proposed projects in the Village Plan. Appropriate initiatives would be Projects 1.2 - 1.5 and 5.1 - 5.4.



Example of local businesses in the Village

### 1.2 AGREE A MARKETING STRATEGY TO PROMOTE BUSINESS

Greyabbey is renowned for its high quality antiques shops, cafes and businesses. From the public consultations and Village walkabout, it was felt a cohesive marketing strategy would help promote businesses further and encourage future investment.

Initial steps would include working closely with the community to agree on an overarching brand for the Village (Project 5.3) that all local businesses can identify with. Following this, regular business forum meetings would ensure the strategy is developed and implemented.

### 1.3 ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AND INFO SHARING

At present there are a number of residents groups, businesses and clubs/societies that operate within the Village but independently of each other.

Various groups have connections with heritage, the Abbey, Church and school, wildlife, walking organisations and clubs. It was felt that these partnerships could be strengthened to allow for discussions and information sharing from group to group. The goal of such a project is to unify communities, businesses and groups under a common goal, which makes the Village stronger as a whole.

### 1 FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare

#### 1.4 BUSINESS START UP OPPORTUNITIES

A strong business network exists within the Village, however potential exists to promote Greyabbey as a site for start up businesses. Given its close proximity to Newtownards, Greyabbey could offer new local businesses a site, thereby improving and securing the economic viability of the Village in the future. While the availability of land within Greyabbey is limited, a key prominent derelict site has been identified within the Plan that could be considered as a site for new start up units. Located along upper Main Street this former terrace of one storey cottages, which is in a poor state of repair, could be adapted to cater for three new units and in doing so address a long standing dereliction issue.

Their prominence within the Village would provide the new start ups with maximum exposure and on a site within walking distance of established businesses. Any opportunity, short or long term, should adhere to any strategy arising from Project 1.2.



Derelict site with potential for start up units

#### 1.5 IDENTIFY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PROJECTS

Social enterprises are businesses that trade for a social and/or environmental purpose. They generally work through trade to improve communities, provide employment opportunities and tackle social problems and aim to generate their income by selling goods and services in the open market. Profits made are reinvested back into the business or local community.

Examples of possible projects would be a bakery/restaurant that focuses on building employment skills for young people or less skilled, or a cafe which uses produce from a community garden and trains those who are unemployed. This project should explore potential appropriate enterprises for Greyabbey, taking advantage of the existing antiques/cafe offer of the Village and the quality product associated with the Village. As with Project 1.4 any social enterprise projects should compliment the overarching marketing strategy for the Village.



Example of local business in the Village

## 1 FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare

### 1.6 CREATION OF A NEW COMMUNITY HUB (REDESIGNED VILLAGE HALL)

The existing Village Hall is located along the Newtownards Road on the approach to Greyabbey from Newtownards. The hall has a large surface car park, two tennis courts to the front and green space to the rear but is considered dated and in need of total refurbishment in order to cater for the growing needs of the Village. There is, therefore, an opportunity to establish a new community hub to offer facilities currently unavailable within the Village.

Suggested uses for the building would be a revitalised Village Hall, sports hall, GP surgery (see project 1.7) and to allow for other facilities to function on a part time basis, such as a creche, chemist, pharmacy or physiotherapy.

The design of the hub should be sympathetic to the Village and complement other projects in the Plan (such as Projects 4.4 and 4.5). Any layout should seek to place parking to the rear to enable a strong frontage to address Newtownards Road.

### 1.7 LOBBY FOR A GP SURGERY AT NEW COMMUNITY HUB

During the public consultation sessions and Village walkabout the need for GP provision within the Village was discussed. It was also highlighted that in the Village centre there are limited spaces available for a surgery/practice to be established.

The Plan proposes that a GP surgery be accommodated within the new community hub (see Project 1.6). This would provide a much needed service for the local community and the wider area. The location of the community hub on the site of the existing Village Hall is within walking distance for a large proportion of the residential community in Greyabbey. Establishing a surgery in this location would, therefore, have the potential to offer a local, modern facility as part of a one-stop shop community hub. The hub would also house other complimentary services and activities. In the interim consideration could be given to piloting a GP drop-in service at Trinity Church.

### 1.8 COORDINATED ARDS VILLAGES EVENTS AND FESTIVALS PROGRAMME

During the public consultations across several of the Villages, the proximity of Greyabbey, Kircubbin, Ballyhalbert and Ballywalter highlighted the potential to establish a coordinated events and festival programme. The purpose of this strategic initiative would be for the Villages to join forces at particular peak times of the year by offering a packed itinerary of tourist events. Running over the course of a weekend or week, these events and festivals could showcase the unique offering of each Village and the wider Peninsula, whether it be food and drink related or connected to water activities along both shores.

## 2 CHAMPIONING history and heritage

### 2.1 PURSUE 'CONSERVATION AREA' DESIGNATION FOR THE VILLAGE

The Plan proposes a Conservation area designation within the Village to be agreed and led by the community. While the Plan proposes that the Georgian/Victorian centre is designated in the first instance, in the longer term the aspiration could be to assess the viability of extending the Conservation Area limits to include a larger portion of the Village.

A designated Conservation Area would provide the community with a level of control over new development proposals, as well as changes to the existing streetscape.

### 2.2 ESTABLISH AND SUPPORT 'FRIENDS OF THE ABBEY'

'Friends of the Abbey' is an initiative of the Greyabbey & District Community Association and was launched in June 2016. The Plan fully supports this community-led initiative, which aims to preserve and enhance the Cistercian Abbey visitor centre as a key heritage destination within Greyabbey and the wider Peninsula.

The day-to-day running of the centre is largely dependant on local volunteers and the community is presently recruiting volunteers to train as tour guides, help staff the information centre and assist with gardening projects.

### 2.3 DEVELOP PROPERTY/FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT GUIDANCE

Greyabbey has a well established and sought after reputation that includes the Cistercian Abbey-monastery, high quality antique shops and cafes and its surrounding areas of outstanding natural beauty. Areas within the Village do have a high level of aesthetic appeal, such as the Georgian and Victorian buildings within its historic core. However to assist in unifying the streetscape across the whole Village, the Plan proposes that improvement guidance be developed for properties and frontages that would largely fall outside its historic centre.

Such guidance would relate to a palette of suitable colour schemes for the front facades of properties, as well as appropriate detailing relating to window and door frames, chimneys, roof tiles, rainwater goods and ancillary equipment such as the installation of satellite dishes away from the front of buildings. This guidance would be formulated largely by the community so that it achieves maximum buy in.



Residential properties along upper Main Street

## 2 CHAMPIONING history and heritage

### 2.4 PROMOTE THE GREYABBEY HERITAGE TRAIL

Ards and North Down Borough Council has produced a heritage guide and walking trail for Greyabbey that showcases sites of interest throughout the Village. A Greyabbey Heritage Trail app is also available to download, providing audio points and useful directories full of all the information visitors need to explore the Village.

