

Saintfield

Village Renewal and Development Plan

Addendum and Updated Action Plan: November 2017

The Village Renewal and Development Plan review was funded under Priority 6 (LEADER) of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the European Union, and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.



Mourne,
Gullion &
Lecale
Rural Development
Partnership



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

ARUP

1. Introduction

The Saintfield Integrated Development Plan (Village Plan) was initially produced in 2012. This has now been reviewed and updated by the community in conjunction with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The review has taken the form of an addendum to the initial Village Plan and should be read in conjunction with it. The addendum includes an updated Action Plan (see Section 2), which identifies which projects and initiatives have been implemented since the original plan was published and highlights projects which could be focused on over the next phase of implementation.

Ove Arup and Partners (Arup) was appointed as the consultancy team to facilitate the review and update of the Action Plan. This update has been facilitated by a stakeholder workshop. The outcome of this is an updated Action Plan which includes a range of projects and initiatives that we believe will have a real impact on the area.

The review of the Village Plan was funded under Priority 6 (LEADER) of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the European Union, and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Rural Development Programme uses the LEADER approach which adopts a community led model to assist rural communities to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in their local area, through the allocation of funds based on local need. Village Renewal and Development is an important element of the Rural Development Programme.

The Village Plan is a working document that requires the support of the community and in many cases the community working in partnership with other agencies and statutory bodies.

It is important to note that some projects and initiatives set out within the action plan may be subject to future feasibility studies and analysis, detailed design, landowner agreements, statutory approvals and available funding.

2. Implementation

This plan is designed to improve the social and economic fabric of the area.

The Updated Action Plan provides an indication of the key tasks which need to be undertaken to progress specific projects. This often includes detailed scheme design, preparation of the business case and funding application, and in some cases further feasibility and analysis. The source of funding will often dictate the order in which tasks need to be undertaken, for example the Rural Development Programme expects all statutory consents to be placed before the funding application is submitted. There are potential sources of funding available for the projects and initiatives set out within this Village Renewal Plan. It is important to note that reference to potential funding is a guidance only. Other funding opportunities may become available during the lifetime of this plan, and all projects will be subject to appropriate eligibility checks, application and assessment procedures as set by each funding body.

The Updated Action Plan also provides an indication of the priority level of each project based on discussions with key stakeholders during plan preparation. Alongside this, a lead delivery agent and key stakeholders have also been noted. There may also be other interested groups who should be engaged during project implementation or those whose agreement must be sought, such as a private landowner or statutory bodies. It is also important to recognise that priorities may change as funding opportunities become available.

The Village Plan is a working document that requires the support of the community and in many cases the community working in partnership with other agencies and statutory bodies. It is important to note that some projects and initiatives set out within the action plan may be subject to future feasibility studies and analysis, detailed design, landowner agreements, statutory approvals and available funding.



3. Saintfield- Review of 2012 Action Plan

		2012 Action Plan				2017 Update			
Action substantially complete / situation has improved									
Ongoing / no change									
Major constraint to implementation / situation has got worse									
New Project									
Regeneration Initiative		Key Stakeholders	Priority	Time frame	Potential Funders Actions	Progress @ November 2017	Priority H, M, L	Timeframe	Actions
1. Community and Youth Facilities									
1.1	Community/ Sports facility	SDA, NMDDC, DFI, SPORTNI	H	L	RDP, SPORTNI, NMDDC, SLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saintfield is a community and sports orientated village therefore this remains the highest priority. Work has been ongoing for several years and progress has been made on an alternative site to that identified in the 2010 Action Plan. The new site is located off the Belfast Road and will entail the conversion and change of use of vacant industrial warehouses to indoor leisure/community centre. Planning permission is pending. Detailed design is underway and funding sought from RDP and Peace 4 fund. Due to the location of the site, a crossing point will be required as the Belfast Road is extremely busy. It was highlighted that this facility must be flexible and open to everyone in the community. Facility must complement existing facilities such as Rowallane Community Hub. 	H	1 yr.	<p>Agree lease with NMDDC and set up management arrangement for the facility.</p> <p>Secure funding and statutory approvals for implementation of project</p> <p>Explore options for school to make use of community centre to support need for crossing point at the Belfast Road.</p> <p>Engage with DfI to ensure a crossing point can be provided before the facility is up and running.</p>
1.2	Provision of Children's Play Park	SDA, NMDDC, DFI, SPORTNI	H	L	RDP, SPORTNI, NMDDC, SLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified that existing Play Park at Lislane requires updating (also recognised in NMDDC Play Strategy) The community also highlighted the need for a new play park to be located adjacent to the new community centre: could be a community project 	H	S	Community to seek funding for new play park adjacent to the community / sports facility.

