

March 26th, 2026

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 8th April 2026 at 7:00 pm**  
in **Church Street, Newtownards.**

# Agenda

## Agenda

(Attached)

[EC 08.04.26 Agenda.pdf](#)

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### 1. Apologies

### 2. Declarations of Interest

### Reports for Approval

### 3. Proposal for Partnership with the National Trust: Cockle Island Tern Conservation Project

(Attached)

[3 Proposal for Partnership with the National Trust - Cockle Island Tern Conservation Project.pdf](#)

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### 4. Property Maintenance Strategy 2026-2036

### 5. Car Park Capital Works 2026-27

[5 Car Park Capital Works 2026-27.pdf](#)

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[5 Appendix 1 Table of Condition Scores.pdf](#)

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### 6. Notice of Motion 632 HRC Pedestrian Access

### Reports for Noting

### 7. Ards and North Down In Bloom Annual Grants

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[7 Appendix 1 - Table Illustrating Applications Against Set Criteria.pdf](#)

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### 8. Notice of Motion 689 - Feasibility of Permitting Wooden Memorials

[8 Notice of Motion 689 Feasibility of Permitting Wooden Memorials.pdf](#)

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## 9. Notice of Motion 677 - Proposal for Public Hire Bicycle Scheme

[9 Notice of Motion 677 - Proposal for Public Hire Bicycle Scheme.pdf](#)

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## 10. Notices of Motion

### 10.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Edmund and Alderman Adair

That this Council is deeply concerned at the impact of the change to Isle of Man's visa requirements on the Northern Ireland fishing fleet. The changes which mean that overseas crew require an Isle of Man work visa rather than the transit visa or UK skilled worker visa and therefore cannot fish within the Isle of Man 12 nautical mile limit, effectively excluding the Northern Ireland fishing fleet from its fishing traditional waters. Council requests that officers write to the Manx Government, to highlight the damage to the Northern Fishing and Fish Processing Industry and request that the relevant measures are taken by the Manx Government to reverse the impact of these changes.

### 10.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor McCollum and Councillor Wray

That this Council notes the profound impact on the Clandeboye Community of the tragic death of 16 year old DICE leader and Army Cadet Jaidyn Rice on the 8th July 2025 and further notes the terrible loss of seven other lives on roads in our Borough during 2025, the highest of any Council area.

Further that this Council tasks officers to work with the Rice family to create a bench honouring Jaidyn's contribution to her community, such bench to be a place of reflection, connection and outreach, in an agreed location and incorporating Council's Here to Help app for signposting to vital support services around the Borough.

## 11. Any Other Notified Business

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

### Items Delegated for Decision/Approval (In Confidence)

## 12. Tender Reports

### 12.1 Tender for the Supply of Liquid Fuels at Ards and North Down Council Properties

[12.1 Tender for the Supply of Liquid Fuels at ANDBC Properties.pdf](#)

*Not included*

### 12.2 Tender Extension for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance Equipment Repairs and Servicing

[12.2 Tender Extension for Grounds Maintenance Equipment Repairs and](#)

*Not included*

- 12.3 ~~Tender Extension~~ **Service for the Provision of Memorial Testing**  
📄 *12.3 Tender Extension for the Provision of Memorial Testing.pdf* **Not included**
- 12.4 **Appointment of Ice Cream and Hot Drinks Vendors at Various Locations in the Borough 2026-27**  
📄 *12.4 Appointment of Ice Cream and Hot Drink Vendors 2026-2027.pdf* **Not included**

## **ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

1 April 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a hybrid meeting (in person and via Zoom) of the Environment Committee of Ards and North Down Borough Council in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards on **Wednesday, 8 April 2026** commencing at **7.00pm**.

Yours faithfully

Susie McCullough  
Chief Executive  
Ards and North Down Borough Council

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest

#### **Reports for Approval**

3. Proposal for Partnership with the National Trust: Cockle Island Tern Conservation Project (Report attached)
4. Property Maintenance Strategy 2026-2036 (Report attached)
5. Car Park Capital Works 2026-27 (Report attached)
6. Notice of Motion 632 HRC Pedestrian Access (Report attached)

#### **Reports for Noting**

7. Ards and North Down In Bloom Annual Grants (Report attached)
8. Notice of Motion 689 - Feasibility of Permitting Wooden Memorials (Report attached)
9. Notice of Motion 677 - Proposal for Public Hire Bicycle Scheme (Report attached)
10. Notices of Motion
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Further that this Council tasks officers to work with the Rice family to create a bench honouring Jaidyn's contribution to her community, such bench to be a place of reflection, connection and outreach, in an agreed location and incorporating Council's Here to Help app for signposting to vital support services around the Borough.

#### 11. Any Other Notified Business

**\*\*\* IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

#### **Items Delegated for Decision/Approval (In Confidence)**

#### 12. Tender Reports

- 12.1. Tender for the Supply of Liquid Fuels at Ards and North Down Council Properties (Report attached)
- 12.2. Tender Extension for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance Equipment Repairs and Servicing (Report attached)
- 12.3. Tender Extension for the Provision of Memorial Testing (Report attached)
- 12.4. Appointment of Ice Cream and Hot Drinks Vendors at Various Locations in the Borough 2026-27 (Report attached)

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (16 Members)**

Alderman Adair	Councillor Douglas
Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor Edmund
Councillor Ashe	Councillor Harbinson (Vice Chair)
Councillor Blaney	Alderman McRandal
Councillor Boyle	Councillor Kendall (Chair)
Councillor Brady	Alderman McAlpine
Alderman Cummings	Councillor Newman
Councillor Cathcart	Councillor Wray

Unclassified

## ITEM 3

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
	If multiple:
Meeting	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting	08 April 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Environmental Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Estates
Report title	Proposal for Partnership with the National Trust: Cockle Island Tern Conservation Project
Attachments	
File Reference (if applicable)	56044
Legislation	Other Wildlife and Natural Environment (WANE) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
Resource Implications	None Narrative:
Screening Requirements	<i>The Council will commit to consider the implication of all reports under the categories of Section 75, Rural Needs, Data Protection, Climate and Sustainability:</i>  Screening of decision not required
Link to Corporate Plan Priority and Outcome	Priority 2: Environmental Choose an item. If multiple:

## Background

This report outlines a proposed partnership between ANDBC Harbours and the National Trust to safeguard the Tern colony at Groomsport through the deployment of a dedicated nesting raft.

Cockle Island, located within Groomsport Harbour, is a critical summer breeding site for several hundred pairs of Arctic Terns and Common Terns. Managed by the National Trust, this colony is of significant local and ecological importance.

However, the colony currently faces two major threats:

- **Sea-Level Rise and Tidal Surges:** High spring tides frequently wash over the low-lying island, destroying nests and eggs.
- **Ecological Fragility:** Significant losses due to Avian Influenza in 2023 have made the remaining population more vulnerable, increasing the risk of the colony abandoning the site for the Copeland Islands.

To mitigate these risks and provide a "high-ground" nesting alternative, the National Trust has proposed a Tern Raft Project.

## Key Issues

To ensure the success of this conservation initiative, it is proposed that Council supports the National Trust by providing essential infrastructure and logistical assistance.

The proposed commitments are as follows:

- **Mooring Provision:** Provide a suitable mooring for a Tern raft (up to 6 metres, provided by National Trust) adjacent to Cockle Island. The proposed location will utilise an existing mud anchor. This service would be provided free of charge.
- **Secure Storage:** Allocate space within the Groomsport Harbour locked storage area for the raft during the off-season, free of charge.
- **Operational Support:** Assist with the seasonal launch and berthing of the raft at the start of the breeding season, and its subsequent recovery to storage at the season's end.
- **Maintenance:** Conduct a safety check of the mooring twice annually to ensure the raft remains secure.

## Next Steps

Harbours and National Trust staff would review this arrangement on an annual basis to ensure operational compatibility and project efficacy.

## Summary

The report proposes a partnership with the National Trust to protect the vulnerable Tern colony at Cockle Island by supporting the installation and seasonal management of a nesting raft. The Council would provide a mooring, off-season storage, operational assistance, and safety checks, with the arrangement reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness and reinforce the Council's commitment to local biodiversity.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council Approves this collaborative approach, reinforcing ANDBC's commitment to local biodiversity and the protection of a signature species within the Borough's coastal waters.

Unclassified

**ITEM 5****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
	If multiple:
Meeting	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting	08 April 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Environmental Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Estates
Report title	Car Park Capital Works 2026-27
Attachments	Appendix 1 Table of Condition Scores
File Reference (if applicable)	65369
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Resource Implications	Budget Narrative: Agreed Capital Budget
Screening Requirements	<i>The Council will commit to consider the implication of all reports under the categories of Section 75, Rural Needs, Data Protection, Climate and Sustainability:</i>  Screening of report not required
Link to Corporate Plan Priority and Outcome	Priority 1: Economic 4. A vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors  If multiple:

If multiple:

## Background

The Council's agreed Maintenance Strategy incorporates a "needs based" approach for its refurbishment programme. Car Parks are scored every year and the lowest scoring of them are earmarked for resurfacing, subject to budgetary constraints.

## Key Issues

As resurfacing works are carried out from our capital budget, a set amount is required to be identified each year to facilitate accurate capital budget forecasting.

An annual figure of £50k is included in the capital budget, however as noted in previous reports and our Car Park Strategy, this amount is inadequate in terms of achieving a vision of a modern, attractive and fully fit for purpose public car park estate.

Our Car Park Strategy, agreed in 2021, sets out a vision for a high standard public asset that realises its full potential in helping to promote a sustainable Borough – driving forward economic, environmental and social well-being. The implementation of a number of key improvements to our car parks is essential, including:

- Resurfacing
- New line marking, utilising the upper end of the standard widths for parking spaces to help accommodate the larger, SUV type vehicles that have increased in popularity in recent years.
- New fully DDA compliant spacing with drop-kerbs for wheelchair use.
- LED lighting that provides a clearer, brighter light but uses less power and incorporates automatic dimming features.

In addition to the above, several further enhancements have been identified as being important in terms of realising our vision for high quality modern car parks, including:

- Enhanced signage
- Enhanced environmental features, planting etc.
- Bicycle and motorcycle parking facilities
- EV charging infrastructure

The implementation of such an improvement programme will not be possible within the current budget availability.

A new tariff structure has been agreed, with projected additional revenue of £0.5M, based on current usage patterns. This will provide much needed additional funds to implement the Car Park Strategy, paid for by car park users.

Implementation of these tariffs is dependent on the Department for Infrastructure resolving the legislative impediment allowing Council to legislate the transferred car parks. Although Officers believe the Department may make steps to revoke the legislation in Autumn 2026, a formal timeline has not been provided, and therefore plans cannot be made for this projected revenue.