The natural tranquility of the Village, coupled with the ingrained Georgian architecture, are close to the community's heart. These attributes should be enhanced by adding to the existing heritage signage and online trail app, in an effort to achieve a top class heritage trail that ties all of the Village's unique offerings together and befits one of the most historic Villages in Northern Ireland. This could be achieved through the installation of finger posts, additional interpretive heritage signage and a heritage trail leaflet, alongside improvements to pathways and access points to sites.



Site of an original water pump on Cardy Road

### 2.5 ENHANCE THE SETTING OF THE ABBEY

Grey Abbey is one of the best examples of Anglo Norman Cistercian architecture in Ulster, with a rich history to be explored. The Cistercian Abbey is set in the landscaped parkland of the 18th Century Rosemount House. The house remains private, however visitors are welcome to explore the ruins and enjoy the lawns. At present there is pedestrian and wheelchair access from the car park to the visitor centre, a herb garden and the Abbey Church.

The setting of the Abbey and access to it have the potential to be enhanced through a number of sensitive improvement measures. These could include the undergrounding of any remaining overhead lines and the screening of the existing portacabin through low level planting and landscaping.

In the longer term consideration could also be given to replacing the tarmac car park surfacing with natural stone.



Existing portacabin within the grounds of the Abbey

### 3 ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues

#### 3.1 DEVELOP A VILLAGE CAR PARKING STRATEGY

One of the major concerns raised during consultation sessions and the Village walkabout was the issue of parking. At present there is public parking available along both sides of Main Street, however these spaces are in heavy demand and subject to commuter parking. Residents and visitors to the Village often face the challenge of finding parking spaces centrally to access the shops, cafes and restaurants.

Car parks are located at Trinity Presbyterian Church, the Village Square next to Greyabbey Primary School, to the rear of the Wildfowler Inn (privately owned), at the Abbey on Church Road, the Village Hall and the National Trust car park to the south of the Village. A parking strategy, formulated with residents and business owners, would examine this issue in a holistic fashion with a view to creating a baseline assessment of parking habits/trends so that all available car parks can be utilised effectively.



Existing parking at Greyabbey Primary School

#### 3.2 REORGANISE GREYABBEY PRIMARY SCHOOL CAR PARK

Parking at Greyabbey Primary School during peak times poses a serious danger to school children, pedestrians and cars passing through the Village.

The tight road junction at the corner of the school restricts visibility and footpath width. However a reorganisation of the existing parking to provide maximum capacity, along with the implementation of a Village car parking strategy (See Project 3.1), would help mitigate the dangers of this junction and also alleviate Main Street parking.

#### 3.3 AGREE IMPROVEMENTS TO NATIONAL TRUST CAR PARK

The National Trust car park located on the Portaferry Road provides an excellent base for the exploration of Strangford Lough. The Plan acknowledges an arrangement between the National Trust and the parking needs of Orange Tree House.

Along with the proposed promenade to the sloebushes (Project 4.3), improvements to the car park would encourage more residents and visitors to park at this site and explore the surrounding landscape, alleviating parking in the Village. Improvements would include enlargement of the site, resurfacing and reorganising spaces.

### 3 ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues

#### 3.4 NEW ON-STREET PARKING AT CUAN GDNS/N'ARDS ROAD

Emphasised during the public consultations and feedback was the lack of residential parking at the junction of Cuan Gardens and Newtownards Road. At present there is a stretch of open green space in front of Nos. 3-8 Newtownards Road, either side of its junction with Cuan Gardens.

An assessment should be undertaken to ascertain if the redevelopment of the space could allow for six dedicated off-road resident parking spaces catering for the needs of residents at Nos. 1-6 Newtownards Road. It is noted that Nos. 7 and 8 already benefit from in curtilage parking spaces that are accessed from Cuan Gardens.

Subject to agreement from the necessary statutory agencies, these additional spaces would help to alleviate a degree of parking centrally in the Village. They would also prevent the need for residents of these dwellings to park along Cuan Gardens and walk to their homes.



Open space fronting Nos 1-8 Newtownards Road

#### 3.5 IDENTIFY TEMPORARY CAR PARKING SOLUTIONS

A key concern raised by residents and business owners was the lack of parking within the Village. Temporary parking solutions for derelict sites within the Village would help to alleviate parking congestion along Main Street and the Village as a whole.

The Village Plan proposes that one of the Village's most prominent derelict sites be utilised on a temporary basis as a central Village car park. It is acknowledged that this site is presently subject to a Planning application for residential units and the use of the site on a temporary basis would require the landowner's permission.

Preparation works would include excavating the site, infilling where necessary and temporarily resurfacing to allow for a number of safe and secure public parking spaces. This would provide a useful 'meanwhile use' while at the same time remove an 'eyesore' until such time as future development takes place.



Prominent derelict site along Main Street

### 3 ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues

#### 3.6 TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AT VILLAGE ENTRANCES

There were several areas of concern identified by the community for excessive speeds when entering the Village. These were Newtownards Road, Carrowdore Road, Church Street and Portaferry Road.

A range of traffic calming measures should be considered at these locations in order to address vehicular speeds. These could include the installation of speed humps, speed tables or raised crossings prior to the junction, alongside the use of road narrowing solutions to reinforce both physically and visually the shared nature of the roads. If raised crossings are incorporated these could include decorative surface materials to permit pedestrians to cross the carriageway without stepping down and up between the kerb and road.

An assessment should also be made as to the viability of raising the profile and increasing the diameter of the mini roundabout in order to ensure road users to follow its profile.

In addition, there were also recommendations from residents and business owners that the footpath running alongside the roundabout, directly opposite the Newtownards Road, could incorporate a build out. This build out was to ensure traffic travelling south along Main Street conformed with the geometry of the roundabout instead of taking a straight line through it.

Subject to statutory agency approval, the viability of appropriate alterations to this junction to improve its safety should be explored. The aim would be to reduce the ability of traffic to speed over the roundabout without due care, and instead encourage traffic to slow down and approach the roundabout with greater caution.



