

# Screening Form

- 1. Is this a** Strategy
- 2. Name of Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service** NOM Visually Aware Borough
- 3. Reference** 402
- 4. Category of Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service** New

**5. Please provide a description of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service**

The following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council in April 2025 meeting:

That this Council recognises the challenges faced by those who are blind and partially sighted and commits to working to make Ards and North Down a Visually Aware Borough. This Council recognises the expertise of the RNIB, their vision for a world where blind and partially sighted people participate equally, and their goal of breaking down the barriers for blind and partially sighted people in everyday life. Tasks officers to bring forward a report outlining what processes we already have in place and identifying what measures the Council can take to ensure we are a welcoming, visually aware Borough.

**6. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.**

To break down Barriers for blind and partially sighted individuals.

- 7. Who initiated or wrote the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?** NOM - Cll Gilmour
- 8. Who is responsible for the implementation of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?** Head of Administration
- 9. Is this policy affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities?** No

# Equality

## **1. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?**

Yes

### **1a. If Yes, which Section 75 categories are expected to benefit?**

Disability

### **1b. How are they expected to benefit?**

The report outlines a range of strategic improvements the council could introduce to benefit those blind or partially sighted individuals

## **2. Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?**

Yes

### **2a. If yes, are they:**

Financial - is it dependent on financial support of Council or another named Body or Organisation?

## **3. Who are the internal/external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?**

Staff, Service Users, Other Public Sector organisations, Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions, Potential Visitors

## **4. Is this policy associated with any other Council Policy (or Policies)?**

Yes

### **4a. If yes, please state the related Policy (or Policies)**

Equality Scheme  
Equality Action Plan  
Disability Action Plan

## **5. Does this policy affect Internal or External users?**

Both

Evidence to help inform the Section 75 screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

## **6. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?**

Disability

### **Disability evidence**

The NI Census data showed that 25.3% of people living in Ards and North Down had a Long-term health problem or disability.

11.1% of the population with long-term health problem or disability which limits activities a lot by LGD (Census 2021). The NISRA statistic show that Among all the LGD in NI, Ards and North Down also ranked one of three highest proportion of residents with 'Blindness or partial sight loss' (2nd or 1.96%)

The RNIB Sight Loss Data tool suggests that the estimated total number of people living with sight loss in Ards and North Down (2022) is 5,950

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and

priorities for each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy / decision?

**7. Please provide details of different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the categories**

Life with a visual impairment presents a spectrum of experiences, from individuals with partial sight who possess significant residual vision to those living with total blindness, each navigating the world with unique adaptive strategies. Many report a profound impact on their independence and spontaneity, as everyday outings and tasks often demand meticulous planning or assistance. This constant negotiation with an often-inaccessible world leads to pervasive feelings of frustration and exhaustion, stemming from challenges like unreadable packaging, difficult public transport, and a scarcity of accessible digital content. Consequently, a significant number experience social isolation and loneliness, a direct result of barriers to social interaction and a lack of understanding from sighted peers. They frequently encounter misconceptions and stigma, facing patronising attitudes, unwanted stares, or even disbelief about their disability, particularly for those with partial sight whose impairment isn't immediately apparent. Furthermore, interacting with mainstream systems like benefits or healthcare can be a struggle due to inaccessible communication and processes.

**8. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Religious belief?**

None

**9. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Political opinion?**

None

**10. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Racial group?**

None

**11. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Age?**

None

**12. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Marital status?**

None

**13. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Sexual orientation?**

None

**14. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Men and women generally?**

None

**15. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Disability?**

Major

**15a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Disability**

Positive overall Impact on Equality of Opportunity:

The policy aims to dismantle systemic and environmental barriers that currently limit the opportunities of blind and partially sighted individuals. By improving access to information, enhancing independent mobility, promoting inclusive policy-making, and fostering better understanding, it directly contributes to:

Reduced Disadvantage: Minimising the "substantial disadvantage" faced by visually impaired people in accessing services, employment, education, and social participation, as defined by the Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the DDA.

Greater Independence: Empowering individuals to lead more self-determined lives without excessive reliance on others.