If multiple:

### **Condition Scores**

The table at Appendix 1 provides a list of all car parks. They have been surveyed and ranked in order of their condition. Given that their users could reasonably have expectations of a higher standard; charged car parks have had a weighting added to lower their scores so that they gain priority over others. Similarly, car parks within town/village centres have also had a (slightly lesser) weighting added so that they can be prioritised over the less frequently used, more rural car parks. Works identified, and costings provided generally only relate to more 'essential' maintenance/enhancement works (resurfacing) and do not include the further desirable enhancements set out above.

Cognisance of wider strategies and plans for these assets is essential to reducing the likelihood of spending significant sums of money on assets that may be disposed of or replaced in the foreseeable future. Therefore, discussions with relevant officers have taken place to ensure that proposed works reflect any known plans for the assets concerned.

Any car parks with known imminent works to be carried out have been exempted from the scoring.

### **Next Steps**

Within the current limits of our agreed 2026-27 capital budget for car park works, it is planned that the following works will be undertaken in accordance with the prioritisation process outlined in this report:

- Upgrade of Old Cross East, Newtownards
- Upper Court St, Newtownards

These two projects have an estimated total of £38,920. Whilst the remaining budget of £11,080 is not sufficient to complete any further projects, officers will keep budgets under review and if sufficient surplus budget becomes available (from income or underspends) officers will complete a third project at:

- Newtownards Road/Church St, Bangor.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council Agrees the car park capital works for 2026-27 as outlined in this report.

Tier	Asset Description and Location	Location	Score	Percentage	Tier adjusted Score	Type	Car Park Size (m2)	Estimated resurfacing cost	Comments
2	Crommelin Park	Donaghadee							ongoing grant funded refurbishment
2	Burr Point	Ballyhalbert	8.00	100.00	100.00	No Fee	1555	£54,425.00	
2	Main Road Cloughey	Cloughey	7.95	99.38	99.38	No Fee	3973	£139,055.00	
2	Banks Lane	Bangor	7.89	98.63	98.63	No Fee	2332	£81,620.00	
2	Clandeboyne Road	Bangor	7.88	98.50	98.50	No Fee	1364	£47,740.00	
2	Cloughey Picnic Area - Ratallagh	Cloughey	7.88	98.50	98.50	No Fee	682	£23,870.00	
2	Harbour Road	Ballyhalbert	7.88	98.50	98.50	No Fee	315	£11,025.00	
2	Manor Street	Donaghadee	7.87	98.38	98.38	No Fee	554	£19,390.00	
3	Portavogie Road	Portavogie	7.13	89.13	98.04	No Fee	375	£13,125.00	
3	Stricklands Glen	Bangor	7.13	89.13	98.04	No Fee	332	£11,620.00	
2	Groomsport Harbour	Groomsport	7.78	97.25	97.25	No Fee	2030	£71,050.00	
2	Seacliff Road	Bangor	7.78	97.25	97.25	No Fee	3927	£137,445.00	
2	Springvale Road	Ballywalter	7.75	96.88	96.88	No Fee	1350	£47,250.00	
2	The Moat	Donaghadee	7.71	96.38	96.38	No Fee	255	£8,925.00	reline accessible bays
2	Ward Arras	Bangor	7.63	95.38	95.38	No Fee	2120	£74,200.00	reline accessible bays
2	Anchor	Portavogie	7.59	94.88	94.88	No Fee	2815	£98,525.00	reline accessible bays
2	Talbot Street	Newtownards	7.58	94.75	94.75	No Fee	1566	£54,810.00	
2	The Green	Kircubbin	7.57	94.63	94.63	No Fee	1174	£41,090.00	
2	Seapark	Holywood	7.54	94.25	94.25	No Fee	927	£32,445.00	reline
2	Islandhill	Comber	7.40	92.50	92.50	No Fee	2280	£79,800.00	reline accessible bays
2	Shore Street	Donaghadee	7.38	92.25	92.25	No Fee	512	£17,920.00	
2	Ballymenoch	Holywood	7.33	91.63	91.63	No Fee	619	£21,665.00	
2	Harbour Car Park	Donaghadee	7.31	91.38	91.38	No Fee	5059	£177,065.00	
2	Meeting House Street	Portaferry	7.31	91.38	91.38	No Fee	1128	£39,480.00	
2	Whitechurch Road	Ballywalter	7.31	91.38	91.38	No Fee	608	£24,320.00	
2	Newtownards Road	Comber	7.30	91.25	91.25	No Fee	1178	£41,230.00	reline
2	Railway Street	Donaghadee	7.29	91.13	91.13	No Fee	1090	£38,150.00	
2	Whiterock	Whiterock	7.21	90.13	90.13	No Fee	1210	£42,350.00	reline accessible bays
2	Ballywalter Harbour	Ballywalter	7.20	90.00	90.00	No Fee	1695	£59,325.00	
2	Glen Link	Comber	7.17	89.63	89.63	No Fee	541	£18,935.00	reline accessible bays
2	The Commons	Donaghadee	7.12	89.00	89.00	No Fee	2209	£77,315.00	
1	Hibernia Street North	Holywood	7.91	98.88	88.99	Fee	2714	£94,990.00	
1	Clifton Road	Bangor	7.90	98.75	88.88	Fee	695	£24,325.00	
1	Holborn Avenue	Bangor	7.90	98.75	88.88	Fee	2360	£82,600.00	
2	The Ropewalk	Portaferry	7.11	88.88	88.88	No Fee	3660	£128,100.00	
2	Sportsplex	Bangor	7.10	88.75	88.75	No Fee	4250	£148,750.00	
2	Main Street	Millisle	7.05	88.13	88.13	No Fee	11505	£402,675.00	
1	Castle Street	Bangor	7.81	97.63	87.86	Fee	1927	£67,445.00	
2	Cunningburn	Newtownards	6.94	86.75	86.75	No Fee	1500	£52,500.00	
1	Eisenhower / Quay Street	Bangor	7.70	96.25	86.63	No Fee	3843	£134,505.00	
1	Abbey Street West	Bangor	7.65	95.63	86.06	Fee	718	£25,130.00	
1	Spafield	Holywood	7.55	94.38	84.94	No Fee	2569	£89,915.00	new signage required
2	Whitespots	Conlig	6.73	84.13	84.13	No Fee	3050	£106,750.00	
1	Castle Park	Bangor	7.47	93.38	84.04	No Fee	3266	£114,310.00	
1	Hibernia Street South	Holywood	7.46	93.25	83.93	Fee	841	£29,435.00	
1	Central Avenue	Bangor	7.40	92.50	83.25	Fee	645	£22,575.00	

1	Abbey Street East	Bangor	7.38	92.25	83.03	Fee	1750	£61,250.00	
1	South Street/Court Street	Newtownards	7.33	91.63	82.46	Fee	5120	£179,200.00	
2	Springwell Drive	Groomspoint	6.58	82.25	82.25	No Fee	1060	£37,100.00	
2	Templepatrick	Donaghadee	6.56	82.00	82.00	No Fee	3095	£108,325.00	
1	Bingham Lane	Bangor	7.27	90.88	81.79	Fee	1573	£55,055.00	
1	Old Cross Street West	Newtownards	7.23	90.38	81.34	Fee	2386	£83,510.00	
1	Killinchy Street	Comber	7.15	89.38	80.44	No Fee	802	£28,070.00	
3	Ballywhiskin	Ballywhiskin	5.83	72.88	80.16	No Fee	2909	£101,815.00	
1	Mill Street	Newtownards	7.11	88.88	79.99	Fee	1590	£55,650.00	
1	Kennel Lane	Newtownards	7.10	88.75	79.88	Fee	2678	£93,730.00	
1	South Street	Newtownards	7.10	88.75	79.88	Fee	930	£32,550.00	
1	Mills Road	Bangor	7.09	88.63	79.76	Fee	2016	£70,560.00	
2	Moss Road	Millisle	6.35	79.38	79.38	No Fee	3721	£130,235.00	reline & replace signage
1	Ann Street	Newtownards	7.05	88.13	79.31	Fee	2220	£77,700.00	
1	Church Road	Holywood	7.05	88.13	79.31	Fee	2142	£74,970.00	
1	Mill Street Gas Works South	Newtownards	7.05	88.13	79.31	No Fee	2348	£82,180.00	
1	Castle Street/Bridge Street	Comber	7.00	87.50	78.75	No Fee	2185	£76,475.00	
1	Newtownards Road/Church Street	Bangor	6.88	86.00	77.40	No Fee	780	£27,300.00	
1	Mill Street Gas Works North	Newtownards	6.86	85.75	77.18	Fee	2322	£81,270.00	
1	Upper Court Street	Newtownards	6.85	85.63	77.06	Fee	640	£22,400.00	
1	West Street	Newtownards	6.81	85.13	76.61	Fee	1580	£55,300.00	
2	Shore Road	Kircubbin	5.73	71.63	71.63	No Fee	1664	£49,920.00	
1	Old Cross Street East	Newtownards	6.17	77.13	69.41	Fee	472	£16,520.00	

£4,730,255.00

Tier 1	Town Centre car parks high use.	x 0.9
Tier 2	Village Centre car parks. Town outskirts. Medium use.	x 1.0
Tier 3	Country Car parks. Minor car parks. Lcx 1.1	

Unclassified

## ITEM 7

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
	If multiple:
Meeting	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting	08 April 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Environmental Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Parks and Cemeteries
Report title	Ards and North Down in Bloom Annual Grants
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Table Illustrating Applications Against Set Criteria
File Reference (if applicable)	PCA85
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Resource Implications	Budget
	Narrative: Budget in Place
Screening Requirements	<i>The Council will commit to consider the implication of all reports under the categories of Section 75, Rural Needs, Data Protection, Climate and Sustainability:</i>  Screening of decision not required
Link to Corporate Plan Priority and Outcome	Priority 3: Social 5. Safe, welcoming and inclusive communities that are flourishing  If multiple:

## Background

The purpose of this report is to note the 31 applications for the annual Ards and North Down in Bloom funding grants. Ards and North Down Borough has a reputation for leading the way with our floral displays. The Borough has won regional and national competitions in recent years and the common theme throughout all the success is the incredible hard work and enthusiasm shown by our staff and the local communities they work with.

The grant scheme assists the Ards and North Down in Bloom initiative which has been developed with three overlapping objectives: horticultural excellence, community participation and environmentally sustainable practices. These are in line with objectives of Translink Ulster in Bloom and other regional awards schemes. By actively supporting this competition, applicants not only make their communities more attractive, but also contribute to the Borough's entry to the Translink Ulster in Bloom Competition and other regional awards.