Newtownards road Roundabout



Example of a build out as a measure to reduce traffic speeds Baginton Village, England

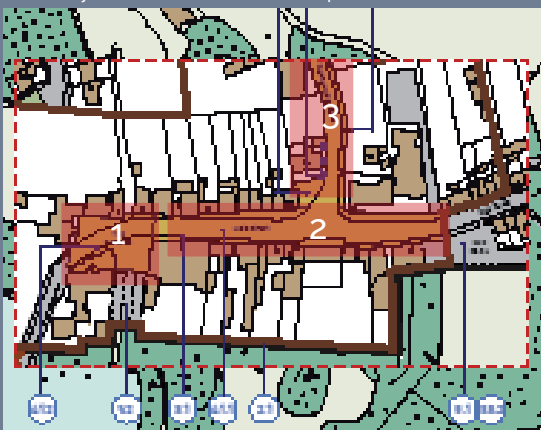
## 4 ENHANCING the built environment

### 4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Greyabbey is renowned for its quality antique offer and includes a number of antique shops and thriving businesses. At present the environmental quality of the Main Street is generally of a high level. It was emphasised during the public consultation sessions and the Village walkabout that if Greyabbey wishes to continue to raise its profile then a unified approach to the environmental quality of the Village is required.

The Plan proposes initial improvements concentrated within the central core of the Village, in the area proposed as the designated Village Conservation Area (see project 2.1). Three key areas are identified on the Plan, these are The Square, Lower Main Street and the Newtownards Road. It was felt that improving the quality of these spaces would provide a degree of design cohesion while placing emphasis on the central commercial core.

Three key areas for environmental improvements



This project would also allow for future improvements to the wider Village in a phased approach if deemed appropriate.

By working closely with the community, suggested improvements would have to complement and enhance the quality of the existing architecture and aesthetic of the Village.

Works could include improved footpath and road surfacing, lighting and benches, public art, hanging baskets and localised landscape schemes (see Project 5.5).



Main Street close to its junction with N'Ards Road



Lower Main Street

### 4 ENHANCING the built environment

#### 4.2 IMPROVED FOOTPATH NETWORK

The Plan proposes improvements to two specific footpaths within the Village, at the Main Street/Newtownards Road junction approaching the Village roundabout and alongside the Village Hall.

The Newtownards Road junction and roundabout present a real danger to pedestrians and motorists. Alongside considering the viability of a reconfigured roundabout junction (Project 3.6), the Plan proposes the establishment of a new stretch of footpath from Main Street towards Newtownards Road.

The footpath to the west of the Village Hall provides access to an existing informal walking route along the picturesque Strangford Lough. The Plan proposes formalising this access to provide a safe footpath connection to the variety of projects included in the Plan such as a seating and picnic area (4.4), trim trail site (4.5) and boardwalk to the playing fields (4.3).



Lack of footpath along southern side of N'Ards Road

#### 4.3 FORGE NEW COASTAL CONNECTIONS

The natural beauty and tranquilly of Greyabbey plays a part in the Village having such a wide appeal. During public consultations it was suggested that a sympathetic extension of existing Village footpaths would be greatly welcomed. To the south of the Village, some of the most beautiful views can be seen along the shore towards the sloebushes, as well as open views across the Lough.

The Plan proposes that consideration be given to establishing a dedicated walkway from the National Trust car park south towards the sloebushes (4.3.1). This could take the form of a sensitively designed promenade walkway cantilevered/built off the existing low level road wall and would provide pedestrians and cyclists with a safer and more picturesque view and journey along the shoreside of the lough. The viability of a boardwalk from the rear of the Village Hall to the playing field should be explored to formalise this popular waterfront walking route (4.3.2).



Informal walking route from Village Hall to playing field

## 4 ENHANCING the built environment

### 4.4 SEATING AND PICNIC AREA TO REAR OF VILLAGE HALL /HUB

Located to the rear of the Village Hall / proposed community hub (Project 1.7) the Plan proposes a seating and picnic area integrated within the woodland area. This would be linked by informal or formal walking routes around the lough to the playing field and beyond.

The opportunity exists in this location to provide a natural seating and picnic area that would offer an amenity area for families, walkers and those visiting the Village. The design of the seating and picnic area should be sympathetic to its surroundings and take advantage of the natural topography.

### 4.5 ESTABLISH A TRIM TRAIL

Trim trails have become very popular over recent years, especially when placed along routes of existing walking paths and networks. They usually comprise outdoor gym equipment installed as a collection of exercise pieces or individually along a route.

There are two locations indicated on the Village Plan, the first next to the seating and picnic area to the rear of the Village Hall/proposed community hub, and the second adjacent to the enhanced play area accessed from Islandview Road. Trim trails along these existing walking networks would increase their use and widen their appeal.

### 4.6 ENHANCED PLAY AREA

The existing Islandview play area has recently been refurbished following investment by Ards and North Down Borough Council. Situated to the south of Islandview Road, the play area benefits from good pedestrian connections to local residential communities and is in close proximity to the existing playing field.

Suggested improvements to the play area would be increasing the size and upgrading or improving play equipment to cater for a wider age group. Improved materials, surfaces and quality of the space would enliven the space and attract more residents and visitors to enjoy the wider area.

The installation of the outdoor gym equipment next to the play area would further enhance the area by widening the appeal to families wanting to take part in active recreational activities in this picturesque setting overlooking the Lough.



Bespoke play area at Tollymore Forest Park

### 5 BEAUTIFYING the Village

#### 5.1 STRATEGY TO IMPROVE DERELICT BUILDINGS AND SITES

Although there are not a large number of derelict buildings and sites within Greyabbey, those that do exist are in very prominent locations. The presence of these sites and buildings can have a negative impact on the environmental quality of the Village. From site surveys it was noted that a few were of architectural and historic merit while others had fallen into a very poor state of disrepair. As part of this project the Plan proposes that a dereliction assessment be carried out to ascertain ownership, potential temporary/meanwhile uses and future aspirations for the sites.

Tasks would include establishing a catalogue of all vacant and derelict properties/sites and making contact in the first instance with the owners to find ways of improving their appearance. Priority would be placed on 'quick wins' in problematic cases, alongside temporary uses and longer term solutions.



Dereliction within the Village

#### 5.2 IDENTIFY/ENHANCE SELECTED RESID/COMM PROPERTIES

Greyabbey is a very picturesque Village, with a mixture of Georgian and Victorian buildings located along lower Main Street, however the external appearance of a number of buildings detracts from the character of the Village. It is proposed that an appraisal of these properties is undertaken to provide a baseline condition report that would then be used to determine what level of enhancement work would be appropriate and of most benefit to the owners and the Village. While Project 2.3 seeks to set in place design guidance to unify the streetscape, this project relates to a handful of historic properties that would benefit from a diplomatic and focussed approach. In these cases informal contact should be made with owners/occupiers in an effort to establish open lines of communication and map out ways to move forward. The opportunity exists to embark on community led enhancement work such as painting and window/door repair.



Building of architectural merit along Main Street

## 5 BEAUTIFYING the Village

### 5.3 VILLAGE BRANDING AND PROMOTION SCHEME

Greyabbey's niche and unique selling point is considered to be well established, however public feedback has suggested that in order to raise the profile of what the Village has to offer a focussed Village branding and promotion scheme was essential.

