



**A  
VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN  
FOR KILCOO  
2012-2016**

**JUNE 2012**

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# **CONTENTS**

	<i>Page</i>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. BACKGROUND</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. BASE LINE STUDY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b>	<b>17</b>

## **Appendices**

- A) Terms of Reference
- B) Base line study
- C) Socio-economic profile
- D) Copy of household survey and results
- E) Results from Planning for Real event
- F) Copy of survey of children and results
- G) Outline plan for play area

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Kilcoo Community Association commissioned this five year development plan with support from Down Rural Area Partnership and East Down Rural Community Network. The plan takes full account of the individual strengths and opportunities within Kilcoo and exploits all available development opportunities, focusing attention on realistic projects which can complement and add value to the existing village infrastructure.
2. The plan is based on an extensive study and analysis of the village which included a base line study a SWOT analysis and a comprehensive socio-economic profile.
3. An intensive process of public consultation took place and this included a household survey which attracted almost 80 responses, a Planning for Real community consultation event which attracted over 130 participants and a survey of local school children.
4. The consultation identified high levels of satisfaction locally with: the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and the local school, There is considerable dissatisfaction with recreation and leisure facilities, community facilities, library services, facilities for young people and employment opportunities. Residents are very much in favour of providing a play area and refurbishing the parochial hall. There is also a high level of support for the provision of a bus shelter.
5. The plan sets out the following vision for the village: ““Kilcoo is a friendly, welcoming and peaceful community in an area of outstanding natural beauty which supports a sustainable lifestyle for all residents and which is renowned for its love of and prowess in culture and sport.”
6. To pursue the vision the plan identifies five strategic priorities: Improving the local environment; improving local services, developing the local community, improving traffic and transport, developing the local economy.
7. A total of 31 actions are then identified spread across the five themes and for each lead and support organisations are identified as are potential funders and for each action an indicative timescale is given.
8. The plan also contains an outline drawing for a possible play area in the village on a site adjoining the parochial hall.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** Kilcoo (Church of Mourning) is a village situated on the road between the towns of Rathfriland and Castlewellan. It is located within Down District Council local government area.
- 1.2** At the 2001 census Kilcoo had a population of 1415 people and is served by a Catholic Church, St Malachy's Primary School and Kilcoo GAC. There is a playgroup, credit union and small shop. Given the large number of new houses constructed in recent years the population of the village has undoubtedly increased but there has not been a parallel improvement in local community infrastructure. Kilcoo Community Association is striving to improve the quality of life for local residents. It has been working with support from the East Down Rural Community Network to develop and enhance the village.
- 1.3** The Group wished to produce an Integrated Village Plan which was expected to take full account of the individual strengths and opportunities within Kilcoo and to exploit all available development opportunities thereby focusing attention on realistic projects which can complement and add value to the existing village infrastructure. In particular the Association was keen to explore the potential for a new play area. A copy of the Terms of Reference for the plan is enclosed as **APPENDIX A**.
- 1.4** This plan focuses on the village of Kilcoo in Down District Council. The plan includes a profile which provides a picture of the village, spanning community, services and economic activity. To highlight the particular circumstances of the village, this profile compares its information in relation to patterns and trends across Down District as a whole and Northern Ireland. A summary of the key features is then provided to inform a village action plan.
- 1.5** The plan has been prepared by a team of consultants appointed by Kilcoo Community Association: Frank Dolaghan of Mentor Economic Developments Limited, Marnette Lyons of Environmental Designs and Nick Mack, who worked in close collaboration with the Association.
- 1.6** The methodology for producing the plan involved:
- An initial meeting in Kilcoo with the Committee of the Community Association
  - At this meeting it was decided to seek community opinion on the needs of the village through a public survey which the Committee would ensure was delivered on a door to door basis throughout the area and through a Planning for Real exercise.
  - The consultants provided a draft survey and this was amended by the residents prior to distribution.

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- Analysis of the survey and presentation of the findings to the working group
  - Organisation of a Planning for Real community consultation event and analysis of the feedback from that event
  - Preparation of a detailed socio-economic analysis of the village based on desk research and consultations with relevant statutory bodies
  - Preparation of a baseline study of the village
  - Consultation with statutory bodies
  - Preparation of outline drawings and associated costs for a new play area in the village
  - Numerous meetings with the Community Association
  - Preparation of an initial draft plan which was presented to the steering group and subsequently amended.
  - Production of a final plan.

**1.7** Mentor Economic Developments Limited, on behalf of the consultancy team, wish to acknowledge the assistance provided during the course of the preparation of this plan. In particular we acknowledge the contribution made by Ann Grant and Brian Morgan, the other members of the committee of the Village Association and the work of the staff and pupils of St Malachy's Primary School for their assistance with the model building. We also thank the Board of Governors of St Malachy's Primary School for the use of the school assembly hall for the Planning for Real event.