Increased Participation: Enabling full and meaningful participation in all aspects of community life.

Improved Well-being: Reducing the frustration, isolation, and stress associated with living in an inaccessible environment, thereby enhancing overall quality of life.

In essence, this policy moves Ards and North Down Borough closer to fulfilling its legal and moral obligations under the Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the DDA by ensuring that blind and partially sighted individuals have genuinely equal opportunities to thrive within their community.

**16. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Dependants?**

None

**17. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? If Yes, provide details. If No, provide reasons.**

**Religious belief**

N/A

**Political opinion**

N/A

**Racial group**

N/A

**Age**

N/A

**Marital Status**

N/A

**Sexual orientation**

N/A

**Men and women generally**

N/A

**Disability**

This report outlines the various methods that can be considered to remove the barriers and promote equality of opportunity throughout council services.

**Dependants**

N/A

**18. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?**

None

**19. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?**

No

**19a. Please provide your reasons below**

This is not applicable to this NOM

## **Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006**

**20. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability?**

Yes

**20a. Provide details of opportunities identified**

The report identifies several key opportunities for Ards and North Down Borough to become more visually aware and welcoming for blind and partially sighted individuals. These opportunities fall into two main categories: those achievable within existing budgets and those requiring additional funding.

**Opportunities Within Existing Budgets**

**Comprehensive Training:** Implement mandatory sight loss awareness training for all council staff and councillors, with a specific focus on those involved in managing public bins. This training would include simulations or "blindfold walks," provided by the RNIB, to highlight the impact of poorly placed obstacles.

**Communication Auditing:** Collaborate with the RNIB to conduct a thorough audit of all council communications, including the website, publications, social media, videos, and meeting accessibility, to ensure they are fully accessible.

**Visual Accessibility Audits:** Arrange two further visual accessibility audits with elected members and the RNIB, specifically suggesting locations in Newtownards and a rural area within the Borough.

**Enhanced Website Accessibility:** Conduct regular accessibility audits involving blind and partially sighted users to identify and resolve usability issues, ensuring all new website content adheres to the highest accessibility standards.

**Wider Buddy Card Scheme Promotion:** Work with the RNIB to promote the Buddy Card scheme more widely, ensuring all eligible individuals are aware of it, and explore expanding its coverage to a broader range of Council services and events.

**Policy Review:** Undertake a review of specific council policies to guarantee their inclusivity for blind or visually impaired individuals.

**21. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life?**

Yes

**21a. Provide details of opportunities identified**

**Opportunities Requiring Dedicated Budget Allocation**

**Assistive Technology Provision:** Invest in assistive technology like CloverBook Pro devices to be placed in main Council reception areas. This would allow visually impaired visitors to easily magnify, adjust contrast on, or have read aloud crucial documents, forms, and planning materials. The CloverBook Pro also offers multi-language text-to-speech and HDMI connectivity for larger screens.

**Business Best Practice Leaflet:** Create a "Business Best Practice" leaflet to educate local businesses on legal obligations regarding pavement obstructions. This resource would provide clear guidelines for placing bins, goods, and signage, emphasizing maintaining a minimum 1.8m (ideally 2m) clear pavement width and recommended bin placement/retrieval times. This could also serve as an educational tool for Waste Services and Environmental Health officers.

**"Bin Smart" Household Initiative:** Implement a "Bin Smart" initiative through information leaflets or eye-catching stickers directly attached to wheelie bins on collection day, targeting areas with known obstruction issues. This effort could be aligned with the existing Considerate Parking campaign for maximum impact.

**Joint Council-RNIB Accessibility Working Group:** Establish a Joint Council-RNIB Accessibility Working

Group with other interested councils, following the lead of Derry City and Strabane Council, to ensure consistent implementation of proposed actions and maximize collective impact on accessibility and inclusion.

## **Additional Considerations**

### **22. Are there any potential impacts of the policy / decision (positive or negative) on people with multiple identities?**

No

## **Monitoring Arrangements**

### **23. Outline what data you could collect in the future to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties**

By combining quantitative and qualitative monitoring methods, Ards and North Down Borough can effectively track progress, identify areas for further improvement, and ensure their initiatives genuinely enhance the lives of blind and partially sighted individuals.