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1.3	Fold Housing development – Main St back lands south	SDA, Priv, NIHE	M	M	NIHE, Priv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No progress due to land owner rejection. The current need is for over 55's housing which is centrally located to enable access to amenities. 	M	M	<p>Initiate discussion with NIHE / Local Planning Authority to identify suitable sites for social / affordable housing through the emerging Local Development Plan process.</p> <p>Initiate discussion with Local Planning Authority to zone land for over 50's housing.</p>	
1.4	Development of Main Street backlands North as Park area / community space	SDA, NMDDC, Heritage Craft Association	M	M	Lot, DCAL, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rowallane Community Hub has been completed and is an excellent community resource. Use of the facility including the growing plots should now be encouraged. Utilise the facility to promote and enhance arts and crafts - potential for a craft market. Volunteers needed to ensure the facility can be managed efficiently. Main back lands for sale as housing site (See action 3. 	M	L	<p>Identify suitable sites for communal space within village.</p> <p>A site which is accessible to the proposed community facility would be preferable.</p> <p>The site selection and feasibility could be undertaken alongside that for the play park.</p> <p>Develop marketing programme to encourage the use of Rowallane Community Hub.</p>	

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1.5	Complete development of Belfast Road residential site	Priv	M	M	Priv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now complete. Transport NI property derelict but has been painted. The creation of a small car park at bus stop for commuters would be beneficial. TNI have not supported this so far. 	M	M	Engage with NMDDC and DFI to provide additional commuter parking space (See action 14).		
1.6	Better networking, communication and partnership working across Saintfield	All	H	S	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review of the 2012 action plans has highlight a lot of excellent work ongoing in Saintfield, however this could be enhanced with better partnership working and coordination. More frequent meetings which are open to all those interested in the development of Saintfield. 					
2		Environmental and Townscape Improvements									
2.1	Develop a shop front design guide	SDA NIEA, PS, NMDDC	H	L	NIEA, PS, HLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main St. designated as Conservation Area and shop front guidelines set by Local Planning Authority. Some feel that there is adequate guidance to inform planning decisions and more forceful action creates divisions and is not generally acceptable to owners, however others can see a benefit in this action. The quality of Main St. is tiring and would benefit from enhancements such as route and branch improvements to improved physical environment. SDA have highlighted the need for such improvements within their Lottery Heritage Action Plan. 	M	L	<p>Community and shop owners to explore whether a shop front design guide would be beneficial and a valuable contribution.</p> <p>Ensure route and branch treatment work is exploring and developed further to ensure enhancement for the physical quality of Main Street.</p>		
2.2	Vacant building reuse scheme, including those at Fair Green	SDA, NMDDC, PS, NIEA	H	L	NMDDC, RDP, HLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing problem. Encourage the reuse of these buildings for commercial, residential or other innovative uses. Units at Fair Green remain vacant. Current owner is not in position to develop. Have been painted by SDA. Development of vacant / derelict building to convert to museum/ tourist asset. 	H	M	<p>Continue to explore alternative and innovative uses for these units.</p> <p>Consider the feasibility of having pop up shops in the vacant units</p>		