## 2. BASE LINE STUDY

- 2.1 A detailed baseline study of the village has been produced by the consultants working in collaboration with the Village Association and the full results are enclosed as **APPENDIX B**.
- 2.2 An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the village was completed and is set out below.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low crime rate</li> <li>• Good primary school</li> <li>• Good place for children</li> <li>• Pleasant place to live</li> <li>• Clean and tidy environment</li> <li>• Good quality housing</li> <li>• No drugs and absence of crime</li> <li>• Neighbourly</li> <li>• Community Association</li> <li>• Good rural location</li> <li>• Parochial hall</li> <li>• Credit Union</li> <li>• Playgroup</li> <li>• GAA</li> <li>• Other community and voluntary organisations</li> <li>• Support from EDRCN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No play area</li> <li>• No youth facilities</li> <li>• Not enough recreational facilities</li> <li>• Poor facilities for older people</li> <li>• Poor broadband service</li> <li>• Poor employment opportunities locally</li> <li>• Not enough shops</li> <li>• No ATM</li> <li>• Poor library service</li> <li>• Speed of traffic through village</li> <li>• No website</li> <li>• Absence of footpaths from centre of village</li> <li>• Poor access to lough</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of playground</li> <li>• Acquisition of hall to provide community centre</li> <li>• Provision of youth facilities</li> <li>• Expansion of leisure facilities at GAA centre</li> <li>• Provision of footpaths</li> <li>• Improvement to broadband service</li> <li>• More community events</li> <li>• Traffic calming measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of key community leaders</li> <li>• Failure to take advantage of funding opportunities</li> </ul>

- 2.3 A comprehensive Socio-economic profile of the village is enclosed as **APPENDIX C**.

**KILCOO TODAY - A SNAPSHOT**





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### **3. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

**3.1** The Community Association decided to conduct a household survey to gather opinion from residents and a copy of the survey used, together with the full analysis of findings, is enclosed as **APPENDIX D**. Over 400 copies were distributed throughout the village and the response was quite high with just under 80 returns. A summary of the findings from the survey is set out below.

#### **3.2 MAIN FINDINGS FROM SURVEY**

##### **3.2.1 Satisfaction levels**

High level of satisfaction with:

- Level of anti-social behaviour
- Local school
- Level of crime

General satisfaction with:

- Overall appearance and cleanliness
- Police service
- Waste disposal service
- Recycling facilities
- Shopping
- Traffic control
- GP services

Some dissatisfaction with:

- Childcare facilities
- Street lighting and footpaths
- Other health services
- Community relations
- Public transport
- Facilities for older people

High level of dissatisfaction with:

- Community facilities
- Library services
- Recreation and leisure
- Facilities for young people
- Employment opportunities

Residents were asked how much in favour they would be of the following ideas?

ISSUE	Totally	Very much	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
Improving the parochial hall	47	16	7	3	2
Provision of a bus shelter at Cloncool Crescent	32	15	15	8	1
Provision of a playground	53	11	5	1	1

As can be seen 63 of the 75 respondents (84%) are totally or very much in favour of improving the parochial hall while 47 of 71 respondents (66%) are in favour of the provision of a bus shelter at Cloncool Crescent and 64 of 71 respondents (90%) are in favour of the provision of a playground.

Residents were also asked to give their priorities for the next 5 years and answers included:

Playground  
 Youth club  
 Footpaths from village centre to the Square and Thierafurth Inn  
 Traffic safety measures  
 Refurbishment of parochial hall  
 Improved traffic control  
 Leisure facilities  
 Environmental improvements

### 3.3 Planning for Real Event

**3.3.1** Children from St Malachy's Primary School worked with the consultants to produce a three dimensional model of the village and this was later put on display in the school and the local community were invited to view the model and use it to record their ideas for the development of the village. Over 130 people attended the Planning for Real event.

ATTENDANCES

AGE RANGE	MALE	FEMALE
Under 16	35	14
17-30	10	14
31-65	26	31
66+	2	0
TOTAL	73	59

As can be seen a good cross-section of the community in terms of age and gender attended.



One of the tools used to engage young people was a graffiti wall and the finished wall is shown below.



### 3.3.3 Results:

The full results are enclosed as **APPENDIX E** but a summary is set out below.