**Establish Baselines:** Before implementing any changes, collect baseline data for all relevant metrics. This allows for accurate comparison and measurement of impact.

**Regular Reporting:** Implement a system for regular reporting on all KPIs to relevant stakeholders (e.g., Council, RNIB, visually impaired community).

**Feedback Loops:** Crucially, establish clear and accessible channels for visually impaired individuals to provide ongoing feedback. This could include dedicated email addresses, phone lines, online forms, or regular community forums. This qualitative data is invaluable for understanding lived experience.

**Annual Review:** Conduct an annual comprehensive review of all accessibility initiatives, evaluating their overall impact against the strategic goal of making Ards and North Down a "truly welcoming and visually aware Borough."

**Case Studies/Success Stories:** Collect and highlight specific success stories or case studies that demonstrate the positive impact of the implementations on individuals' lives. This provides powerful qualitative evidence.

### **25. On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy/decision is**

Screened Out - No negative impacts

Email

sian.mcconnell-porter@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

## Screening Panel Comments

# Appendix - Religious Belief

## Religious belief (Internal)

\* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

	Catholic	Protestant & other Christian	Other religions	Total
<b>Males F/T</b>	33	388	34	425
	8%	84%	8%	100%
<b>Males P/T</b>	*	*	*	8
	25%	63%	13%	100%
<b>Females F/T</b>	58	223	6	287
	20%	78%	2%	100%
<b>Females P/T</b>	12	20	5	35
	32%	54%	14%	100%
<b>Total</b>	105	606	46	757
	14%	80%	6%	100%

## Religious belief (External)

The Northern Ireland Census 2021 (NISRA) statistics for the Borough area show the religious group the person belongs to or for people with no current religion their religious group of upbringing. People with no current religion and no religion of upbringing are labelled 'None'.

On Census Day 2021 in Northern Ireland just under one person in five (19.0%) either had 'no religion' (17.4%) or 'religion not stated' (1.6%). Nearly one person in three in Ards and North Down (32.1%) had 'no

religion' or 'religion not stated' On census day 2021 bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 45.7% of the population were either Catholic or brought up as a Catholic, while 43.5% were recorded as 'Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related)'. Again, bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 1.5% of the population are classified as 'other religions' and 9.3% of the population identified that they neither belonged to nor were brought up in a religion. This points to the increasingly secular nature of the population ('None').

	<b>All usual Residents</b>	<b>Catholic</b>	<b>Protestant and other Christian Religions</b>	<b>Other Reglions</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Ards and North Down</b>	163,659	22,912	111,288	1,636	27,822
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	1,903,178	875,461	818,366	19,031	171,286

	<b>Ards and North Down</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>
<b>All Usual residents</b>	163,659	1,903,178
<b>Catholic</b>	18,003	799,334
<b>Presbyterian</b>	47,461	323,540
<b>Church of Ireland</b>	22, 912	228,381
<b>Methodist</b>	6,546	38,063
<b>Other Chrtistian Religions</b>	16,365	133,222
<b>Other Religions</b>	1,636	19,031
<b>No Religion/Not stated</b>	52,370	361,603

# Appendix - Political Opinion

## Political opinion (External)

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections (2023) and Northern Ireland Assembly Elections (2022) detail the political representation on Ards and North Down. Data also shows the turnout to vote. This tends to be lower than the rest of Northern Ireland, suggesting less strong political opinions, however the results show a preference in Ards and North Down for Unionist Parties.

Constituency	Registered Voters	Turnout
North Down	70,176	60%
Strangford	70,755	68%
Northern Ireland	1,373,731	63%

District Electoral Area	Eligible Electorate	Votes Polled
<b>Overall Turnout (2023)</b>		
Ards and North Down Borough Council Area	123,736	57,677
<b>Overall Turnout (2023)</b>		
Northern Ireland	1,380,372	745,400

Party	Local Government Seats Held	Local Government Seats Held	NI Assembly Elections seats held	NI Assembly Elections seats held
	ANDBC	Northern Ireland	North Down and Strangford	Northern Ireland
Alliance	12	67	4	17
Aontù	0	0	0	0
DUP	14	122	3	25
Green	2	5	0	0
Independants	3	19	1	2
People before Profit	0	1	0	1