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McRoberts is now for sale and fabric is deteriorating – no grants available to buy or refurbish currently. 			<p>Lobby for temporary rates reduction scheme for new businesses.</p> <p>Prepare feasibility of bringing selected buildings back to use, to include the costs and management of such asset.</p>	
2.3	Shop front Improvement scheme	SDA, NMDDC, PS, NIEA	H	L	NMDDC, RDP, HLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derelict properties have been painted, however blank shutter problem remains. Saintfield would benefit from a comprehensive shop front improvement scheme or Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). THI has been explored in the past however was unsuccessful. 	M	M	<p>Liaise with NMDDC / DfC regarding funding and management of shop front / THI scheme</p> <p>Liaise with local shop owners to gain buy in</p>	
2.4	Main Street and Fair Green EI scheme	SDA, NMDDC, DFI, PS	H	M	NMDDC, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting schemes have been completed. Some improvements have been carried out using RDP funding Lower Main St has been resurfaced. Owner controls level of work 	L	L	<p>Liaise with NMDDC / DfC regarding funding sources for comprehensive EI scheme</p> <p>Implement Landscape Action Plan</p>	
2.5	Implementation of Landscape Plan prepared in 2015 In small stages	SDA, DFI, Priv., NMDDC	M	M	NMDDC, Fund raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify manageable no. of sites and implement identified Landscaping 				

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2.6	Implementation of Heritage Action Plan to assist in the environmental treatment of Main Street.	SDA, DfI, Priv, NMDDC	M	M	NMDDC, Fund Raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with relevant stakeholders and wider community in relation to the implementation of Heritage Action Plan. Identify key action areas. Discuss and highlight priorities for Main Street Improvements. 			
2.7	Improvements to Gateway signs and additional signage within the village	NMDDC, DFI,	M	M	NMDDC, fund raising, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 of these have been improved – 2 more have potential. 			
3 Tourism, Leisure and Recreation									
3.1	Develop Saintfield walking routes – Developing existing “Walk Around Saintfield” guide	SDA, DfI, TourNI, NMDDC	H	M	RDP, NMDDC, DfI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDDC have commissioned feasibility study to create green way on old railway. This is part of the DfI’s Strategic Plan for Greenways for Northern Ireland. (See new action 19) Potential to link this greenway to the new community / sporting centre to create a local hub. Enhance links to Rowallane Gardens 	H	S	Support and monitor progress with application Engage with NMDDC to explore links from the Greenway to the new Community / sporting hub.
3.2	Development of an educational / exercise area - Town Hill Town Park or alternative site	SDA, NMDDC, DCAL	M	L	NMDDC, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project abandoned by Council. We would like to buy another site for an educational / exercise area linked to paths. 	H	H	Requires grant support – Lottery has been approached, needs Owner consent.
3.3	Windmill Hill/ Mill Pond public park	SDA, NMDDC, DCAL	M	L	NMDDC, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project has become much more important given the proposed location of the new community centre / sporting hub and potential Comber to Newcastle Greenway (See item 1 and 18). A highway to health / heritage walk could be provided around Windmill Hill linking to both the community hub and future greenway. 	H	S	Explore feasibility and funding sources.