<b>THEME</b>	<b>NO. OF CARDS</b>
Traffic and transport	45
Community facilities	59
Leisure	98
Local environment	99
Work, training, local economy	34
Housing	19
Crime and safety	2
Health	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>373</b>

### 3.3.4 Feedback from opportunity sites:

#### PLAYGROUND LOCATION – PREFERENCES

OPTIONS	VOTES
Rush's field beside school	52
Green on Ballymoney Road	0
Site behind school and chapel	1
Field behind Blackthorn Close, Crockoona Park.	54
Mullandra Park, front green	4
Crockoona Park, front green	8
Site at parochial hall	8

#### POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES IN NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE

ACTIVITY	VOTES
Keep fit – ladies	9
Keep fit – gents	7
Boxing	27
Badminton	13
Drama lessons and plays	9
Dance classes	15
Music lessons	19
Cards	5
Yoga	11
Pilates	6
Over 60s club	8
Indoor bowls	4
Evening classes	11
Art classes	18
Youth club	34
Irish language classes	2
Irish music lessons	1
Facilities to print cross-community magazine	1

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR RUSH'S BUILDING

SUGGESTIONS	FREQUENCY
Demolish to improve sight lines	14
Community centre	6
Demolish and add to graveyard	1
Playpark	12
Youth club	7
Shop	2

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Multi-cultural centre	1
Irish Arts Centre	3
Off licence	1
Pub	1
Advice centre	2
Tourist office	1
Improve house	2

### 3.4 Survey of school children

Thanks to the co-operation of the principal and staff at St Malachy's Primary school a survey was distributed to children at the school to explore their needs and aspirations in relation to a playground in the village. A copy of the survey and the full results are enclosed as **APPENDIX F**.

127 replies were received. Perhaps unsurprisingly all 127 are in favour of a play park.

The children were presented with 8 different pieces of play equipment and asked to pick the four which would appeal to them the most. The top four pieces of equipment are:

Large multi-purpose unit  
Climbing frame  
Swings  
See saw

### 3.5 Feedback from statutory bodies

A specially designed pro-forma was sent to a range of relevant statutory bodies seeking their views on the issues which affected their remit in Kilcoo. The responses are set out below.

#### **NI Housing Executive**

NIHE identify the following as the key issues facing Kilcoo: lack of available social housing, insufficient play facilities, lack of community centre/hub, lack of local employment opportunities. NIHE has carried out a latent demand survey to identify hidden housing need. The possibility of small scale social housing development is presently being considered by NIHE area planners at Newtownards Area office.

#### **PSNI**

PSNI identify the presence of anti-social behaviour in one of the cul-de-sacs in the village. There are few facilities to engage the youth in the area.

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Residents have complained about traffic speeding through the village. The road through the village is a main arterial route and traffic calming measures have been put in place to help reduce speed in the village. PSNI plan to direct more high-visibility patrols to the area to address anti-social behaviour. PSNI hope to engage more with the local community groups within the next 5 years and be able to attend but it will be a slow progress to be accepted. Nothing is specific at this stage.

## **ROADS SERVICE**

Forward Planning are responsible for undertaking the assessment, prioritisation and implementation of a number of different schemes to improve the safety and efficiency of the road network. The type of road improvements undertaken by Forward Planning Section include:

- Junction improvements;
- Carriageway re-alignments;
- Sightline improvements; and
- Provision of new footway links.

Potential schemes are identified through Route Strategy Studies, the Sub-Regional Transport Plan and requests from members of the public / public representatives etc. In order to make the most effective use of the limited available funding these requests are compared and prioritised to compete for inclusion in future works programmes. To do this we use criteria contained in the Roads Manual which sets out assessment procedures and guidelines. The assessment procedure takes into account the contribution any scheme will make to sustainable transportation principles which include integration, road safety, economy, environmental impact and accessibility.

At present resources for the forthcoming 3 financial years are fully committed and therefore there are no plans at present to carry out any of the fore mentioned improvements within Kilcoo during that period.

At present there are no active requests or assessments for schemes of this nature within Kilcoo. Any requests for improvements as result of your public consultation process would be welcome. Requests received would be assessed for possible inclusion in the next programme of road improvement works in the Down District Council area.

The most recent traffic figures for Dublin Road, Kilcoo indicate an average of 5-6,000 vehicles travelling through the village daily. This was last surveyed in 2012.

Kilcoo Community Association have raised the following matters with Roads Service:

Bog Rd Junction with Bryansford Rd  
Bog Road Cross Roads with Tullaree Rd  
Bog Rd Junction with Dublin Road  
Extend Speed Limit  
Footpath from Hall to Square

### **PLANNING SERVICE**

Kilcoo is a local service centre within the rural area. The Catholic church, gates and railings are listed and the parochial house and its curtilage is a locally important traditional dwelling.. There are important tree groups along the Muddock river and around the church.