Related to the Business Marketing Strategy as outlined within Project 1.2, which aims to promote the Village by working closely with local residents and businesses, a confident brand should be formulated and promoted.

This would involve agreeing first and foremost what Greyabbey's brand should be. Cognisance should be given to ongoing work on the wider Peninsula brand with a subtle twist to reflect the unique characteristics of Greyabbey. A consistent colour palette and/or logo could run through all branding material and be reflected in welcome/directional signage, lighting arrangements, seating and interpretation material.



Example of bespoke directional signage  
Derry/Londonderry

### 5.4 DEVELOP SIGNAGE AT VILLAGE ENTRANCE POINTS

Four key areas have been identified that would benefit from the installation of entrance signage. These areas are located along the Portaferry Road, Newtownards Road, Carrowdore Road and Church Street. They are considered to be thresholds to Greyabbey, the points at which motorists and cyclists formally enter the Village.

This project should form part of a wider signage strategy for the Peninsula yet still be flexible enough to allow for a level of individuality that reflects Greyabbey's unique character. The Village branding and promotion scheme should work closely alongside this to ensure a unified and strong message is presented.

Along with any necessary traffic calming measures at these areas, this entrance signage should demarcate the transition from rural to Village in a legible and attractive manner.



Existing speed limit signs at Village entrance

### 5 BEAUTIFYING the Village

#### 5.5 EXTEND PLANTING, FLORAL DISPLAYS AND LANDSCAPING

Ards and North Down Borough Council has been proactive in the regular planting and maintenance of floral displays along the Newtownards Road, on the approach to the Village. The positive impact these floral displays and planted beds have had on the Village has been noted by residents.

Building on the success of this work the Plan has identified a further two locations that would benefit from similar landscape work. These are along Islandview Road and on Main Street in close proximity to the War Memorial. Both sites comprise a long narrow strip of green space fronting residential properties and includes a few semi mature trees; with the Main Street site also incorporating a small raised planting bed. The potential exists to greatly improve the environmental quality of both spaces for the benefit of the immediate residents and the wider Village. Planting plans for both sites could be drawn up between the Council and local residents.



Proposed location of improvements on Islandview Road

#### 5.6 LOBBY TO REPAIR WALL ALONG NEWTOWNARDS ROAD

A section of the boundary wall along the Newtownards Road to the west of Trinity Presbyterian Church has remained in disrepair for a number of years and its condition continues to deteriorate. Both unsightly and dangerous, it is important that this section of wall be repaired and reinstated to match the existing wall, reusing the existing stone as much as possible.

There should also be an assessment undertaken to ensure the raised site to the rear of the wall does not cause any future damage.

#### 5.7 ELIMINATE WEED GROWTH ALONG KEY ROUTES














A number of key locations within the Village, where weed growth regularly occurs, were highlighted during the public consultations and Village walkabouts. These are to the north east of the Village along Church Street and south of the Village along Portaferry Road. The weed growth, apart from being unsightly, can lead to dangerous road conditions in these locations, particularly if motorist's sight lines are impeded.

The Plan proposes that a regular systematic clearing and maintenance of these areas be carried out to ensure a build up does not occur in the future.

# GREYABBEY

## INTEGRATED VILLAGE PLAN MAP

**KEY**

-  Existing Buildings
-  Public Green Space
-  Pitch / Play Area
-  Existing Vegetation
-  High Quality Public Realm
-  Opportunity Sites
-  Proposed Development / Redevelopment
-  Tree / Hedge Planting
-  Traffic Calming
-  Proposed Walking Network
-  Continuous Footpath
-  Settlement Limit
-  Proposed Conservation Area

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## SHARED VISION STATEMENT

"As one of the most **historic villages** on the Ards Peninsula, Greyabbey, with its **Cistercian abbey-monastery ruins**, will build on its growing reputation as a must see **tourist destination**.

It's **thriving business community**, renowned for its **high quality antiques offer** within the backdrop of some of Northern Ireland's finest **Georgian and Victorian architecture**, presents a **confident and welcoming village** and one that's **open to all**.

**Improved pedestrian access** along the Portaferry Road will **strengthen the relationship** between the village, the Lough and its unique wildlife setting."



### 1 FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare

- 1.1 Establish a Greyabbey business forum
- 1.2 Agree a marketing strategy to promote business
- 1.3 Encourage partnership building and info sharing
- 1.4 Business start-up opportunities
- 1.5 Identify social enterprise projects
- 1.6 Creation of a new community hub through a redesigned village hall
- 1.7 Lobby for a GP surgery at new community hub
- 1.8 Coordinated Ards Villages Events and Festivals Programme

### 2 CHAMPIONING history and heritage

- 2.1 Pursue 'Conservation Area' designation for the village
- 2.2 Establish and support 'Friends of the Abbey'
- 2.3 Develop property and frontage improvement guidance
  - 2.3.1 Householder renovations
  - 2.3.2 Business frontages/signage
- 2.4 Promote the Greyabbey Heritage Trail
  - 2.4.1 Extending heritage interpretation signage throughout village
  - 2.4.2 Produce a heritage trail leaflet
- 2.5 Enhance the setting of the Abbey
  - 2.5.1 Undergrounding of utilities
  - 2.5.2 Cladding/facade treatment of Church Hall

### 3 ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues

- 3.1 Develop a village car parking strategy
- 3.2 Reorganise Greyabbey Primary School car park
- 3.3 Agree improvements to National Trust car park
- 3.4 New on-street parking at Cuan Gardens/Newtownards Road
- 3.5 Identify temporary car parking solutions
  - 3.5.1 Collaborating with owners of key parking areas
  - 3.5.2 Centralised temporary public parking facility
- 3.6 Traffic calming measures at village entrances
  - 3.6.1 Portaferry Road
  - 3.6.2 Newtownards Road including staggered tree planting
  - 3.6.3 Carrowdore Road including staggered tree planting
  - 3.6.4 Church Street

### 4 ENHANCING the built environment

- 4.1 Environmental improvement schemes
  - 4.1.1 Main Street (The Square to Newtownards Road)
  - 4.1.2 The Square
  - 4.1.3 Main Street / Newtownards Road
- 4.2 Improved footpath network
  - 4.2.1 Main Street / Newtownards Road junction
  - 4.2.2 Formalised footpath alongside Village Hall
- 4.3 Forge new coastal connections
  - 4.3.1 Promenade from National Trust Car Park to Sloebushes
  - 4.3.2 Boardwalk from Village Hall to Playing Fields
- 4.4 Seating and picnic area to rear of village hall/hub
- 4.5 Establish a village trim trail
- 4.6 Enhanced play area
  - 4.6.1 Installation of play park and play fields entrance gateway/marker
  - 4.6.2 Upgraded and enlarged play park facility