This collective effort continues to pay off. Recent award successes include Holywood achieving Runner-Up for Best Kept Medium Town, Groomsport winning Best Kept Large Village, Donaghadee securing the title of Best Kept Small Town, Bangor earning Runner-Up for Best Kept City, and Newtownards being named a Finalist for Best Kept Large Town. These achievements build on an impressive track record including Donaghadee winning Gold in Britain in Bloom 2025 — a remarkable accomplishment and a powerful showcase of the Borough's dedication to excellence.

## Key Issues

Ards and North Down Borough Council currently makes budget provision for the allocation of funding to community groups in order to assist with floral displays in the city, towns and villages throughout the Borough, to assist with the Council's commitment to the Translink Ulster in Bloom competition. The allocation for funding is intended to supplement floral display and amenity area maintenance currently carried out by the Council's Parks and Cemeteries Service. This may be in the form of planters, flower beds, sustainable wildflower displays or equipment to support this work, either on Council or other statutory bodies land or privately owned non-domestic areas in public view.

The Ards and North Down in Bloom Grants Policy Review was approved by Council in January 2025. The maximum limit for funding is £1,250 per annum per group. This increase was approved by Council in January 2025. A further grant may be provided for funding, in whole or in part, for appropriate liability insurance covering the floral display work over and above the group's normal insured activities. Insurance grants can be provided for up to 40% of the total project costs. Funding will be allocated with 50% advance payment, with the further 50% paid upon the receipt of invoices as per Council wide policy.

Council welcomes applications from multiple groups within the same town or village, recognising that different organisations may be working in distinct areas and that funding is limited. However, projects must demonstrate coverage across a wider area and must not duplicate or overlap in a way that suggests double funding. To promote collaboration and ensure fair distribution of resources, where more than one group

applies from the same city, town or village, the Council may only be able to support one project if funding is limited.

### **Next Steps**

The 31 applications were assessed against the following criteria:

- Meet the core objectives of Ards and North Down in Bloom – Horticultural excellence, Environmental Sustainability and Community.
- Provide a vision as to how the funding will enhance the particular areas and how this will be sustained in subsequent years.
- Evidence of approval from relevant landowner where works are to be carried out.
- Where appropriate insurance liability cover is in place, copy of certificate and schedule to be submitted.
- How the works are to be carried out, and by whom.
- Detailed breakdown of how funding will be utilised, and receipts submitted accordingly.

### **Summary**

Appendix 1 summarises how each application met the criteria. In the assessment, 31 of the applications were considered to have met the criteria with minor stipulations. Currently, there is a budget allocation of £37,000 for the In Bloom programme. The applications amount to a total of £33,090.85 plus £500.00 for insurance.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council Notes this report.

Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

CRITERIA									
GROUP	Please state the nature of the proposed project: (500 WORDS)	Explain how the project will meet the core objectives of Ards and North Down In Bloom - <i>Horticultural, Environment and Community</i>	Provide a vision as to how the funding will enhance the particular areas and how this will be sustained in subsequent years.	Evidence of approval from relevant land owner where works are to be carried out	When appropriate insurance liability cover is in place, copy of certificate and schedule to be submitted.	How the works are to be carried out, and by whom.	Detailed breakdown of how funding will be utilised, and receipts submitted accordingly.	Amount of funding requested	Recommendation
Ards Rugby Football Club	A biodiversity focused entrance makeover will add two feature beds with silver birch, pollinator friendly shrubs, lavender, salvia, geranium and seasonal colour, using peat free compost. The project will enhance the club's appearance, support wildlife and involve the Men's Shed, older members and minis in a community planting day.	The project will redesign the club's entrance with perennial, seasonal and pollinator-friendly planting to enhance biodiversity and support In Bloom aims. Low-maintenance soft landscaping will increase green coverage, while minis, youth, families and adults help plant and maintain the area, boosting pride, wellbeing and creating a welcoming arrival point.	Ards RFC is beginning long-term grounds improvements ahead of its 2028 centenary. This phase creates a durable planted entrance using biodiversity-friendly species, maintained by volunteers with youth involvement. All works have approval and insurance. The project will enhance environmental quality, community pride and contribute to In Bloom over future years.	yes	yes	The project will be delivered through a supervised volunteer model led by the grounds team, who will prepare the site and set out planting. Volunteers, including youth members, will plant during a community day. Ongoing maintenance will be shared between the grounds team and the Men's Shed, ensuring consistent care and long-term sustainability.	yes	<b>£500</b>  100% of total project	Approval
Ballygowan Community Association	The Community Association will refill village planters and hanging baskets with colourful plants, involving local residents in planting and maintenance.	Replenishing the flowers around the village provides us with a great opportunity to get the people in our village involved. When individual are involved in the planting process, they	Ballygowan's largely tarmac public spaces will be brightened through replenished planters and hanging baskets, softening the village environment and enhancing	Yes	Yes	Planting will be carried out by BDCA members and volunteers within the community who will also provide any follow up maintenance.	Yes	<b>£440</b>  80% of total project.	Approval

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	Two recently installed three-tier planters at the roundabout will also be replanted, enhancing the village's appearance on key approach routes and continuing strong volunteer participation.	feel more invested with a sense of ownership and will want to help maintain/water the flowers. The flowers will also add a much-needed splash of colour to the village which lacks green space and is mainly built up.	seating areas. BDCA members will maintain the displays year-round, supported by In Bloom funding and local fundraising, improving the appearance and enjoyment of key community spaces.						
Ballyhalbert & District Community Association	The project will replant existing village planters, add new ones along Shore Road and complete planting in the Community Garden. This volunteer-led initiative aims to enhance public spaces, boost biodiversity and encourage residents to take ownership, strengthening community pride, environmental care and social connection across key village locations.	By further developing our Community Garden Space we want to be establishing a "vibrant oasis" that serves as a sanctuary for mental wellbeing and a hub for cross community participation. The goal is to show that we take pride in our village and want our community to be involved. We want to plant a diverse range of plants that attract various insects which in turn attracts birds but also has the benefit of being aesthetically pleasing. We want to use this as a first project for a village care team with the purpose of enlivening our streets and keeping them clean. We have requests from interested residents who are willing to make a difference.	The project will further develop the Community Garden as a vibrant, biodiverse space supporting wellbeing and cross-community involvement. Volunteers will create planting schemes at the roundabout and Talbot House, adding colour and habitat for insects and birds. A new village care team will help enliven streets, encourage pride and keep the area clean.	n/a	yes	The planting and care of the garden along with the planters will be carried out by the association members and volunteers. The care group will take over the care but the association will always have responsibility	yes	<b>£1250</b>  83% of total project	Approval

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		By creating a planting scheme at the village roundabout and outside Talbot House with planters that will be seen by all in and travelling through the village we are adding environment to the sea front for insects and birds with the added bonus of enhancing our village. Where possible we want to plant perennials so we can build over the years.							
Ballyhalbert Park Residents Association	Following years of decline under previous owners, the park's new owner is committed to restoring standards. The residents' group aims to maintain established planters and beds supported by past In Bloom grants and now seeks two additional hanging baskets for a new gazebo to keep the park bright, smart and welcoming.	Our residents' average age is 70, some live alone. We recognise the need to have good community spirit and engagement, to ensure residents are not lonely and left to fend for themselves. Our goal is to achieve a good, safe and inclusive community.	The committee and volunteers take pleasure in maintaining the floral areas when they have been established and delight in the colourful displays.	Yes	No – stated none required	Committee members and volunteers	Yes	<b>£1100</b>  100% of total project	Approval
Ballywalter Community Action Group	This intergenerational project between Ballywalter Community Action Group, the Primary School and Over 50s Gardening Club will maintain the Peace and Memorial Garden	Blooming Ballywalter supports In Bloom through planned horticultural design, strong community participation and sustainable practices. Twenty-two volunteers help maintain displays,	Joint project with multiple groups in Ballywalter. Plan to continue planting and maintaining flower displays at peace and memorial garden and throughout village. Sustained by	Yes	Yes	Community volunteers, local primary school children, local gardening club, supported by contactor and NIHE staff.	Yes	<b>£1000</b>  100% of total project.	Approval

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	and village planters, including new nautical-themed entrance features. The work enhances civic pride, community identity and the village's appearance for residents and visitors.	while a new polytunnel enables seed cultivation with the primary school. Working alongside children builds skills, cooperation and confidence, and enhances floral displays using recycled materials and eco-friendly compost.	volunteers, NIHE staff and Over 50's gardening club.						
Bayburn Community Association (formerly Helen's Bay and Crawfordsburn )	The project builds on extensive 2025 work, with volunteers maintaining over 60 beds and planters across Helen's Bay and Crawfordsburn, including major beds, village entrances and riverside areas. Plans include expanding baskets, planters and a creative feature with a bug hotel at the key junction, further enhancing biodiversity and village appearance.	The project builds on strong volunteer work across both villages, expanding community involvement and previous In Bloom success. Volunteers maintain beds, planters, orchards, woodlands and habitats, including areas formerly managed by Council. Work with schoolchildren supports biodiversity and environmental responsibility, aiming for more coordinated planting and continued recognition for Helen's Bay and Crawfordsburn.	Helen's Bay and Crawfordsburn welcome over a million visitors annually, and In Bloom funding will help maintain high-quality community-led planting supported by local businesses. Last year's work contributed to Crawfordsburn's award success. The 80-year-old Community Association continues expanding its volunteer base and partnerships to enhance planting, biodiversity and village presentation year-round.	Yes	Yes	Volunteers x30, local primary school, volunteers from St John's Church and Now Disability Group.	Yes	<b>£1,250</b>  94% of total project  Requesting grant funding to cover liability insurance with McCarroll McConnell & Co Ltd for policy of £771.	Approval  As per grants policy, funding for insurance is allocated at 40% of overall grant requested.