<b>SDLP</b>	1	39	0	8
<b>Sinn Fèin</b>	0	144	0	27
<b>TUV</b>	0	9	0	1
<b>UUP</b>	8	54	2	9
<b>Other</b>	0	1	0	0

## Appendix - Racial Group

### Racial group (Internal)

\* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Racial Group	Total	Percentage
White	682	78.66%
Black	*	*
Chinese	*	*
Other	*	*
Did not want to answer	*	*
Left Black	176	20.30%

### Racial group (External)

On Census Day 2021, 3.4% of the population, or 65,600 people, belonged to minority ethnic groups. This is around double the 2011 figure (1.8% – 32,400 people) and four times the 2001 figure (0.8% – 14,300 people); Taken together the bulletin reports and tables released today show an increasing diversity from 2011 to 2021 in Northern Ireland's population across statistics on ethnic group, main language, country of birth and passports held. This increasing diversity is evident to a greater or lesser degree across all 11 Local Government Districts.

<b>All Usual Residents</b>	163,660
<b>White</b>	159,892
<b>Irish Traveller</b>	24
<b>Roma</b>	19
<b>Indian</b>	388
<b>Chinese</b>	500
<b>Filipino</b>	308
<b>Pakistani</b>	87
<b>Arab</b>	28
<b>Other Asian</b>	468
<b>Black African</b>	309

<b>Black Other</b>	135
<b>Mixed</b>	1,236
<b>Other ethnicities</b>	266

<b>Main Language</b>	<b>Ards and North Down</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>
<b>English</b>	160,385	1,808,019
<b>Other</b>	3,279	95,158

<b>Passports Held</b>	<b>Ards and North Down</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>
<b>All Usual Residents</b>	163,659	1,903,178
<b>UK only</b>	109,651	894,493
<b>Ireland Only</b>	13,092	513,858
<b>Uk and Ireland</b>	13,098	95,158
<b>Other Passport(s)</b>	4,909	95,158
<b>No Passport</b>	21,275	304,508

## Appendix - Age

### Age (Internal)

Age Profile	Female	Female %	Male	Male %
16 to 29	20	6%	26	65%
30 to 39	75	23%	83	19%
40 to 49	105	33%	121	27%
50 to 59	80	25%	176	39%
65+	42	13%	41	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Age (External)

On Census Day 2021 Ards and North down had the largest increase in the number of people aged 65 and over. This rose from 27,692 (17.7%) in 2011 to 36,226 (22.1%) in 2021, demonstrating the scale of population change due to ageing.

Age Profile	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
0 to 14	361,602	27,822
15 to 39	589,983	44,187
40 to 64	609,015	55,644
65+	323,539	36,226
Total	1,903,173	163,659

# Appendix - Marital Status

## Marital Status (Internal)

\* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Marital Status	Total	Percentage
Single	180	20.76%
Married	405	46.71%
Divorced	35	4.04%
Co Habiting	14	1.61%
Separated	25	2.88%
Civil Partnership	*	*
Left Blank	207	23.88%

## Marital Status (External)

Statistics classifies people aged 16 and over according to their legal marital or civil partnership status on Census Day 21 March 2021. The law in relation to marriage and civil partnership changed in the ten years to 2021. A summary of the changes in Northern Ireland is given below:

- civil partnership for opposite-sex couples became legal in late 2019;
- marriage for same-sex couples became legal in 2020; and
- in late 2020 a couple in a civil partnership could convert their status from civil partnership to marriage.

The rise in the 'single' population and the fall in the 'married' population here is in line with results from recent censuses in England and Wales. These figures mirror changes in society and specifically in personal relationships that has been witnessed over the last 50 years. Ards & North Down LGD, which has the oldest demographic profile of all 11 LGDs, has the highest percentage of adults who were widowed, at 8%.