### 5 BEAUTIFYING the village

- 5.1 Strategy to improve derelict buildings and sites
- 5.2 Identify and enhance selected residential and commercial properties
- 5.3 Village branding and promotion scheme
- 5.4 Develop signage at village entrance points
  - 5.4.1 Portaferry Road
  - 5.4.2 Newtownards Road
  - 5.4.3 Carrowdore Road
  - 5.4.4 Church Street
- 5.5 Extend planting, floral displays and landscaping
- 5.6 Lobby to repair wall along Newtownards Road
- 5.7 Eliminate weed growth along key routes



Residents viewing the Draft Greyabbey Village Plan

## DELIVERY

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The Greyabbey Integrated Village Plan has identified a range of regeneration initiatives that present substantial opportunities for the Village to sustainably grow in line with the overarching aims and shared vision. While facilitated by Ards and North Down Borough Council, the Village Plan has been formulated by the people of Greyabbey and will help to guide future development, whether it be led by Council, statutory agencies, community or private sector. The Plan is as much about people as it is about place and its success will depend on the enthusiasm and commitment of all the stakeholders involved in its implementation.

Successful delivery will require clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved. These are outlined in further detail in Section 8.3.

Where appropriate, the Council will act on behalf of the community to lobby statutory agencies to ensure delivery of projects that fall within their remit.

### 8.2 ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan on page 38 establishes key parameters for each of the Village Plan projects. Successful project delivery must involve a collaborative approach between the lead agency and key stakeholders.

The Action Plan colour codes the projects contained within the Village Plan according to the lead agency. These fall into four distinct groupings namely; Council led, statutory agency led, community/voluntary led and private sector led. Information relating to key stakeholders who will have an interest in the project, is also included.

This Action Plan should be treated as a 'live' part of the report, so that progress on project delivery can be monitored in accordance with priorities, to reflect changing needs within the Village and the availability of funding. Initiatives and opportunities that arise in the future should also be assessed in accordance with the agreed aims and shared vision, and added to the Action Plan where appropriate.



Presentation of the final Draft Village Plan

# Action Plan

Integrated Village Plan Projects			Lead Delivery Agent(s)	Stakeholders / Potential Funders
<b>1</b> FACILITATING BUSINESS GROWTH, COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE AND SOCIAL WELFARE	1.1	Establish a Greyabbey business forum	COU	COMM, PRIV
	1.2	Agree a marketing strategy to promote business	COMM/PRIV	COU, INI
	1.3	Encourage partnership building and info sharing	COMM	COU, PRIV
	1.4	Business start-up opportunities	PRIV/COU	COMM, INI
	1.5	Identify social enterprise projects	COU/PRIV	COMM, INI, SNI
	1.6	Creation of a new community hub through a redesigned Village hall	PRIV/GVHMC	COMM, COU, INI, SNI
	1.7	Lobby to establish a GP surgery at the new community hub	COU/COMM	SEHSCT, GVHMC, TNI, PRIV
	1.8	Coordinated Ards Villages Events and Festivals Programme	COU	COMM, NITB, PRIV

<b>2</b> CHAMPIONING HISTORY AND HERITAGE	2.1	Pursue Conservation Area designation for the Village	COU/COMM	PRIV, HED, GAE
	2.2	Establish and support 'Friends of the Abbey'	COMM	COU, CHU, PRIV, TCV, NITB, GAE
	2.3	Develop property and frontage improvement guidance	COMM	COU, HED, PRIV
		2.3.1 Householder renovations		
	2.3.2 Business frontages/signage			
	2.4	Promote the Greyabbey heritage trail	COU	TNI, HED, CHU, NITB, PRIV, HTH, TCV
		2.4.1 Extending heritage interpretation signage throughout Village		
	2.4.2 Produce a heritage trail leaflet			
	2.5	Enhance the setting of the Abbey	COMM/CHU	COU, HED, NHD, GAE, TCV
		2.5.1 Undergrounding of utilities		
2.5.2 Cladding/facade treatment of Church Hall				

	COUNCIL LED INITIATIVES		STATUTORY AGENCY LED INITIATIVES
	COMMUNITY / VOLUNTARY SECTOR LED INITIATIVES		PRIVATE SECTOR LED INITIATIVES

## Delivery Agents and Stakeholders:

ACNI	Arts Council of Northern Ireland	HTH	Highway to Health	PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
CHU	Churches	INI	Invest Northern Ireland	SCH	Schools
COMM	Community Organisations	MED	Marine Environment Division	SEHSCT	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
COU	Council	NHD	Natural Heritage Division	SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
EA	Education Authority	NT	National Trust	SUS	Sustrans
GAE	Grey Abbey Estate	NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	TCV	The Conservation Volunteers
GVHMC	Greyabbey Village Hall M'ment Ctte	NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	TNI	Transport NI
HED	Historic Environment Division	PRIV	Private Sector	TRANS	Translink

### Action Plan

Integrated Village Plan Projects			Lead Delivery Agent(s)	Stakeholders / Potential Funders		
<b>3</b>	ADDRESSING CAR PARKING AND TRAFFIC ISSUES	3.1	Develop a Village car parking strategy	COU/PRIV	TNI, NHD, CHU	
		3.2	Reorganise Greyabbey Primary School car park	EA/SCH	GAE, TNI, NHD, PRIV	
		3.3	Agree improvements to National Trust car park	NT/COU	COU, TNI, HED, MED, NHD, PRIV	
		3.4	New on-street car parking at Cuan Gardens/ Newtownards Road	TNI	COU, PRIV	
		3.5	Identify temporary parking solutions		COU/COMM	TNI, PRIV
			3.5.1	Collaborating with owners of key parking areas		
			3.5.2	Centralised temporary public parking facility		
		3.6	Traffic calming measures at Village entrances		TNI	COU, PRIV, TCV, SUS
			3.6.1	Portaferry Road		
			3.6.2	Newtownards Road incl staggered tree Planting		
			3.6.3	Carrowdore Road incl staggered tree Planting		
			3.6.4	Church Street		
<b>4</b>	ENHANCING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	4.1	Environmental improvement schemes	COU	TNI, HED, NITB, PRIV, SUS	
			4.1.1			Main Street (The Square to Newtownards Road)
			4.1.2			The Square
			4.1.3			Main Street/Newtownards Road
		4.2	Improved footpath network		TNI	COU, NHD, PRIV, SUS
			4.2.1	Main Street/Newtownards Road junction		
			4.2.2	Formalised footpath alongside Village Hall		
		4.3	Forge new coastal connections		COU/HND	TNI, MED, SUS, HTH
			4.3.1	Promenade from NT Car Park to Sloebushes		
			4.3.2	Boardwalk from Village Hall to Playing Fields		
		4.4	Seating & picnic area to rear of Village hall/hub		COU	NHD, NITB
		4.5	Establish a Village trim trail		COU	MED, NHD, SNI, HTH
		4.6	Enhanced play area		COU	COMM, SNI
4.6.1	Installation of playpark/field entrance marker					
4.6.2	Upgraded and enlarged playpark facility					