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<p>Bowtown Community Association</p>	<p>Blooming Bowtown is a volunteer-led, intergenerational project enhancing shared spaces with new timber planters, seasonal and pollinator-friendly planting, and seeds for the community allotment. Structured gardening sessions unite older residents and teenagers, building skills and reducing antisocial behaviour. A volunteer rota ensures long-term upkeep, ownership and visible environmental improvement across the estate.</p>	<p>Blooming Bowtown will enhance key spaces with durable planters, seasonal and pollinator-friendly planting, and allotment seed growing. Wildflower sowing and volunteer-led maintenance strengthen biodiversity and long-term stewardship. Intergenerational gardening sessions unite older residents and teenagers, building skills, confidence and pride while improving shared spaces and supporting resident-led environmental responsibility across the estate.</p>	<p>Blooming Bowtown supports place-based regeneration by enhancing shared spaces with high-quality planters and pollinator-friendly planting. Intergenerational volunteering between older women and teenagers builds skills, confidence and positive relationships, helping reduce antisocial behaviour. Strong stewardship structures, allotment activity and SPOD support ensure long-term sustainability, biodiversity gains and visible community-led improvement across the estate.</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>Blooming Bowtown will be delivered through a structured, volunteer-led model involving women's and youth programmes and allotment volunteers. Planters will be installed and planted during supervised community days, with older women guiding horticulture and teenagers supporting practical tasks. A volunteer rota will manage watering and upkeep, ensuring safe, sustainable, community-owned delivery.</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p><b>£1250</b> 100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>
<p><b>Castle Gardens Primary school/ Cuan Court Dementia Home</b></p>	<p>The project will transform Cuan Court's garden into a colourful, sensory-rich space for residents living with dementia. P7 pupils will create mosaic artworks, strengthening community connection. Funding</p>	<p>The project will enhance Cuan Court's garden with colourful, sensory planting to support residents living with dementia. P7 pupils will help plant and create mosaics, strengthening skills and intergenerational learning.</p>	<p>The project will transform Cuan Court's garden into a vibrant, sensory space for residents living with dementia, with colourful planting and pupil-designed mosaics. Gentle gardening will support wellbeing and</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>P7 pupils from Castle Gardens Primary and Cuban Court Residents. Men's Shed (for timber and carpentry)</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p><b>£350</b> 100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>

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	will provide plants and compost to add fragrance and seasonal interest. Sensory planting will support wellbeing, while intergenerational involvement fosters empathy, interaction and meaningful engagement outdoors.	Pollinator-friendly flowers boost biodiversity, while shared activities build empathy, creativity and community cohesion, offering residents meaningful outdoor engagement and wellbeing benefits.	purpose, while a low-maintenance design enables staff and residents to manage care. Ongoing school involvement ensures long-term improvement and community pride.						
<b>City Church Bangor</b>	Following the removal of a diseased ash tree, volunteers created new flower beds and added picnic benches, transforming the church grounds into a welcoming, colourful space enjoyed by the public. Community appreciation has been strong, with positive feedback and a £500 donation enabling further expansion using wooden sleepers and an additional picnic table. To complete the vision, funding is needed for topsoil, compost and supplementary plants that volunteers cannot grow at home. This support will	Being located on the main shopping street of our city centre, the enhancement of our grounds will greatly compliment the horticultural displays of the council such as the roundabouts and flowerbed by the Post Office. This will support endeavours of the council to achieve regional or national 'in bloom' awards.  It will benefit the local community in providing a colourful and peaceful area for people to relax and enjoy, all through the use of nature and the use of environmentally peat free compost.	In a time of increasing shop closures and grey shuttered shop fronts, we have the opportunity to create a wonderful area of outstanding natural beauty, transforming the Main Street area with very little cost.  The project will be sustained by the continued input of our volunteers in maintaining the flowerbeds.	Work has already been approved by the relevant church committee.	Yes	Work will be carried out by Church volunteers.	Yes	<b>£345</b>  <b>75% of total project</b>	Approval

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	sustain a vibrant, uplifting green space on Main Street.								
<b>Cloughey &amp; District Community Association</b>	Cloughey's planting campaign will continue in 2026 with 40 additional palm trees along the main road, expanded spring bulbs and a refreshed community garden. Volunteers will also plant new trees and shrubs across the area, with local schools helping children take part. A memorial donation will fund all plants, while additional support is needed for tools and safety equipment to equip volunteers of all ages. Creating shared resources in the community shed will strengthen participation, ownership and pride throughout the village.	Local volunteers are dedicated to keeping Cloughey welcoming and well cared for, with support from Volunteer Now to strengthen recruitment and retention. Collaboration with parents, teachers and schoolchildren encourages community pride from an early age and contributes to the village's low levels of vandalism and graffiti. As a coastal community with a beautiful bay and beach, residents are committed to maintaining high environmental standards and enhancing the village's appearance, supporting ambitions for clean beach recognition and future participation in Ulster in Bloom.	We can use the equipment purchased for all on-going and new planting projects in 2026 and future years, ensuring that Cloughey stays beautiful for years to come.	Most planting takes place on land owned by the Council or Housing Executive, and we work closely with both to ensure full permission before any activity. For example, at our 28 February planting day, Council staff will provide and supervise the use of spades to plant 800 cornus shrubs beside the central car park. When volunteers and children are involved, we take responsibility for their safety, which is why having our own tools and protective equipment is	Yes	Our committee members will organise the selection and purchase of the items needed. We will endeavour, always to select and purchase the most suitable items at realistic prices – within budget.	yes	<b>£506.92</b>  100% of total project	Approval

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				essential for future projects.					
Comber Chamber of Commerce	Comber Chamber of Commerce will coordinate high-quality hanging baskets and window boxes for town-centre businesses, creating a vibrant, welcoming streetscape for residents and visitors. Seasonal floral displays will enhance visual appeal, support increased footfall and contribute to local economic activity. By working collaboratively with traders, the project will ensure consistent, well-maintained planting that reflects civic pride and aligns with In Bloom objectives. Using pollinator-friendly plants and responsible maintenance practices will also promote sustainability and strengthen biodiversity in the town centre.	This project will support the core objectives of Ards and North Down In Bloom by delivering high-quality seasonal planting that promotes horticultural excellence across business, public and residential areas. Pollinator-friendly plants and sustainable practices will enhance biodiversity and environmental responsibility. The initiative encourages strong community participation through collaboration with local traders and aims to support and strengthen Comber's representation in regional and national competitions, including Ulster in Bloom.	Our vision is to create a vibrant, cohesive town centre that reflects pride in Comber. Funding will provide high-quality hanging baskets and window boxes, with reusable fixtures ensuring long-term sustainability. Businesses will maintain displays, while the Chamber coordinates annual planting and future sponsorship, embedding collaboration, environmental responsibility and lasting visual impact.	Businesses are all willing to comply	yes	Works will be carried out as a joint project with Comber Regeneration Community Partnership and Comber Chamber of Commerce	No breakdown provided	<b>£1250</b>  100% of total project	Approval with stipulations detailed below*

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Comber Regeneration	This project enhances Comber's appearance and supports Ulster in Bloom through collaborative planting by the Council and Comber Community Garden. Residents, schools and local groups will grow and maintain plants, fostering pride and participation. Increasing perennials, using resilient species and homemade compost ensures sustainability while volunteers gain valuable horticultural skills from seed to display.	The project promotes horticultural excellence linked to local heritage themes, supports Ulster in Bloom and expands community participation through volunteer events and planter adoption. Free access to the polytunnel encourages learning and involvement. Increasing resilient perennials and reducing bedding plants will strengthen sustainability, lower water use and enhance year-round environmental impact.	This funding is vital for the transition from an all-bedding plants planters scheme to a more resilient mix planters scheme with resilient plants/bedding plants that will reduce the amount of water needed and provide an all year-round display. The maintenance will be carried out by volunteers of the Comber Community Garden plus local people that will adopt a planter, we hope this will increase the collaboration and pride of the residents.	We have agreement for our planters with DfI Roads and the Council.	Yes	The works will be carried out by Comber Community Garden volunteers. Filling pots with composts, taking cuttings, sowing, planting in the town planters, watering, feeding.	Yes	<b>£1250</b> 69% of total project	Approval
Conlig Community Regeneration Group	We are committed to protecting and enhancing Conlig's natural environment and fostering pride among residents. Working with Praxis and Conlig Presbyterian Church, we will create bright, colourful floral displays that reconnect the village with the green character lost through redevelopment. Previous In Bloom	Residents have consistently expressed concern about the loss of Conlig's natural environment, rising litter and a lack of accessible green spaces. Through regular consultation, we identified the need for a project that strengthens horticulture, environment and community. Using the new community garden and walkway as a base, volunteers will learn skills to grow and	Residents have expressed deep concern about the loss of Conlig's natural environment, rising litter and a lack of accessible green spaces, leaving many feeling isolated and disconnected. This project will restore colour and pride by creating floral displays throughout the village and teaching residents	The planters will be located on property owned by the Council, NIHE and Road Services. The only private properties where planters will be placed are the grounds of Conlig Presbyterian Church and the Conlig Orange	Yes	CCRG will work in partnership with Praxis and Conlig Presbyterian Church to deliver and maintain the village's summer floral displays. CCRG will inspect, repair and prepare all planters, supplying the compost, plants and materials needed. Praxis will create the displays, which will be placed throughout the village. All partners will	Yes	<b>£1250</b> 75% of total project.	Approval

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	<p>projects have strengthened community belonging, reduced isolation and given participants a sense of purpose. Many existing planters have now deteriorated and become unsafe, so replacing them will allow us to continue delivering vibrant displays and meaningful involvement for the Praxis community and local residents.</p>	<p>create floral displays, helping reconnect people with nature and each other. Working in partnership with Praxis and Conlig Presbyterian Church ensures wide engagement and meaningful involvement across the village.</p>	<p>horticultural skills at the community garden. Volunteers maintain planters year-round, ensuring sustainability and a lasting legacy. The project has already strengthened confidence, purpose and community belonging—particularly for Praxis participants and isolated seniors—and expanding it will further enhance wellbeing and the local environment.</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Hall. Both parties are supporting the project and have consented to the planters being placed on their property.</p>		<p>help water, check and maintain the planters during the season. At the end of summer, planters will be collected, cleaned and stored for reuse in future years.</p>			
<p>Donaghadee Community Development Association</p>	<p>Donaghadee's long-standing volunteer-led In Bloom programme continues to deliver exceptional results, contributing to first place in Ulster in Bloom, Gold in Britain in Bloom, and success in Tidy Towns and Pride of Place. Over 100 volunteers, schools and community groups support annual activity valued at £10,000. Funding</p>	<p><b>Horticultural Excellence:</b> Displays are designed and supervised by experienced volunteers to ensure professional standards of planting, maintenance and seasonal presentation. <b>Environmental Responsibility:</b> Planting includes nectar-rich species that support pollinators and urban biodiversity. Window boxes act as micro-habitats and ecological stepping stones across the town centre.</p>	<p>The town centre has little by way of green areas and benefits enormously from the annual displays. The funding supports infrastructure that is reused annually and embedded in a long-term volunteer programme. Skills developed through Pupils in Bloom ensure continuity and succession in community gardening. Replacement planters</p>	<p>Works take place in agreed public and town centre locations with the knowledge and support of relevant property owners and the Council's Parks Department</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>All works will be carried out by trained volunteers from DCDA under the supervision of experienced horticultural leads. Pupils will be supported at all times by school staff and volunteers in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Planting, installation and maintenance schedules are coordinated through the DCDA In Bloom committee.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>£1250</b>  100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>