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Ards and North Down</b>
Single	575,966	41,540
Married or in Civil Partnership	682,065	68,340
Separated, Divorced or Formally in a Civil Partnership	151,570	13,400
Widowed or Surviving partner from a Civil Partnership	97,004	10,720

# Appendix - Sexual Orientation

## Sexual Orientation

Statistics show that 2.1% (31,600) of NI population aged 16 and over identified as ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)’ and 90.0% (1,363,900) identified as ‘straight or heterosexual’. More urban LGDs have a higher percentage of people who identified as LGB+. Almost 8% of our population aged 16 and over (119,300) either ticked ‘prefer not to say’ or chose not to answer the question. Taken together, these are labelled ‘No sexual orientation stated’ in these statistics.

8.8% percent of people who identified as LGB+ in Northern Ireland live in the Ards and North Down Borough, Statistics also show that 800 Households in the Borough are living in a same sex couple relationship.

<b>Living in households by relationship</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Ards and North Down</b>
<b>Living in a Same Sex Couple</b>	9,600	800
<b>Not Living as a Couple</b>	694,600	53,500
	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Ards and North Down</b>
All usual Residents (over 16)	1,515,700	134,000
Straight or Hetrosexual	1,364,130	121,940
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or other Sexual orientation	30,314	2,680
No sexual orientation stated	121,256	9,380

# Appendix - Men and Women Generally

## Men and women generally (Internal)

Male	Female	Total
511	356	867
58.94%	41.06%	100%

## Men and women generally (External)

The Northern Ireland usually resident population increased by 5.1% (92,300) from 2011 to 2021. The Census 2021 population is recorded at 1,903,175 people up from 1,810,863 people in 2011. Ards & North Down had an increase of population from 2011 of 7,000, which is 4.5%.

The census day population comprised of 967,000 females and 936,100 males. Statistics show that for every 100 females in Ards and North Down Borough there were 94.9 males.

Statistics show that 54% of the Borough are employed 2% are Unemployed and 43% are Economically inactive. Of those employed, 37% were in the Public administration, education and health Industry and 2% were in the Agriculture, energy and water industry.

62% of employed people travelled to work in a car or van and 34% travelled 5km-20km to their place of work.

There were 70,445 households recorded in Ards and North Down 4,400, 5.9% were unoccupied at the time of the survey.

The average household size in sits at 2.30 (2.44 in NI). 31% are single occupancy and 6% had more than 6 people living in the property.

72% of the Borough owns their own property, this has decreased by 2% from 2011 where 13% are Social rented and increase of 2% increase in 2011.

LGD	Male	Female

<b>Northern Ireland</b>	932,554	970,618
<b>Ards and North Down</b>	80,192	83,466

# Appendix - Disability

## Disability (External)

A self-assessment of whether a person has a long-term health problem or disability that limits daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. It includes problems that are due to old age. The 2021 Census (NIRSA) demonstrates an increase of 15% or more in the percentage of people who reported a long-term health problem or disability which limited day-to-day activities. 41,300 or 25.3% of people in Ards and North Down had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Ards & North Down experienced an increase of 31.4% from 2011. These changes are in part a reflection of the Boroughs ageing population.

The following statistics show a breakdown in residents in Northern Ireland and Ards and North Down borough with a Disability that is expected to last 12 months or more.

The figures show that 7.2 per cent of the Borough have deafness or partial hearing loss, 68% being over the age of 65. 2% have blindness or partial sight loss, 11% of those people are aged 0-39 years. 1.6 % have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair, in comparison to Northern Ireland statics this means that 9.3% of all those who have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair reside in the Borough.

0.8% have an intellectual or learning disability including dyslexia and Downs Syndrome. 1.6% have Autism or Asperger syndrome, 49% are between 0-14 years whilst 40% are aged 15- 39 year. 8.1 % have an emotional, psychological or mental health condition, includes depression and schizophrenia, this is highest in the age ranges of 40 – 64 years (47%). 2% have frequent periods of confusion or memory loss, including Dementia, this is most prevalent with ages 65+. 10% of residents have another condition, for example Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes, again this is most prevalent in age 65+. Taken together these results show that policy making must consider Ards and north Down aging population and health and disability issues as well as recognition for those that provide unpaid care throughout the Borough.