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3.4	Develop Comber to Newcastle Greenway via Saintfield.	SDA, DfI, TourNI, NMDDC	H	S	RDP, NMDDC, DfI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDDC have commissioned feasibility study to create green way along the old railway. This is part of the DfI's Strategic Plan for Greenways for Northern Ireland. Explore opportunities to create a hub in Saintfield to attract walkers to stop and utilise the facilities. This could be linked to the new community / sporting facility (Action 1) as the route runs along the rear of the site. Strategic Plan for Greenways available at: https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/exercise-explore-enjoy-strategic-plan-greenway 			
3.5	Prepare local tourism strategy which promotes tourism and recreation in the local area in partnership with surrounding villages	SDA, TourNI	H	S	NMDDC, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saintfield has a strong and varied heritage which provides an opportunity to explore. This include famous families. Attracting visitors to Saintfield is crucial to the survival of local businesses therefore more needs to be done. The tourism strategy could bring together potential projects such as the greenway to develop a strong local offer. Tourism Strategy to review shop opening hours with the aim of enhancing the vitality of the village in the evenings and Sundays. Coffee shops and other facilities need to be open on Sundays. Rowallane Gardens attracts many visitors – need to encourage these visitors to stop in the village – may be linked to parking problems. Explore potential for a pilgrim trail and tell the story of the Irish Saints – Slemish to Downpatrick Promote the use of www.discoversaintfield.org which is an underutilised resource. Coordinated marketing and promotion required 			
3.6	Creation of Farmers Market	SDA, Local Traders	M	S	NMDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake study to consider options for the farmer's market – location, timing, contents, management etc. Research other areas that have done this successfully (e.g. Comber) 			
4	Infrastructure and Services								
4.1	Road junction improvements	SDA, DFI	M	M	DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change though Lower Main St has been resurfaced. Lobby for banning of heavy goods vehicles as through traffic and for BT to reroute lines underground. The flow of traffic around the village needs to be assessed Many of the pavements around Saintfield need to be resurfaced. 	H	M	Engage with NMDDC and DFI to carry out transport assessment

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	4.2	Civic amenity/ recycling facility	SDA, NMDDC	M	M	NMDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Glass recycling bins have been placed at the front of the Car Park – important that these are regularly emptied. Has meant a small reduction in parking (4 spaces). Paper / cardboard recycling bin needed – potentially at community centre site. 	N/A	N/A	Monitor how well this function / potential to relocate the facility to the Community centre when developed	
	4.3	Car park at Belfast Road bus stop	SDA, NITHC, DFI	M	M	NITHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The creation of a small car park at bus stop for commuters would be beneficial. TNI have not supported this so far. NMDDC have explored parking issues throughout the district and identified a need for additional parking spaces in Saintfield to address commuter parking. Suggestion by the community that servicing and deliveries needs to be reviewed, causes congestion. 	M	M	<p>Engage with NMDDC and DFI to provide additional commuter parking space.</p> <p>Explore if parking facilities at the propose community centre / sports hub could be used during the day for park and ride.</p> <p>Traders to discuss and agree plan for deliveries to avoid peak times.</p>	
	4.4	Extension of Downpatrick Street car park into Main Street back lands South	SDA, DFI.	M	M	DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of additional park and ride facility should reduce the amount of all day parking in the Downpatrick Street car park. The car park would benefit from being redesigned. Environmental improvements proposed under SDA Landscape plan. Survey completed and request submitted to change on St. parking to 2 hr stay – action promised but nothing happened yet. 	M	M	<p>Lobby NMDDC to provide additional park and ride facility.</p> <p>Lobby DFI to implement parking changes.</p> <p>Implement Landscape Action Plan.</p>	
	4.5	Car Park at Academy primary school	SDA, SEELB	H	M	SEELB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic Church has allowed use of its car park which is a short walk to the school. Street parking is still busy. 	H	S	Engage with SEELB to address parking issues.	

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This remains a high priority as the school accommodates 450 pupils and parking is a major health and safety risk. 				
	4.6	Provision of pavement at Station Rd and resurfacing of pavements at key areas throughout the village	DFI, Priv. SDA	H	H	DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help resolve ownership issue and encourage DFI to identify funds and programme. Undertake survey of pavements to identify those in greatest need of resurfacing 			
	4.7	Upgrade to sewage network	DFI NMDDC SDA	H	M	DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewage treatment plant and sewage network is not sufficient causing overflow. Requirement to assess current system, and put plans in place for upgrade if required. 			
Stakeholders and Potential Funders	<p>SDA Saintfield Development Association NMDDC Newry, Mourne and Down District Council TourNI Tourism NI Priv Private sector Lot Lottery funding DCAL Department for Culture, Arts and leisure NIHE Northern Ireland Housing Executive DFI Department for Infrastructure</p> <p>SEELB South Eastern Education and Library Board Sport NI Sport Northern Ireland RDP Rural Development Programme SLF Sports Lottery funding HLF Heritage Lottery funding BLF Big lottery funding NITHC Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company</p>									