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	will deliver two strands: the Pupils in Bloom programme, where Killard Special School students prepare 100 window boxes, and seafront restoration planting to replace storm-damaged barrels with pollinator-friendly displays, strengthening biodiversity and enhancing this key coastal area.	<p><b>Community Participation:</b> Over 100 volunteers contribute annually. The Pupils in Bloom programme provides inclusive participation for young people with additional needs and strengthens school-community links.</p> <p><b>Supporting Awards:</b> The project contributes directly to Donaghadee's continued success in regional and national In Bloom competitions, helping raise the borough's profile.</p>	restore permanent assets that will be maintained by volunteers in future seasons. The project strengthens Donaghadee's identity as an In Bloom town and builds capacity for future participation without increasing long-term funding dependency.						
Gifted enterprise	Main Street In Bloom will revitalise a key gateway by filling empty planters and baskets along Main Street, Bingham Lane and Hamilton Road with coordinated summer displays that complement existing council installations. This community-led project enhances the public realm, strengthens the heritage character of the Old Market House area and supports high-street regeneration by encouraging visitors	This project promotes horticultural excellence by refreshing existing pots, baskets and window boxes with new seasonal blooms. Environmental responsibility is central, with plant choices guided by biodiversity advice to support the borough's ecological goals. A dedicated volunteer team manages and maintains the displays, ensuring an inclusive, welcoming environment that encourages participation from all ages and abilities. By enhancing Bingham Lane—an area	Main Street requires aesthetic improvement due to building dilapidation and dereliction near the seafront. This project will refresh the area using environmentally conscious planters, filled seasonally to ensure year-round impact. By reusing existing containers and adopting sustainable planting, we extend the life of the infrastructure and reduce waste. Volunteer involvement in	We own the building	Yes	A dedicated volunteer team, supported by local businesses and start-ups based in the co-working space, will lead the installation and careful maintenance of planters, baskets and window boxes. Building on existing self-watering infrastructure, the project will create an eye-catching display at the entrance of this historic building. Through collective effort, the initiative enhances the area's appearance while demonstrating a	Yes	<b>£1250</b>  100% of total project.	Approval – with confirmed landowner permission for public footpath.

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	to linger and explore. Local volunteers will plant and maintain the displays, building skills, pride and shared ownership while creating a vibrant, welcoming environment for residents, businesses and event visitors.	affected by vandalism—the project strengthens pride in place and contributes meaningfully to the wider Ulster in Bloom objectives across the borough.	planting and maintenance fosters community participation and environmental stewardship, helping transform a neglected streetscape into a more welcoming, attractive and cared-for part of the town.			strong commitment to sustainability, community participation and the long-term improvement of Main Street’s public realm.			
Groomsport Village Association	The project will maintain and enhance Groomsport’s award-winning horticultural displays through new planting, compost and ongoing care. Volunteers will continue managing village walking routes, especially the beach paths, balancing natural character with safety while addressing dog-fouling issues. Shrub areas near the bug house and grassed sections around plantings will receive improved management, and the neglected Fairy Wood will be restored as a safe, imaginative play space. The group will enhance village	Much of the village’s In Bloom work was once delivered by the Council, but GVA now enhances these limited resources by maintaining footpaths, amenity areas and most floral displays. Welcoming entrance plantings foster civic pride and inspire residents to improve their own properties. Displays are designed to support biodiversity year-round, while paths are managed to protect natural grassland. All work is volunteer-led and widely valued, contributing to Groomsport winning the Best Kept Large Village Award in Northern Ireland.	Our vision is for Groomsport to continue being recognised for the best community planting scheme in Ards and North Down, and to aspire toward a Live Here Love Here Champions Award. Working in partnership with local organisations and business sponsors, we aim to build on our Best Kept Large Village success. Groomsport will remain a place residents are proud to live in and visitors love to experience, with community planting at its heart.	Yes	Yes	GVA has a well organised In Bloom delivery team with a award winning proof of past delivery. This team is in good order to deliver in 2026 in partnership with other community groups and businesses. We are currently in discussion with Ards and North Down council for a joint responsibility plan for planters.	Yes	<b>£1000</b>  77% of total project	Approval

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	entrances, seek dedicated storage, support Stand4Trees and continue the VE Day floral tribute.								
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce	This project will enhance Hollywood town centre by installing and maintaining high-quality wooden raised planters filled with seasonal, pollinator-friendly displays along the High Street. Designed to complement the town's heritage, the planters will soften the urban environment, increase footfall and support local businesses. Delivered through a strong partnership involving the Men's Shed, local schools, community gardening groups and businesses, the initiative promotes skills development, biodiversity and civic	This project promotes horticultural excellence through professionally designed, year-round planters using seasonal colour, evergreens and pollinator-friendly species. Sustainable practices—peat-free compost, native plants, drought-tolerant varieties and community composting—support local biodiversity and environmental goals. Strong community involvement underpins the project, with schools, businesses, the Men's Shed and gardening groups all contributing to planting, construction and maintenance. This inclusive, intergenerational approach fosters civic responsibility and a more	This project will strengthen pride in Hollywood by transforming the High Street with attractive, sustainable planting that creates a greener, more welcoming town centre. Visible involvement from businesses, schools, volunteers and community groups will foster shared ownership and responsibility, encouraging long-term care of the displays. Educational activities will build awareness of biodiversity and sustainable gardening, while intergenerational collaboration promotes inclusion.	This project involves adding window planters to the High Street so no major works involved.	no	The project's sustainability is ensured through shared responsibility and long-term community involvement. Business owners, community garden groups and volunteers will adopt planters for ongoing care, while local schools will participate annually as part of their environmental learning. The Men's Shed will support planter construction, maintenance and repairs, and seasonal replanting will be planned each year. Additional fundraising and business sponsorship will help secure future plant purchases and	yes	<b>£1250</b>  77% of total project	Approval with confirmation of landowners permission

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	pride. It aligns with council priorities and In Bloom principles, creating a sustainable, attractive and welcoming streetscape.	vibrant, welcoming streetscape for Hollywood.	With perennial planting and shared maintenance, the project supports cross-community connection and ensures a vibrant, cared-for streetscape year after year.			continued programme growth.			
Hollywood Shared Town	Dunville Heritage Community Garden, set within Redburn Country Park, is a partnership between Hollywood Shared Town and TCV to restore the historic 1880–1910 garden as a shared community resource. The project will conserve heritage features, including reinstating elements such as the original pergola, while delivering free workshops on propagation, therapeutic horticulture and garden maintenance. Plants and skills will be shared with local groups, including Crossroads Care Home and Redburn EOTAS. Alongside	This project supports In Bloom objectives by enhancing Hollywood’s public spaces with sustainable planting, including perennials, annuals and bulbs that promote biodiversity and celebrate local heritage. All work is carried out using organic, pollinator-friendly methods, helping community groups, care homes, housing associations and schools improve their green spaces responsibly. With over seventy volunteers involved in 2024/25—including corporate partners—the initiative strengthens wellbeing, environmental awareness and community cohesion. It builds lasting partnerships, increases ecological knowledge	This project forms part of a wider green-spaces initiative that engages the community in improving their environment and taking pride in their area. Funding will support annual and perennial planting and the development of heritage features within the garden. Two weekly Green Gyms, supported by the Men’s Shed, ANDBC and an expanding volunteer base—including asylum seekers and refugees—deliver year-round activity that strengthens wellbeing and integration. With growing visitor numbers, family	Activities will occur at Dunville Heritage Community Garden and the Enchanted Garden, with NIEA licences and permissions secured.	yes	Volunteers, schools, youth groups and corporate teams will use sustainable, hand-tool methods and heritage plants to enhance biodiversity and community wellbeing.	yes	<b>£1250</b>  88% of total project	Approval

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	<p>this, accessibility improvements will make the garden more inclusive, engaging and welcoming for all visitors.</p>	<p>and enhances the amenity for residents and visitors alike.</p>	<p>events, plant sales and accessibility improvements, the project is building long-term skills, sustainability and community ownership.</p>						
<p>Kilcooley Womens Centre</p>	<p>The In Bloom Project will transform the disused rear yard at Bangor Social Supermarket into a vibrant urban garden courtyard, replacing a neglected, antisocial space with a welcoming green oasis. Volunteers, staff and participants will help create and maintain floral displays, seating and seasonal planting, enhancing wellbeing and supporting therapeutic horticulture. The project complements council horticultural work, improves the appearance of the regenerated building, and provides a calming, nature-rich environment for individuals facing</p>	<p>This project supports Ards and North Down In Bloom by refreshing community planters, hanging baskets and tubs with vibrant summer displays, alongside installing a new bench extension in Kilcooley Square. It promotes horticultural quality, community participation and environmental responsibility through pollinator-friendly planting and volunteer involvement. By transforming a neglected, unappealing area, the project restores local pride and creates an attractive, sustainable public space. With landowner approval and a simple volunteer-led maintenance plan, it will</p>	<p>No vision – only photos</p>	<p>The property is owned by NIHE and are aware and support the In Bloom programme, as outlined within the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board which they sit with KWC and Council</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>Planting will be carried out by volunteers when plants etc have been delivered by suppliers. Regular maintenance / watering will be carried out by our team of volunteers</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>£1250</b>  100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>

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	significant mental health challenges.	deliver lasting community benefit.							
LADYBIRDS CHILDRENS SERVICES Children & Family Centre	<p>Old Belfast Road in Bloom</p> <p>The Old Belfast Road in Bloom project will install an additional children’s bench with floral furniture planters to brighten a currently run-down frontage and create an inviting space for families. Building on previous In Bloom support, it will extend existing horticultural infrastructure and complement the site’s</p>	<p>This project supports Ards and North Down In Bloom by enhancing the Old Belfast Road with durable, long-lasting planters that can be refreshed annually, ensuring long-term sustainability. It improves a run-down NIHE frontage with bright summer displays and contributes to the borough’s wider Ulster in Bloom efforts. By expanding existing floral infrastructure and supporting both summer and winter planting</p>	<p>Existing large self watering planters and baskets will be refilled and refreshed for the summer months, As we will be using sustainable planters, they can be filled annually to enable subsequent seasons and years to utilise the planters, usable in both summer and autumn seasons. It will enable us to include parents and children into the sustainable planting programme, by encouraging</p>	yes	Yes	<p>Plants and soil will be supplied locally, with volunteers installing and maintaining the new children’s bench planter alongside existing displays.</p>	Yes	<p><b>£1250</b></p> <p>100% of total project</p>	Approval