<b>LGD</b>	<b>All usual residents</b>	Activites Not Limited	Limited a little	Limited a lot
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	1,903,178	1,446,415	247,413	209,349
<b>Ards and North Down</b>	163,659	122,744	22,912	18,002

<b>Long term Health Conditions</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3 or More</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	1,237,065	342,572	152,254	171,286
<b>Ards and North Down</b>	101,468	32,731	14,729	14,729
<b>Disability Breakdown</b>  Age range (0 - 65+)	<b>Ards and North Down</b>		<b>Northern Ireland</b>	
<b>Deafness or Partial Hearing loss</b>	11,802		109,457	
<b>Blindness or Partial Sightloss</b>	3,214		33,961	

<b>Mobility or dexterity difficulty that required the use of a wheelchair</b>	2,641		28,138	
<b>Intellectual or learning disability include dyslexia and Downs Syndrome</b>	1,469		16,923	
<b>Autism or Asperger Syndrome</b>	2,628		35,367	
<b>Emotional, psychological or mental health condition inc depression and schizophrenia</b>	13,275		165,127	
<b>Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss inc Dementia</b>	3,432		37,789	
<b>Other conditions E.g Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes</b>	167,752		16,636	

# Appendix - Dependants

## Dependants (External)

For the Purposes of S75 a dependant can be classed as Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.

In Census 2021 one person in eight of NI population aged 5 or more (or 222,200 people) noted that they provided unpaid care. One important point to note in Policy making is that 2,600 children aged 5 to 14 in Northern Ireland provide unpaid care.

Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage of people who provide unpaid care throughout Northern Ireland , 13.7% estimated at 30,414 residents. 'Unpaid care' covers looking after, giving help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age

A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s). 'No dependent children' includes households with no children and households where all children are non-dependent.

In Ards and North Down there were 27,822 Children (defined as those aged 0 to 14). Children make up 19.2% of the Northern Ireland population. This percentage varies across the Local Government Districts and is lowest in Ards and North Down where the proportion is 17.0%.

According to Birth statistics on NISRA Ards and North Down recorded 2,854 births between 2020 and 2022 , giving an indication of the numbers using buggies or prams in use.

	<b>Dependent children in household:</b>	<b>Dependent children in household:</b>	<b>Dependent children in household:</b>	<b>Dependent children in household:</b>
	<b>None</b>	<b>one</b>	<b>Two</b>	<b>Three</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	71%	11%	11%	6%

<b>Ards and North Down</b>	74%	11%	11%	4%
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**24. Does this policy require an Equality Impact Assessment?**

No

**1. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. E.g**

Implement a notice of motion where blind and partially sighted people participate equally, and their goal of breaking down the barriers for blind and partially sighted people in everyday life.

**2. What definition of 'rural' is the Plan using in respect of Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable

**2c. Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.**

No rural needs identified

## **Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service**

**3. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?**

No

**3d. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas**

N/A

## **Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas**

**4. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service? Deprivation levels can be found at Home Page | NI Area Statistics | NISRA**

No

**4d. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?**

N/A

## **Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas**

**5. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the Social and economic needs of people in rural areas.**

N/A

## **Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service**

6. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified?

No

6b. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified

N/A

## Documenting and Recording

7. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information complied.

Sustainability is a holistic approach that considers ecological, social and economic dimensions, recognising that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity.

Sustainable development is all about meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Depending on your answer your answer may be a 'positive' impact or a 'negative' impact. Specific guidance at each question.

There may be 'no impact'.

If you are not sure complete as 'don't know'

1. What impact will the proposal have on the local community including the ability of people to meet their essential needs?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Transport - Is the activity accessible to everyone via public transport or active travel, in a safe and sustainable way?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Public Placemaking, Community &amp; Culture - Is the activity impacting on people's sense of place and community by being included and connected to the area?</b></p> <p><b>Is the activity impacting on our cultural offering, helping citizens, visitors and young people become acquainted with art and culture?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p>	Positive