# Action Plan

Integrated Village Plan Projects			Lead Delivery Agent(s)	Stakeholders / Potential Funders		
5	BEAUTIFYING THE VILLAGE	5.1	Strategy to improve derelict buildings and sites	COMM	COU, PRIV, TCV	
		5.2	Identify and enhance selected residential and commercial properties	COMM	COU, PRIV, TCV	
		5.3	Village branding and promotion scheme	COU	COMM	
		5.4	Develop signage at Village entrance points		COU/COMM	TNI, ACNI, PRIV, NITB
			5.4.1	Portaferry Road		
			5.4.2	Newtownards Road		
			5.4.3	Carrowdore Road		
		5.4.4	Church Street			
		5.5	Extend Planting, floral displays and landscaping	COU	NIHE, COMM, TNI, PRIV	
5.6	Lobby to repair wall along Newtownards Road	PRIV	COU, COMM, HED			
5.7	Eliminate weed growth along key routes	COMM/TNI	COU, TCV			

- COUNCIL LED INITIATIVES
- COMMUNITY / VOLUNTARY SECTOR LED INITIATIVES
- STATUTORY AGENCY LED INITIATIVES
- PRIVATE SECTOR LED INITIATIVES

## Delivery Agents and Stakeholders:

ACNI	Arts Council of Northern Ireland	HTH	Highway to Health	PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
CHU	Churches	INI	Invest Northern Ireland	SCH	Schools
COMM	Community Organisations	MED	Marine Environment Division	SEHSCT	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
COU	Council	NHD	Natural Heritage Division	SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
EA	Education Authority	NT	National Trust	SUS	Sustrans
GAE	Grey Abbey Estate	NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	TCV	The Conservation Volunteers
GVHMC	Greyabbey Village Hall M'ment Ctte	NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board	TNI	Transport NI
HED	Historic Environment Division	PRIV	Private Sector	TRANS	Translink

# Lough Shore



James Williamson map, 1830

The history of Greyabbey can be traced back to the Early Christian and Viking times, from 700-1100 A.D. The village occupies a sheltered coastal location on the shores of Strangford Lough, its seaward approach shielded by the two islands lying off shore - South Isle and Mid Isle. These are connected to each other and to the mainland by tidal causeways known locally as 'roans'. Until it was drained in the early 1800s, a tidal creek ran inland as far as the Abbey.

### Greba's Viking connections

Greyabbey has long attracted settlers and there is evidence to suggest the Vikings were here. Just beyond the estate wall behind the car park is a large, well-preserved earthen mound called a raised rath. Dating from the Early Christian and Viking period, it was used as a ring-fort and would have offered a commanding view over Greyabbey Bay and Strangford Lough. The local name for Greyabbey, 'Greba' may have come from the Old Norse word Gripa, meaning 'sleze', 'grasp', or 'attack'.

### Early Christian settlement

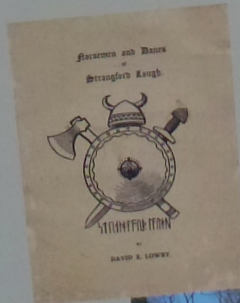
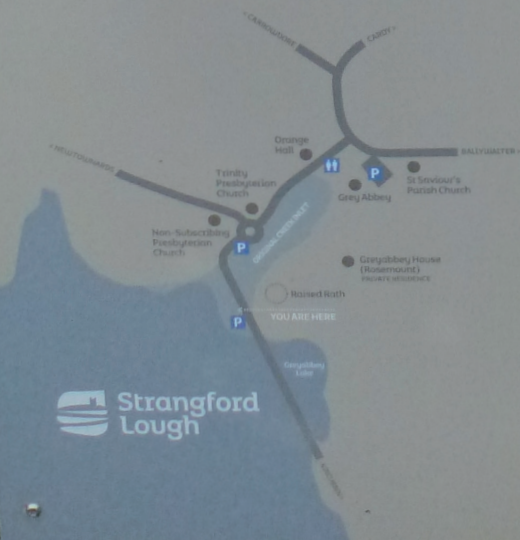
Fish traps of the Early Christian Period were constructed using wooden posts and wicker panels in a large 'V' shape so that fish were channelled into traps located at the point of the V by the outgoing tide. Remnants of these traps in Greyabbey Bay have been dated 700 - 1000 A.D. There was also an Early Christian church on Chapel Isle, on the far side of Mid Isle, with more early Christian period fish traps around it. A stone jetty on Chapel Isle has been dated between 750 and 850 A.D.

### Marine Archaeology

Greyabbey Bay is one of the most important sites for marine archaeology within Strangford Lough, the most notable feature being a well preserved Neolithic logboat buried in the sand. The National Trust owns and manages Greyabbey Bay, Chapel, Mid and South Islands, and Skillen's Wood.

### Mid-Isle Cottage

Easily accessible at low tide, Mid Isle cottage is a 15 minute walk across the sands from this car park. Once the shore steward's house for the Montgomery estate, and the home of the McAvooy family for generations, it is a classic Ulster 19th century cottage. It is now owned by the National Trust.



1976 book cover



Mid-Isle Cottage

### Download the audio app

Use your iPhone or Android Smartphone to scan this code and download the Greyabbey app.



Android



iPhone



### 8.3 DELIVERY STRUCTURES

The people of Greyabbey will need to fully consider the most appropriate mechanism for delivering projects contained within the Village Plan. The Plan should not be read as a guarantee that public resources will be provided for all proposals. The delivery of projects will instead require a multi-disciplinary approach and collaboration between a range of groups including Ards and North Down Borough Council, statutory agencies, community and residents groups and the private sector.