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	large hanging baskets. The project encourages children aged 2–11 to engage in planting and caring for displays, while refreshing tubs and planters with new seasonal flowers to promote early environmental responsibility and community pride.	programmes, the project strengthens horticultural quality, boosts local pride and enhances a highly visible public area.	volunteering in the installation and maintenance of the project						
Lawson Learners	To continue to plant areas of the Lawson Estate with shrubs, plants, bulbs, hanging baskets, with 2 boat displays To replace broken pots and planters and provide an area which can be enjoyed by everyone. A seating area can be used for reflection and some sensory plants will be incorporated.	The areas will continue to be enhanced by various displays. They attract a variety of insects, birds and hedgehogs. The area can be viewed and enjoyed by everyone at any time.	The group has planted 100s of bulbs over several years, We've planted willows to help with flooding . Many people have commented on the area and it has made a vast improvement to an otherwise blank, green area and a wildlife haven.	Yes	Yes	Volunteers of local community groups.	Yes	<b>£1000</b> 100% of total project	Approval
Lisbarnett and Lisbane Community Association	Lisbane has very limited green space, so this project focuses on brightening key public areas with refreshed planters and pots. Supported by In Bloom, we will replant existing containers with late spring and summer bedding, followed by spring	We have reviewed the 4 core objectives of the "In Bloom" funding Policy .  Our Annual Floral display will perfectly enhance the Area and promote pride in our village and increase environmental responsibility .	The funding will refresh existing planters and pots throughout Lisbane, brightening key locations and encouraging residents and workers to take pride in their village. With very limited community	Yes	Yes	Volunteers, and after schools club	Yes	<b>£1200</b> 100% of total project	Approval

Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

	<p>displays in early 2027 at the Community Centre, seating area and Old Post Office. The project encourages wide community participation, with ASC children, Senior Club members and volunteers all contributing to planting and helping to 'Brighten Lisbane'.</p>	<p>Other local establishments will be encouraged to participate in striving for horticultural excellence and to possibly enter in regional our village for regional awards .</p> <p>In addition our project will encourage community participation and will substantially contribute to the wellbeing of our residents and visitors .</p>	<p>planting space, these displays are essential to enhancing the local environment. Supported by In Bloom for several years, the project is delivered by an enthusiastic volunteer team and woven into our After School, Easter and Summer programmes, giving children meaningful hands-on gardening experience and strengthening community involvement.</p>						
<p>Mill Village Gardening Club</p>	<p>We are still attempting to upgrade the pond area, which had been left unfinished by the developer. This is a large area, and it will take at least another year to hedge around the pond, and to introduce planting to attract wildlife.</p>	<p>The Mill Village is listed as a site of significant architectural and industrial heritage, which the shareholders, as a limited company, are seeking to maintain to a high standard.</p>	<p>The club's work has been very dependent on the In Bloom grant. Our vision is one of renewal and extension of the planted environment to provide interest and activity for those residents who see value in working together to provide a vehicle for involving all residents in a project to enhance the total environment for the coming years.</p>	<p>Yes Land owned by Mill Village management.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Voluntary work by club members/residents using equipment purchased/hired as necessary.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>£<b>1200</b> 100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>

Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

<p>Millisle Health and Wellbeing Group</p>	<p>Across Millisle, volunteers will plant and maintain nine council-owned concrete containers and eleven Main Street floral displays, ensuring vibrant colour through summer, autumn and winter. The group also enhances village banks, manages weeds around containers and supports a local farmer by sowing wildflower seed along the main road, creating striking seasonal displays. Members are encouraged to grow seeds and young plants at home, helping build skills, pride and a stronger connection to the village's shared green spaces.</p>	<p>The Health &amp; Wellbeing Group Committee will ensure all guidelines, insurance and safety regulations are followed, continually monitoring volunteer and public safety at the hall and polytunnel. Funding enables us to buy plug plants and perennials to grow on and plant in our containers, providing bright displays throughout the year. We keep clear records, seek best value and maintain this ongoing project, which consistently uplifts passers-by. Our containers display In Bloom support, and wildflower planting attracts many insects and brings joy to the community.</p>	<p>Our vision is to supply a variety of colourful plants to the local area. We want to maintain the sense of pride in our village both for local residents and visitors. We find our displays encourage locals to admire and talk about the plants and that this encourages friendship and mindfulness and on asking questions people learn some new skills and ideas for their own gardens and they ask for cuttings</p>	<p>We hold leases for the ground where the polytunnel sits and for the hall, and we have council permission to plant all concrete planters around the village. We own some of the black planter boxes, while others were purchased by Millisle Community Association. Under the local Steering Group Committee, we agreed to care for the planters at the Baptist Church, a responsibility we have carried out for several years.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Volunteers grow seeds and plug plants in the polytunnel and distribute them to village planters for vibrant seasonal displays.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>£ 1200.59</b>  100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>
<p>Portaferry In Bloom</p>	<p>Portaferry In Bloom will plant and maintain three large shrub beds, grassed areas and key entrances across the village, along with 42 planters along the</p>	<p>By planting and maintaining highly visible non-council public areas, Portaferry In Bloom helps make the Borough—and Portaferry in particular—an attractive, welcoming place to live, work and</p>	<p>By publicly showcasing attractive and biodiverse schemes it is hoped members of the public will be inspired to replicate some elements in their own</p>	<p>DOCUMENT IS CORRUPT – to send end of March</p>	<p>DOCUMENT IS CORRUPT – to send end of March</p>	<p>DOCUMENT IS CORRUPT – to send end of March</p>	<p>DOCUMENT IS CORRUPT – to send end of March</p>	<p><b>Total Requested</b> <b>£1250</b>  100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval  Requesting fuel for equipment</p>

Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

	<p>Shore Front to create a vibrant welcome for residents and the many visitors arriving by ferry. Planting choices support pollinators, biodiversity and sustainability. A programme of free, seasonal nature-themed workshops will engage around 100 intergenerational participants each time, extending skills, knowledge and environmental awareness into local households and strengthening the work of Portaferry In Bloom.</p>	<p>visit. We prioritise biodiversity, reducing chemicals and plastics, and have installed self-watering tower planters to improve water efficiency and reduce run-off. We recycle pots and repurpose flower buckets, with local cafés saving coffee grounds for compost and slug deterrent. Visible volunteering strengthens community pride, while our new community garden supports “grow to eat” activities for local residents.</p>	<p>planting especially in the residential areas and thus enhance areas not managed by Portaferry In Bloom. We will also promote the personal and community benefits, both mental and physical, of engaging with nature and our environment. PIB organise workshops and seasonal activities for residents to raise our public profile and opportunities to volunteer thus increasing our pool of volunteers to continue the valuable community contribution of Portaferry In Bloom in future years.</p>						
<p>Portaferry Regeneration Ltd</p>	<p>The Brewery Yard Hub is a vital economic and community asset, supporting thirteen small businesses and contributing to Portaferry’s town-centre vibrancy. PRL has already improved the building’s energy efficiency and community room, and now aims to transform the</p>	<p>The Brewery Yard project directly supports the horticultural, environmental, and community objectives of Ards &amp; North Down In Bloom.  A new planting scheme of native Irish trees, shrubs, and pollinator friendly perennials will enhance horticultural quality while increasing biodiversity in a sheltered town centre location.</p>	<p>The In Bloom funding will help transform Brewery Yard into a greener, more welcoming and environmentally responsible gateway to Portaferry. Native trees, shrubs and pollinator-friendly planting will soften the hard landscape, boost biodiversity and create an attractive outdoor space for businesses, visitors</p>	<p>Portaferry Regeneration Ltd confirms full approval for the proposed works, as Brewery Yard is wholly owned and managed by PRL. The organisation is responsible for the site’s upkeep, development</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>The planting and enhancement works at Brewery Yard will be delivered through a partnership approach that combines professional expertise with community involvement. A local gardener will lead the installation of the wall mounted planters, prepare the beds, and carry out the initial planting of native trees, shrubs,</p>	<p>Yes – no suppliers</p>	<p><b>£1250</b>  <b><u>54% of total project</u></b></p>	<p>Approval – with stipulations  refreshments included in misc costings – not fundable.</p>

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In Bloom funding 2026

	<p>south-facing courtyard into a biodiverse, welcoming outdoor space. A planting scheme using native trees, shrubs and pollinator-friendly perennials will enhance ecology, visual appeal and civic pride. This project aligns with In Bloom objectives, strengthens regeneration efforts and reinforces Portaferry's identity as an environmentally conscious, community-driven town.</p>	<p>Environmentally, the project promotes sustainable landscaping, habitat creation, and reduced carbon impact through softening hard surfaces and supporting wildlife.</p> <p>Community involvement is central: tenants, volunteers, and local groups will be invited to assist in planting and ongoing care, fostering pride of place, strengthening social connections, and creating a more welcoming, attractive space for residents, visitors, and businesses.</p>	<p>and community users. PRL will involve volunteers, tenants and local groups in planting and seasonal care, supported by a local gardener to ensure long-term maintenance. This partnership approach will sustain the improvements and strengthen Brewery Yard as a community-led, environmentally focused hub.</p>	<p>and long-term stewardship, ensuring all improvements support environmental enhancement and sustainable microbusiness growth. As a dedicated enterprise and community hub, Brewery Yard can progress the project without restriction. All planned enhancements align with PRL's strategic objectives and have been formally endorsed by the Board as part of its ongoing regeneration programme.</p>		<p>perennials, and seasonal displays. Their horticultural knowledge will ensure highquality, sustainable planting suited to the Yard's microclimate.</p>			
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Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

<p>Portavogie Regeneration Forum</p>	<p>This intergenerational project brings young and older residents together to build relationships, learn horticultural skills and enhance the appearance of Portavogie. Building on work begun in 2016, the programme includes planting with Portavogie Primary School—teaching P7 pupils to grow potatoes, tomatoes and bedding plants—followed by summer maintenance and winter planting. Each year an eco-planter is added to the village, and East Coast Day Opportunities helps maintain another, giving young adults meaningful ways to contribute to their community and keep Portavogie in bloom year-round.</p>	<p>In the several years that PRF has received funding from 'In Bloom' we have demonstrated that we meet the core objectives of Ards and North Down 'In Bloom'. We have enhanced the area in terms of how the village looks aesthetically, while developing skills of our residents. We have also increased community spirit and volunteering. Helping to inspire children to grow their own food. Produce has been distributed to school children and elderly neighbours surrounding the school area. We have sustained the project for over seven years while expanding each time. We have always sought permission from landowners and our <u>governance is excellent.</u></p>	<p>Portavogie has strong tourism potential, but some areas suffer from dereliction, so this project aims to enhance the village's appearance and encourage wider community pride. Building on previous years, volunteers supply plants and pots along key roads and add a new recycled eco-planter annually. Young people from the primary school and East Coast Day Opportunities help plant and maintain displays across the village. The project consistently brings a feel-good factor, inspires more residents to get involved and has potential to expand along additional roads and the full walking trail.</p>	<p>As in previous years, we will receive approval from business and landowners, as this is very much a community partnership. This consent will be in writing. No hazards or obstructions will be created as a result of our initiative.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Explain how the works will be carried out and by whom. The resources will be ordered by the committee of PRF using our financial procedures. The practical work will be carried out by PRF members, volunteers, school pupils and young adults from East Coast Day Opportunities</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>£1250</b> 100% of total project</p>	<p><b>Approval</b> – based on pending landowner approval</p>
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Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