## 2. What impact will the proposals have on local, sustainable food supply chains?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Food - If this activity involves either the direct or indirect purchase of food or catering services will there be a negative impact on a sustainable food system?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Food systems currently account for 21-37% of total global greenhouse gases and are a primary cause of environmental degradation and significantly contribute to socio-economic and health inequalities. This can be mitigated by specifying sustainable food and catering services, fresh seasonal food of a high nutritional value produced through low environmental impact farming methods and high standards of animal welfare.</b></p>	No Impact

## 3. What impact will the proposals have on diversity and equality of opportunity?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Equal opportunity - Does the activity have a positive or negative impact on inclusivity and discrimination?</b></p>	Positive

#### 4. What impact will the proposals have on prosperity, social value and fair trade?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Decent jobs and income - Are local employment opportunities being created removed 'or removed'? Will there be any volunteering opportunities?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p><b>Will the financial benefits help raise local income levels and tackle poverty and derivations of poverty such as food and fuel poverty?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p><b>Social Value - Will the activity lead to the creation of works or services? Are there opportunities to support apprenticeships or training opportunities to combat social exclusion? Are there any opportunities to work with organisations with an environmental or social mission (e.g., from the VCSE sector)?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p><b>Human and labour rights - Will there be provisions to ensure workers up the supply chain have their human and labour rights respected?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Products at high risk of the use of child labour and contravention of human and labour rights include electronic equipment, textiles, agricultural commodities and construction materials.</b></p>	<p>Positive</p>

**5. What impact will the proposals have on greenhouse gas emissions, including energy and transport?**

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Greenhouse Gas Emmissions - Will this activity have a positive or negative impact on greenhouse gases (most commonly caused by fossil fuel burning or deforestation)?</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p>Greenhouse gases include CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs or SF6. The most common sources include consumption of brown (non-renewable) electricity, burning of coal, oil, petrol, diesel, natural gas, emissions from landfill sites, and the destruction of natural carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands, forests, grasslands, freshwater lakes, and wetlands.</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Energy - Will the activity reduce energy demand through energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p>Will energy come from renewable energy sources e.g., solar, wind etc.? Will buildings be designed and constructed to high energy and environmental standards?</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Transport - Will the activity be accessible to everyone via active travel (Bike/walking) or public transport? Does the proposal help to reduce non-essential travel and individual car use?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p><b>Embodied carbon - Will the activity use materials from 'heavy industries' such as cement, concrete, iron and steel, or require international transportation of materials using aviation or shipping?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>

## 6. What impact will the proposals have on waste generation or how waste is managed?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Waste generation - Will this activity lead to the production of waste?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Have you considered how to reduce waste through demand management and re-use strategies which support the circular economy?</b></p>	No Impact
<p><b>Waste Management - Is waste going to be managed in a responsible, sustainable way?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Will waste be monitored? What recycling provisions are there? Will any waste be sent to landfill?</b></p>	No Impact

## 7. What impact will the proposals have on the direct consumption of natural resources, including materials, minerals and fresh water?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Materials - Will this activity lead to the consumption of raw materials? (Raw materials include steel, oil, corn, grain, gasoline, wood / forest resources, plastic, natural gas, and coal).</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Can materials be swapped or reduced, to minimize pressure on natural resources and reduce environmental impact?</b></p>	No Impact
<p><b>Will lifecycle costing exercises be used in procurement (e.g., if purchasing vehicles, energy-intensive equipment or major capital projects) in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources and achieve value for money</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</b></p>	Positive

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Fresh water - Will this activity increase pressure on freshwater resources through direct water consumption?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p>	No Impact
<p><b>Will the activity impact on the public's ability to access a clean and safe water supply?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p>Unsustainable water consumption includes use of mains water or other freshwater supplied without water efficiency or recycling measures.</p>	No Impact

**8. What impact will the proposals have on local resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and severe weather events, including drought, landslips, flooding and sites designated as being at risk of flooding or sea level rise?**

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Adverse Weather and Climate Impacts - Will buildings, infrastructure, or natural assets be at risk to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weather?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b></p> <p>For Northern Ireland, climate change is causing hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels.</p> <p>A precautionary approach is advised for all planning and construction decisions, taking into account the latest UK Climate Change Projections and making sure that development is not permitted on flood plains and / or land at risk of flooding under future climate scenarios.</p> <p>Avoid activities that may be vulnerable to overheating or flood risk. New assets (e.g. landscaping, buildings etc.) should be future proofed, ensuring all investments are resilient to current and future climate conditions.</p>	No Impact