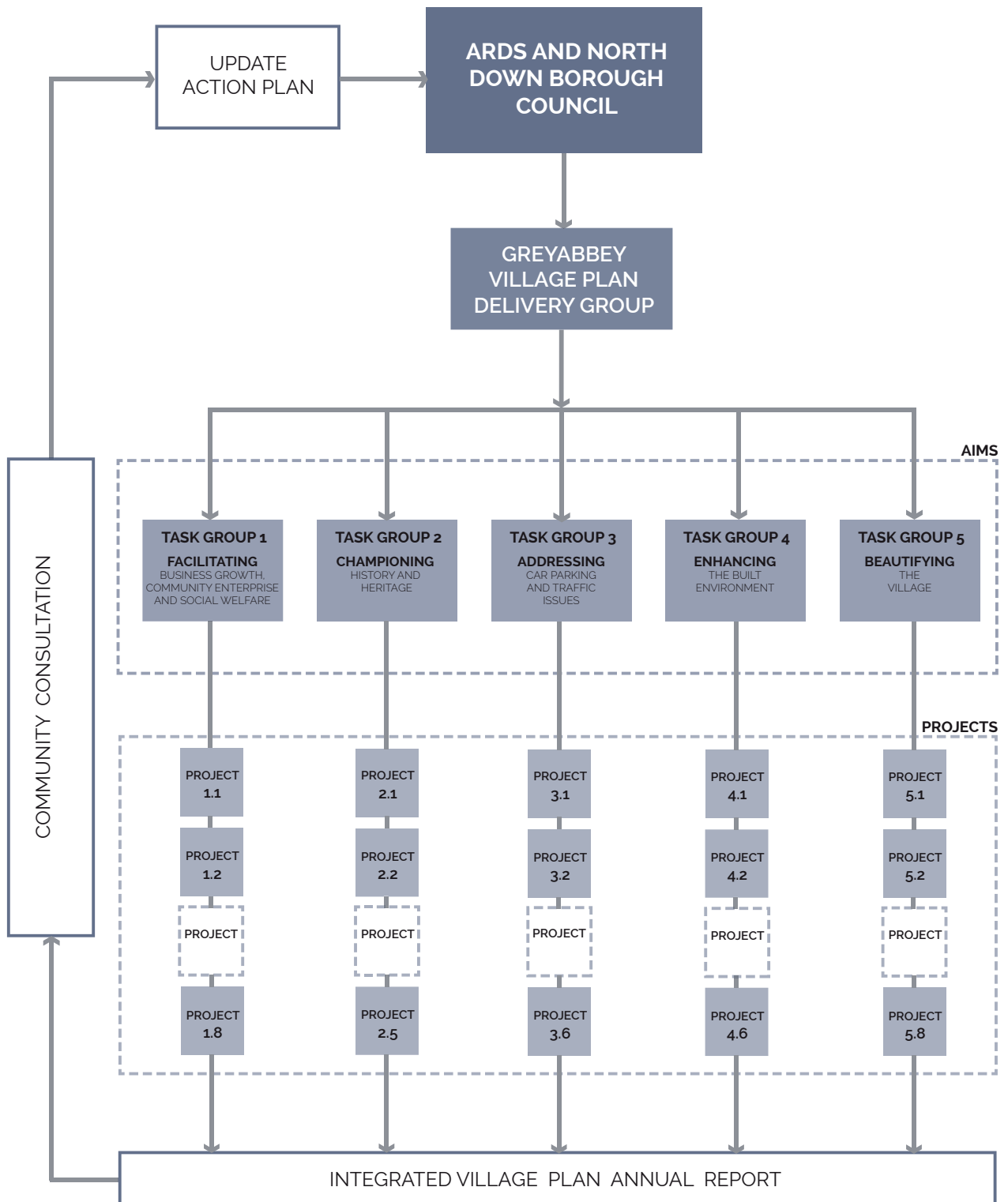
One potential delivery structure is illustrated in the organisational chart shown opposite. This chart outlines the strategic alignment of the Village Plan and the components involved in its delivery. As lead agency, **Ards and North Down Borough Council** would be responsible for the day-to-day Planning and coordination of the Village Plan, in addition to the delivery of specific projects that fall clearly under its remit. Building on its strong working relationships with a range of community organisations, statutory agencies and contacts within the business community, Ards and North Down Borough Council would be best suited to provide guidance on how the Village Plan can best contribute to existing strategies and initiatives from a council wide perspective.

The Council could also assist in identifying the availability of appropriate funding streams, as well as providing a strategic overview in the delivery of those projects that are common to a number of Villages (thereby resulting in better provision at reduced costs). Given current circumstances, it is more crucial than ever that limited funds are targeted and channelled accurately in the direction of those projects that need them most.

As a tier below the lead agency, it is anticipated that a **Greyabbey Village Plan Delivery Group** would be established to oversee the future direction of the Village Plan. This type of structure allows for the delegation of projects to individual **Task Groups** in accordance with each of the overarching aims. With input from the Council, these Task Groups would then prioritise **projects** in relation to individual members' expertise and their capacity to manage and progress. Wide stakeholder participation within each task group needs to be encouraged so that a range of skills, expertise and advice can be drawn upon for delivery.

The challenge is how these projects can be best delivered in order to realise their full economic, social and environmental benefits. Delivery must involve collaborative work between a range of organisations, in addition to the championing of projects by individuals from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. While we continue to face challenges in relation to securing funding streams, only by working together in an inventive and targeted way can the shared vision for Greyabbey be realised.

A **feedback loop** is also in place to ensure that community consultation and participation remains an integral part of the process, particularly in relation to project status reports and any changes to the Action Plan.



Delivery Organisational Chart

# Appendix A

Feedback received on Draft Greyabbey Village Plan  
from public consultation events

## GREYABBEY VILLAGE PLAN (DRAFT)

### 1.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK FORM – NUMBER OF RESPONSES

1.1 A total of **22** completed feedback forms have been received.

### 2.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK FORM – ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES RECEIVED

#### 2.1 How effective do you think the draft projects will be?

Please give each a score out of 10 (0 = bad and 10 = good)

2.1.1 A breakdown of those responses received in relation to each draft project is shown below. Average scores have been collated for each draft project alongside the number of respondents who scored that project on their form. It was noted that not all completed feedback forms included a score against every draft project.

FACILITATING business growth, community enterprise and social welfare		Average Score	Number of respondents
1.1	Establish a Greyabbey Business Forum	6.9	17
1.2	Agree a Marketing Strategy to promote business	6.8	17
1.3	Business start-up opportunities	7.0	19
1.4	Identify social enterprise projects	8.3	17
1.5	Lobby to re-establish a GP surgery	8.3	19
1.6	Encourage partnership building and information sharing	6.8	18

CHAMPIONING history and heritage		Average Score	Number of respondents
2.1	Pursue Conservation Area designation	7.7	20
2.2	Establish 'Friends of the Abbey' to promote and maintain Abbey	8.4	19
2.3	Develop property and frontage improvement guidance	8.0	18
2.4	Promote the Greyabbey Heritage Trail	7.6	21
2.5	Enhance the setting of the Abbey	7.7	22

ADDRESSING car parking and traffic issues		Average Score	Number of respondents
3.1	Develop a village car parking strategy	8.8	22
3.2	Reorganise the Greyabbey Primary School Car Park	7.6	18
3.3	Agree improvements to the National Trust Car Park (Portaferry Road)	7.9	21
3.4	Resurfacing Village Hall Car Park	7.3	16
3.5	Identify new parking facilities within the village	8.3	19
3.6	Secure traffic calming measures at key village entrances	8.1	18