<p>Redburn Loughview Community Forum</p>	<p>This project will enhance the Redburn and Loughview area by expanding our community growing space with new pollinator-friendly beds, sensory features and sustainable planting. Building on Project Seedling, it introduces perennials, edible beds and accessible raised planters, alongside composting, habitat creation and rainwater collection. Volunteers from across age groups—including over-50s, women’s groups, families and local schools—will take part in planting and maintenance. As an ONUS Safe Place, the garden offers a welcoming environment that strengthens wellbeing, biodiversity and long-term community stewardship.</p>	<p>Project Sapling directly supports Ards and North Down In Bloom by improving horticultural quality, environmental sustainability and community participation. New pollinator-friendly planting, perennial borders, edible beds and accessible raised planters will enhance the Redburn and Loughview area using peat-free, environmentally responsible materials. Biodiversity will be strengthened through nectar-rich planting, composting, water collection and wildlife habitats. Over-50s volunteers, women’s groups and intergenerational participants will take part in planting and maintenance, reducing isolation, building skills and creating a shared, inclusive community asset.</p>	<p>Vision for <b>Project Sapling</b></p> <p>This project will enhance the Redburn and Loughview area with colourful, biodiverse planting and accessible sensory features that improve wellbeing for all ages. Funding will expand community beds, refresh tired spaces and introduce new pollinator-friendly planting. Our established volunteer groups—including over-50s, women’s groups and intergenerational participants—will maintain the space year-round, supported by our ONUS-registered Safe Place approach. With perennials, composting, water collection and reused materials, the project creates a sustainable, long-lasting community asset that strengthens pride, connection and environmental stewardship.</p>	<p>Yes - NIHE</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Volunteers Staff and Community Groups.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>£<b>1250</b> 100% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>
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Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

<p>Rooted in the Dee</p>	<p>“Rooted in Bloom 26” will strengthen our community garden by expanding soft-fruit, vegetable and pollinator planting using organic and heritage Irish seeds. Funding will support biodiversity, add seating, protect seedlings with netting and increase composting to reduce waste and enrich soil. The project will also produce local food, host community events, improve signage and build partnerships with groups focused on wellbeing and climate action. Delivered entirely by dedicated volunteers, the grant will energise our inclusive garden and build on its growing success.</p>	<p>This project will secure the long-term future of the garden by replacing old beds with durable materials, improving paths and adding seating, transforming a once-neglected dumping area into a valued community space. It supports In Bloom objectives by reusing materials, composting, reducing carbon emissions and promoting chemical-free growing. Organic fruit, vegetables and pollinator planting will enhance the local environment, while an expanding volunteer base strengthens community participation. Working alongside DCDA and Dee in Bloom, the project will build partnerships and horticultural capacity across Donaghadee.</p>	<p>The grant will enable Rooted in the Dee to realise our plans to make the garden more resilient for future weather extremes by providing a shelter belt, reach new audiences, tackle the biodiversity and climate crises and build community. Last year the garden attracted more than 100 visitors including children and the elderly.</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>Volunteers</p>	<p>Yes – second hand put as supplier.</p>	<p><b>£1250</b> 100% of funding</p>	<p>Approval</p>
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Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

<p>St Patrick's GAC, Portaferry</p>	<p>This project will enhance the club grounds by transforming underused grass verges and stone areas into a more vibrant, biodiverse and welcoming community space. New self-watering planters, seasonal displays and a native wildflower strip will boost visual appeal and support pollinators. Smaller planters around the clubhouse will further brighten the site. Delivered by club volunteers with guidance from Portaferry in Bloom and a local landscaper, the project promotes environmental responsibility, strengthens community ownership and broadens the use of the grounds beyond sport.</p>	<p>This project will transform the approaches to St Patrick's GAC Park with large entrance planters and a wildflower boundary that boosts biodiversity and creates a vibrant welcome. Pollinator-friendly perennials, seasonal colour and peat-free, water-efficient planting will ensure long-lasting impact. Rainwater capture, composting and a no-pesticide approach reinforce environmental responsibility. With over 300 weekly users, the enhanced entrances will lift the whole site, while delivery by club volunteers and Portaferry in Bloom builds skills, confidence and community ownership.</p>	<p>The project is designed for low-maintenance longevity: hardy perennials, drought tolerant species, mulch to suppress weeds and irrigation where needed. We will run a seasonal volunteer rota for watering, deadheading and litter-picking, and hold an annual spring "plant-up" day with families and juvenile teams. Replacement plants will be budgeted each year from club fundraising and small sponsorships, ensuring the displays are sustained beyond the grant term.</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>Installation will be carried out by the club's volunteers (including a local landscaper) with initial support from Portaferry in Bloom.</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p><b>£1248.34</b> 99.9% of total project</p>	<p>Approval</p>
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## Appendix 1

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West Winds Development Association	We are seeking funding to install six raised beds across three paved areas in the West Winds estate, enhancing spaces used by elderly and vulnerable residents. Working with NIHE and Walkers, we will select sensory, seasonal and low-maintenance planting, supported by WWDA volunteers who will engage nearby residents. The beds build on several years of environmental improvements and link to future dementia-friendly garden plans. This project will create welcoming, colourful spaces that encourage social connection, horticultural interest and wider community participation.	The project will enhance horticultural learning by helping residents explore plant care, sensory gardening and seasonal choices, supported by experienced WWDA volunteers. Environmentally, the three paved areas will be transformed into attractive focal points that encourage walking, connect to wider greenway plans and maximise impact through partnership working. Community involvement will grow as more residents join planting and maintenance, reducing isolation, building pride and strengthening understanding of dementia-friendly approaches. These improvements will promote the West Winds as a welcoming, inclusive and environmentally active estate.	WWDA aims to continue improving the estate's outdoor spaces, using this project as a stepping stone toward our planned Dementia Friendly Garden. The raised beds will enhance the appearance of the paved areas, creating welcoming places for residents and visitors to sit, chat and relax. Volunteers will engage neighbouring households, encouraging involvement and identifying local residents to help with upkeep. With training and ongoing support, WWDA will ensure the beds are maintained long-term, strengthening community pride, inclusion and wellbeing.	Yes - NIHE	Yes	WWDA has identified a supplier to build and install the raised beds, which will be placed on the paved areas with agreement from NIHE and neighbouring residents. Planting will be carried out jointly by WWDA volunteers and local residents, with support from NIHE. Ongoing maintenance will be shared, with at least one resident from each area encouraged to take a lead role. WWDA will provide training, advice and summer support to build confidence in caring for the beds and understanding native planting.	Yes	<b>£1250</b> 46% of total project	Approval
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## Appendix 1

In Bloom funding 2026

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**\*Comber Chamber of Commerce - Suggested Letter of Offer Condition****Additional Information Required Prior to Release of Funding**

Before any payment can be processed, the Council requires the following information to allow full assessment and reporting:

**A detailed breakdown of all project costs**, including itemised expenditure, supplier costs (where applicable), and confirmation of any match funding or in-kind contributions.

Unclassified

## ITEM 8

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
	If multiple:
Meeting	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting	08 April 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Environmental Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Parks and Cemeteries
Report title	Notice of Motion 689 - Feasibility of Permitting Wooden Memorials
Attachments	Link to Council agreed 'Procedures, Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries': <a href="http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/cemeteries">www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/cemeteries</a>
File Reference (if applicable)	NOM 689
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Burial Grounds Regulations (NI) 1992
Resource Implications	Budget and Staffing Narrative: extra inspections required
Screening Requirements	<i>The Council will commit to consider the implication of all reports under the categories of Section 75, Rural Needs, Data Protection, Climate and Sustainability:</i>  Screening will be required if agreed
Link to Corporate Plan Priority and Outcome	Priority 3: Social 5. Safe, welcoming and inclusive communities that are flourishing If multiple:

## Background

In November 2025 the following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council:

*“That Council task officers to bring forward a report on the possibly of permitting wooden memorials at our cemeteries as part of regulations going forward.”*

At present the Council agreed document ‘Procedures, Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries’ does not permit the erection of any wooden memorials. Below outlines the practical, regulatory, environmental, legal, and operational considerations of such a policy change, with reference to the Burial Ground Regulations (NI) 1992.

## Key Issues

Councils in NI operate under the Burial Grounds Regulations (NI) 1992, which require cemetery authorities to ensure safe conditions for visitors and staff.

The installation of Wooden Memorials will require a regulatory approach and an application process. While generally constructed from a more perishable material than conventional stone memorials, there would still be a form of foundation required to ensure stability and minimise structural failure.

Wooden memorials deteriorate more rapidly than stone because of exposure to moisture, frost, fungal decay and insect damage. Burial Grounds Regulations (NI) 1992 emphasise the need to ensure memorials remain structurally sound and safe due to historical health and safety incidents linked to unstable memorials.

Memorial safety is a statutory duty and requires memorials to be stable and built to specific standards for long-term safety. Council currently carry out an industry approved inspection regime and the introduction of wooden memorials will need to be included in this regime but with a more regular inspection programme due to the perishable nature of the construction material. This will be at an additional cost to Council. Rapid degradation increases the risk of collapse, making wooden memorials potentially more maintenance-intensive for the grave plot owner. As all memorials are subject to a robust application and approval process, significant risk may be mitigated by the introduction of size limitations and installation requirements, similar to those of stone memorials.

Council will potentially face higher maintenance demands when memorials degrade prematurely. Ensuring safety (removal, repair or repositioning) would require additional officer time, inspections and possible costs recoverable from grave owners.

Council maintains cemetery “lawn-style” layouts with consistent memorial materials, usually stone. Wooden markers would introduce visual inconsistency, not in keeping with the aesthetics of the cemetery layout. As referred to previously, all memorials are subject to a robust application and approval process, aesthetics of the cemetery layout may be controlled by the introduction of size limitations.

Wooden memorials can be seen as sustainable if sourced responsibly. However, untreated timber has limited lifespan; treated timber may raise environmental concerns regarding chemical leaching. In addition, wood is more vulnerable to vandalism (fire, carving, breaking).

Such risks may mean increased reporting, repairs and possible insurance implications. While memorial maintenance falls with the grave owner, Council would be the first point of contact regarding a memorial failure and responsible for ensuring the safety for all site users.