**9. What impact will the proposals have on the local environment (e.g., air/water/soil pollution, land conversion, visual impacts, traffic, noise, vibration, odour, dust, particulates, smoke), heritage (including designated heritage, archaeology sites or listed buildings) and wildlife (including protected sites and species)?**

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Air pollution - Will the activity produce air pollutants?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b></p> <p><b>Air pollutants include: Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5); Ozone (O3) Nitrogen dioxide (NO2); Carbon Monoxide (CO); Sulphur Dioxide (SO2).</b></p> <p><b>The most common causes of air pollution are:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel combustion from motor vehicles (e.g. cars and heavy-duty vehicles)</li> <li>• Heat and power generation (e.g. oil and coal power plants and boilers)</li> <li>• Industrial facilities (e.g. manufacturing factories, mines, and oil refineries)</li> <li>• Municipal and agricultural waste sites and waste incineration/burning.</li> </ul>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Ozone layer depletion - Will this activity produce ozone depleting substances (fluorinated gases)?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b></p> <p><b>Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)</li> <li>• perfluorocarbons (PFCs)</li> <li>• sulphur hexafluoride (SF6)</li> </ul> <p><b>For example through the use of refrigeration and air conditioning units.</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Water/soil pollution - Will this activity involve any construction work, street works or road deliveries of construction materials or other goods?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b></p> <p><b>Soil and water pollution is caused from damaging rainwater run-off arising from road surface treatments, tyre abrasion, fuels and lubricants.</b></p> <p><b>Procurement and contractual mechanisms can be used to ensure that building and civil engineering contractors adhere take steps to ensure pollution is prevented from occurring or from dispersing to other areas. Contractors can minimise the use of all substances that could cause pollution and failing that, implement and communicate procedures to ensure the correct disposal (or release) of substances that could cause pollution.</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Chemical pollution - Will there be any use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, paint or cleaning products?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Will there be any excess fertiliser use that could result in nitrogen or phosphorus runoff?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p><b>Noise pollution - Is the activity likely to create a noise nuisance?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p><b>Noise pollution can have detrimental effects on human health, amenity, productivity and the natural environment.</b></p> <p><b>Eliminating or reducing excessive noise is a legal responsibility and helps to limit the disturbance of residents and businesses, caused by activities and operations.</b></p>	<p>No Impact</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Land conversion - Will this activity result in the reduction in the area of forested land, directly or indirectly?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p>Deforestation usually arises from the clearing of land for development, agriculture, or logging for paper, wood, or minerals.</p>	No Impact
<p><b>Built Heritage - Will this activity impact on designated heritage sites such as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Archaeology Site, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site or Registered Park and Garden?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p>	No Impact
<p><b>Natural Heritage and Biodiversity - Will this activity result in any displacement or loss of biodiversity, overfishing or affect protected or designated sites (e.g. ASSIs, SPAs etc).</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</b></p> <p>Changes in land use exert the most significant effect on biodiversity. These changes include the conversion of natural ecosystems into agriculture or into urban areas; changes in frequency, duration or magnitude of wildfires and similar disturbances; and the introduction of new species into land and freshwater environments.</p>	No Impact

**10 What impact will the proposals have on ensuring peace, justice, public participation and partnership working for sustainable development?**

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Peace - Will this activity have a negative or positive impact on community safety, crime or anti-social behaviour?</b></p>	Positive
<p><b>Justice - Are there safeguards in place to prevent against bribery and corruption?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</b></p> <p>Decision making should be open and transparent with clear governance and accountability arrangements.</p>	No Impact

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p><b>Political voice - Are citizens involved and do they have a role in deciding what happens and how it gets implemented?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</b></p>	Positive
<p><b>Partnerships - Will this activity involve working with others either locally or at a national level to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development?</b></p> <p><b>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</b></p>	Positive

**On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is**

Screened Out - No negative impacts

**1. Is Data Protection relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?**

No

## Data Protection Officer Comments