ENHANCING the built environment		Average Score	Number of respondents
4.1	Improve the footpath network within the village	8.3	20
4.2	Environmental Improvement Schemes	8.0	20
4.3	Forge new coastal connections	7.5	18
4.4	Seating and picnic area to rear of Village Hall	6.5	18
4.5	Enhanced play area	7.5	17
4.6	Establish a Village Trim Trail	5.6	17

<b>BEAUTIFYING the village</b>		<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
5.1	Formulate a strategy to improve derelict buildings and sites	9.3	22
5.2	Identify and enhance selected residential and commercial properties	7.7	17
5.3	Village branding and promotion scheme	7.7	19
5.4	Develop signage at key village entrance points	8.1	20
5.5	Upgrade planting, floral displays and landscaping schemes	7.9	19
5.6	Lobby for the repair of wall along Newtownards Road	8.8	21
5.7	Eliminate weed growth along key routes	8.2	19

#### **Top five scoring projects from responses received:**

5.1	Formulate a strategy to improve derelict buildings and sites	9.3
3.1	Develop a village car parking strategy	8.8
5.6	Lobby for the repair of wall along Newtownards Road	8.8
2.2	Establish 'Friends of the Abbey' to promote and maintain Abbey	8.4
4.1	Improve the footpath network within the village	8.3

#### **Bottom five scoring projects from responses received:**

1.1	Establish a Greyabbey Business Forum	6.9
1.6	Encourage partnership building and information sharing	6.8
1.2	Agree a Marketing Strategy to promote business	6.8
4.4	Seating and picnic area to rear of Village Hall	6.5
4.6	Establish a Village Trim Trail	5.6

## **2.2 What are your top 3 priorities for Greyabbey?**

<b>Derelict sites/buildings/facades/eye sores</b>	<b>(11)</b>
<b>Pavement parking/parking/safer streets/footpaths</b>	<b>(9)</b>
<b>Traffic calming / speeds</b>	<b>(8)</b>
<b>Upgrade tennis courts to MUGA/Enhanced leisure facilities/play/recreation areas</b>	<b>(5)</b>
<b>Upgrade planting schemes/floral displays</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>GP / Doctors surgery</b>	<b>(3)</b>
The Abbey / Friends of the Abbey	(2)
Car parking in Cuan Gardens	(2)
More trees	(2)
A promenade walkway / coastal promenade	(2)
Repair wall along Newtownards Road	(2)
Dog Fouling	
Environmental improvements	
Conservation status for village	
A coherent community	
No more housing developments	
Promote the tourism and business	

## **2.3 Do you have any other ideas to improve the area?**

<b>Trinity Church open their car parking to help facilitate staff parking</b>	<b>(2)</b>
<b>Create a car parking area for residents of Cuan Gardens (fronting Nos 1-7 and 2-8)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
Traffic calming rumble strip as 3.6.1 along the Carrowdore Road before village	
Conservation village status needed	
Maximising parking at Greyabbey Primary School Car Park	
Resurface village hall car park is in progress	
No trees with upgraded landscaping schemes	
New project 5.8 coastal walk along sloping bank	
Why can we not have a crossing/traffic lights like Kircubbin and Ballywalter?	
Redesign Main Street / Newtownards Road junction	
Commuter traffic hinders Main Street (am/pm)	
Any redesign needs to take note of HGV and larger heavy haulage vehicles usage functions	
Knock village hall down and make decent community centre	
Get rid of derelict buildings/sites	
Exhausted leisure facilities	
GP surgery	
Market village as a tourist destination	
5.2 make the Residents do it themselves	
4.4 Portaferry road would be better	
Some things need to be done!	

**2.4 Would you like to be kept informed about the village plan process?**

A total of 7 respondents stated that they would like to be kept informed and have provided contact details.

**2.5 Do you have any other comments?**

Good to see plans!!

Children are in need of a much improved playpark at Island View (like Portavogie/Ballywalter)

Good to see something being done to better the village

Many congratulations on facilitating such a good consultation event

**2.6 Verbal feedback received at public drop-in session**

Change cantilevered walkway around Orange tree House – undesirable to owner of business and local residents (change to access National Trust Car Park via existing footpath)

Change from boardwalk to walking route indicated on plan

Existing walks/trails through forest from village to community hall indicated on plan

Possibility of zoning areas for future development / housing

Requirement to reduce speeds before reaching village, additional ‘Rumble Strip’ proposed for N’ards Rd / Carrowdore Road

Feels like a Village of two halves’ – ways to bring the village together (two levels of El’s?)

Roundabout junction still needs addressing – possible build out of footpath

Key to the Village uniqueness is the beauty and tranquility of the Lough

**2.7 Council Workshop Feedback**

Conservation Area – village should be involved in the decision making process

‘Greyabbey is great’ / Friends of the Abbey – manning the Abbey would benefit from additional funding for training

Car parks – church car park may be receiving funding for public parking

Relationship with Montgomery’s – very good

**2.8 Recommended changes to the draft Greyabbey Village Plan**

**(a) REDESIGNED VILLAGE HALL TO CREATE A NEW COMMUNITY HUB – New Project 1.6**

Village Hall is considered dated and would benefit from a new purpose designed facility to cater for a number of groups/drop-in services

**(b) LOBBY FOR A GP SURGERY AT NEW COMMUNITY HUB – Amended Project 1.7**

As part of a new community hub in this location

**(c) CO-ORDINATED ARDS VILLAGE EVENTS AND FESTIVALS PROGRAMME – New Project 1.8**

As a result of feedback received during drop in session

Potential for neighbouring villages

**(d) REMOVE RESURFACING OF VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK - Project 3.4**

Project already completed

**(e) NEW ON-STREET PARKING AT CUAN GARDENS / N’ARDS ROAD - New Project 3.4**

Requested by residents as six properties fronting N’Ards Road do not have parking spaces

**(f) ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON CARROWDORE ROAD/N’ARDS ROAD – Amended Project 3.6.1 / 3.6.2**

Tree planting measures welcomed but additional measures requested to deal with traffic speeds

**(g) REMOVAL OF BOARDWALK TO PLAYING FIELDS - Project 4.3.2**

Due to feedback on health and safety concerns (while people do walk across this area it can be prone to flooding)

**(h) REMOVAL OF OUTDOOR GYM FROM LANDS ADJACENT TO NATIONAL TRUST CAR PARK – Amended Project 4.6**

Landowner attended drop-in session and requested its removal

- 
- (i) **REMOVAL OF PEDESTRIAN LINK AROUND ORANGE TREE HOUSE – Amended Project 4.3**  
Requested by business owner during consultation session
  
  - (j) **SUPPORTING FUTURE HOUSING GROWTH – New Project 5.8**  
Reflecting latest plans for vacant site along Main Street – works imminent





GREYABBEY  
INTEGRATED Village Plan



Ards and  
North Down  
Borough Council