In the Council agreed document 'Procedures, Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries' Sections 31 and 32 is most relevant to this report. Section 31 clearly states that all headstones shall be of stone or other non-perishable material and shall be placed on a solid foundation and that Council does not permit the erection of any wooden memorials. In addition, headstones are not to exceed 1.371m in height, depending on headstone type. It also states that other items, other than the headstone, should be no more than 508mm. Section 32 states that each grave owner must keep the grave, monument or railing in good order and repair to the satisfaction of the Council, and should anyone fail to do so the Council may put in order and/or repair at the expense of the grave owner and refuse opening until the costs of such repairs or removal is paid.

Across Northern Ireland, Councils follow the Burial Grounds Regulations (NI) 1992, which set strict guidance on cemetery functions including memorial permissions. In Ards and North Down Borough Council the Council's cemetery rules do not expressly permit the erection of wooden memorials. To consider a change to the burial rules, an Equality Impact Assessment is required along with Committee approval.

Officers have reviewed a selection of other Councils regarding permitting wooden memorials in their current regulations. The findings are as follows:

**Antrim & Newtownabbey:** All such erections shall be of stone or other non-perishable material and shall be located only on the solid foundation. No reference to wooden memorials.

**Belfast City Council:** The Council's memorial management policy emphasises memorial stability, adherence to strict material and fixing standards, and the need to avoid memorial types that present safety risks. All memorials must be made of stone or another non-perishable material, such as granite. Temporary hardwood memorials are allowed only for the first year after burial with a height restriction of 76.2cm.

**Mid Ulster District Council:** The Council's cemetery management policy outlines detailed rules on memorial structures but restricts materials to those capable of meeting safety standards and long-term stability. All memorials/headstones must be made of stone or other non-perishable material such as granite. Temporary hardwood memorials can be erected but only for six months.

**Mid & East Antrim Borough Council:** The Council regulations similarly require durable materials and compliance with safety and working standards. All memorials and headstones must be made of stone or other non-perishable material such as granite. Temporary hardwood memorials can be erected but only for the first year, a height restriction of 110cm is in place.

**Derry City & Strabane District Council:** The Council regulations state that all memorials/headstones must be made of stone or other non-perishable material such as granite. No reference to wooden memorials.

**Fermanagh and Omagh District Council:** All memorials and memorial stones must be made of stone or other non-perishable material such as granite. No wooden memorials permitted.

**Lisburn and Castlereagh District Council:** Materials for Headstones/Tablets: All such erections shall be of stone or other non-perishable material and shall be located only on the solid foundation. No reference to wooden memorials.

**Newry Mourne and Down District Council:** All memorials and memorial stones must be made of stone or other non-perishable material such as granite. Temporary hardwood memorials can be erected.

### **Next Steps**

The Council agreed document 'Procedures, Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries' is due for review in September 2027, during the consultation period Officers will assess demand for wooden memorials.

### **Summary**

In the Council document 'Procedures, Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries' Section 31 states that all headstones shall be of stone or other non-perishable material and shall be placed on a solid foundation and that Council does not permit the erection of any wooden memorials. In addition, headstones are not to exceed 1.371m in height, depending on headstone type. Although, some councils do permit wooden headstones this is a temporary measure and height restrictions apply.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council Notes this report.

Unclassified

## ITEM 9

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
	If multiple:
Meeting	Environment Committee
Date of Meeting	04 March 2026
Responsible Director	Director of Environmental Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Parks and Cemeteries
Report title	Notice of Motion 677 - Proposal for Public Hire Bicycle Scheme
Attachments	n/a
File Reference (if applicable)	NOM 677
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Resource Implications	None
	Narrative:
Screening Requirements	<i>The Council will commit to consider the implication of all reports under the categories of Section 75, Rural Needs, Data Protection, Climate and Sustainability:</i>  Screening of decision not required
Link to Corporate Plan Priority and Outcome	Priority 3: Social 4. A vibrant, attractive, sustainable Borough for citizens, visitors, businesses and investors  If multiple:

## Background

In September 2025 the following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council:

*“That this Council produces a report to scope the potential of introducing a public hire bicycle scheme similar to Belfast Bikes for use across the new Greenway network. That the report outlines the benefits, risks, costs, potential partnerships and any funding opportunities including those provided through Department for Infrastructure [DfI] Active Travel to inform a Council decision on progressing such a scheme.”*

With the first Ards and North Down (AND) Greenway opening soon between Newtownards and Bangor, this Council can become a cycling Borough by prioritising active modes of transport for short journeys, that people usually drive but could easily cycle.

Not everyone has access to a bicycle or the means or willingness to invest in one, especially those who are only starting out or visiting the area. Public cycle-share schemes can bring significant benefits in these circumstances.



Cycling improves physical health and psychological wellbeing, and it saves money on fuel or public transport. Fewer motor vehicles mean reduced congestion, fewer collisions, lower emissions, and improved air quality.

Providing bicycles is known to positively influence behaviour and the environment by increasing micromobility through active travel and using nudge techniques such as bicycles, active travel challenges, and apps that inform and motivate people to cycle.

**Key Issues**

Public cycle share schemes fall into two models: docked and dockless, as illustrated in table below:

<p>Docked at fixed docking stations</p>	<p>Dockless model with bikes parked out of the way in designated areas on pavements and at other points</p>
	

With a variety of schemes around the UK, currently managed by nine different operators. The most well-known local example is the Belfast bike hire scheme.

Belfast Bikes Scheme

The scheme has operated since April 2015 and continues to use a subscription and usage fee model, with pricing set by Belfast City Council to maintain affordability and accessibility. The scheme was established with £700,000 of external funding, delivering 30 docking stations and 300 bikes. A strategic review in 2020 identified: consistent growth in users and rentals and strong public support, with clear evidence of modal shift and improved health outcomes. In 2025, a new provider, Beryl, partnered with Frank and Honest Coffee Company to install 60 docking bays, with a 300-bike and 100-e-bike serviced network, expanding greener journey options across Belfast.

Edinburgh Dockless Cycle Hire Scheme

Launched in September 2025, this scheme introduced 50 electric bikes across an 8sq km zone. Key features include: No cost to Edinburgh Council; Bikes rented via the Voi app; Fares: £0.11 per minute (£6.60 per hour), with bundles and subscriptions available; dockless model with designated parking points; and improved bike durability and better technology to manage coverage.

Active Travel Hubs

The first Active Travel Hub to open in Northern Ireland is located in East Belfast and is a base for The Walk Wheel and Cycle Trust (formally Sustrans) to encourage commuters and locals in East Belfast to try travel alternatives, such as public transport or cycling and walking along the Comber Greenway. The project runs from an eye-catching container hub based in the new community pocket park in the East Side Urban Villages area. A similar scheme was later launched in Derry-Londonderry. The project, funded by the Urban Villages Initiative, regenerated a previously derelict site, transformed with landscaping, planting, street furniture and three shipping

containers for various uses, including the Active Travel Hub and a cycling café. The venue delivers lessons in cycling for all ages and abilities, journey planning for cyclists, bicycle repair and skill development.

It should be noted that the East Belfast Active Travel Hub is located at the busy intersection of two Greenways.

As the AND Greenway Network continues to develop, an opportunity exists to potentially connect Beryl bikes from Belfast along the Greenways, creating a wider cycling loop and improving access for visitors.

### Risks and Considerations

- Choosing the right mix of modes, Pedal bikes; E-bikes; E-scooters etc, to match the objectives and therefore maximise active travel and the users move away from car usage.
- Providing a dense network of docking stations [300-500m apart] within existing cycling infrastructure for connectivity.
- Vandalism of publicly accessible bikes, ensure robust bike design and considerate docking locations.
- Costs of installation and operation. Installation of docking stations has an estimated cost of £35,000-40,000 per station and could include 12 docks each with 10 bikes. Dockless system with provider such as the Voi model runs at no cost to Council.
- Operation including maintenance and effective stocking of popular docking stations.
- Tariff pricing model should be designed to be inclusive and has potential to be made up of 3 price plans: pay as you go, casual and annual.
- Subsidy income is generated through subscriptions and usage fees, with pricing kept affordable to encourage uptake.

Potential partnership opportunities through sponsorship could involve associating the image of one or more companies to the service, exploiting the values and visibility offered by the public bike service in cities or towns. This includes advertising on the bikes; operational vehicles; digital media; naming of docking stations by local businesses.

### Funding Opportunities

The Belfast Bike scheme was developed as part of the Belfast City Council Physical Investment Programme launched in 2012. The Department for Infrastructure (Department for Regional Development in 2012) provided initial capital funding for the scheme as part of their Active Travel Demonstration Projects budget.

While funding of this nature does not currently exist, the launch of the new DFI Active Travel plan may provide opportunity in future. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 underscores the crucial role of active travel in addressing climate goals. It mandates the development of sectoral plans for transport which set a minimum spend on active travel from the overall transport budgets of 10%. The plan aims to maximise the benefits of this increased investment, creating a seamless, integrated network that allows more people, regardless of age or ability, to choose active travel for many of their everyday journeys.

A new bike hire scheme for Ards and North Down could of course be funded by Council which would be subject to an approved business case and budget availability.

The Active Travel Hub detailed in this report was developed using a central government funding stream. While a similar funding stream is not currently available, this may change in future and Officers will continue to actively pursue such funding. A similar scheme to the Active Travel Hub.

Opportunity does exist to advertise the operation of the service through and Expression of Interest and allow a contracted company to operate the service at no cost to Council, similar to the scheme described in Edinburgh. However, the installation of infrastructure etc, would be unlikely to attract interest at this stage of the AND Greenway project.

### **Next Steps**

Council is currently in the process of developing a Cycling Masterplan for the Borough, which is being compiled by the Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust. This Masterplan will consider how to encourage Active Travel in the Borough, enhance connectivity, improve accessibility, support sustainable tourism and contribute to net zero goals. There will be an Action Plan suggesting what infrastructure is required at a settlement level to enable these aims to be delivered as well as wider recommendations to support behavioural change and modal shift.

Council also provides a range of activities to promote and enhance the use of community trails and Greenways by residents and visitors. This is achieved through the provision of a range of activities that increase participation in active travel, physical education and mental wellbeing.

Activities such as Park Pedal, Teens on Wheels and the disability bicycle scheme at Bangor Sportsplex, all contribute to maximising the usage of the new Greenways network in Ards and North Down. These activities will continue on the new AND Greenways with continued engagement and understanding on user needs. This may, in future, lead to the conclusion that active travel Hubs or similar would be beneficial.

Council will also continue to deliver the Newtownards to Comber Greenway through the current capital project, actively working with partners in DFI to link Greenway sections and cycle paths.

### **Summary**

While it is a good news story that the first phase of the AND Greenway network is nearing completion, it is also noted that a large project remains to connect the network directly to the existing Comber Greenway and to fully connect urban sections of the new route, in partnership with DFI. While a similar scheme to the Belfast Bikes could be introduced it would not be feasible to do it at present, a rental scheme will be considered as Council progresses our Greenway network.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council Notes the above report.