### **3.6 Consultation with other local community and voluntary groups**

Invitations were issued to a number of local community and voluntary organisations to meet the consultants to discuss their particular needs or plans.

Kilcoo Gaelic Football Club accepted the invitation and at a meeting with the consultants outlined their plans for the development of their complex which is on the outskirts of the village. The club wish to create a sports centre and to add a handball wall. They would also be supportive of proposals to create a walk past their complex with an outdoor fitness trail.

St. Malachy's Accordion Band met the consultants and outlined their need for new instruments and support for a planned trip for the band to the USA.



## **4. DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **4.1 VISION**

Based on consultations and research the vision for Kilcoo is:

“Kilcoo is a friendly, welcoming and peaceful community in an area of outstanding natural beauty which supports a sustainable lifestyle for all residents, which is renowned for its love of and prowess in culture and sport.”

### **4.2 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

The Village has decided to concentrate its efforts on the following priority themes:

- Improving the local environment
- Improving local services
- Developing the local community
- Improving traffic and transport
- Developing the local economy

In order to achieve each priority a number of actions have been identified. Some of these will be long term i.e. within 4 to 5 years, others will be medium term, i.e. within 3 to 4 years and finally, others will be short term i.e. within 1 to 2 years.

The village has identified the provision of a playground as a priority project. A number of sites were considered but only the site at the Parochial Hall is considered obtainable within the plan period.

<b>PRIORITY: IMPROVING THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>ACTIONS</b>			
<b>1.</b> Provide flower beds, tree planting, additional street furniture and entrance features	Community Association, Down District Council, NIHE, school, Conservation Volunteers, Groundwork NI, Woodland Trust	DRAP Down District Council Sponsorship	Short to medium term
<b>2.</b> Annual Community Clean Up to be undertaken	Community Association, Down District Council, Tidy Northern Ireland, school	DRAP Down District Council Sponsorship	Annually
<b>3.</b> Mount campaign locally to encourage owners to use poop scoops and lobby Down District Council to take action against offenders	Community Association, Down District Council	DRAP Down District Council Sponsorship	Short to medium term
<b>4.</b> Lobby for improvements to derelict buildings	Community Association		Medium to long term
<b>5.</b> Lobby DCC/Roads Service to improve footpaths and lighting between village centre, The Square and the Thierafurth Inn	Community Association		Short to medium term
<b>6.</b> Lobby for provision of bus shelter at Cloncool Crescent	Community Association		Short to medium term

**PRIORITY: IMPROVING LOCAL SERVICES**

ACTIONS			
7. Provision of play ground on site adjoining parochial hall	Community Association, Down District Council	DRAP, NIHE, Down District Council	Short to medium term
8. Provision of youth club and summer scheme	Community Association, SEELB Youth Service	SEELB Youth Service, Big Lottery, Churches, PSNI	Short to medium term
9. Provision of walk and outdoor gym trail between GAA club and Ballymoney Road	Community Association, Down District Council	DRAP, NIHE, Down District Council, Health and Well Being Team	Short to medium term
10. Provide sports centre and handball wall at GAA complex	GAA, Community Association	Sports for All	Short to medium term
11. Explore potential for pitch and putt course	Community Association, Down District Council	Sports for All	
12. Provide community-based defibrillator	Community Association	Health and Well Being Team, sponsorship	Medium to long term
13. Work with health and well-being team in Trust to raise awareness of healthy living options	Community Association	Health and Well Being Team	Short to medium term
14. Devise and deliver programme of activities including meals on wheels, day trips and indoor activities for older people	Community Association	SHSCT	Short to medium term
15. Lobby for improvements to library service	Community Association	NI Libraries	Short to medium term

<b>PRIORITY: DEVELOPING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY</b>		
<b>ACTIONS</b>		
<b>16.</b> Explore potential for acquiring parochial hall as community centre and securing funding for renovation.	Community Association	DRAP, Big Lottery, Down District Council
<b>17.</b> Development of youth club	Community Association	DRAP, SEELB Youth Service, Big Lottery
<b>18.</b> Establish boxing club	Community Association	Sports for All
<b>19.</b> Organise delivery of evening classes	Community Association	East Down Institute
<b>20.</b> Improve communications locally by creating community notice boards, sustaining existing newsletter and creating village Facebook site	Community Association	DRAP
<b>21.</b> Deliver capacity building programme for local community and voluntary groups	Community Association, East Down Rural Community Network	East Down Rural Community Network
<b>22.</b> Support St Malachy's Band to achieve their development plans	Community Association	Arts Council
<b>23.</b> Establish Neighbourhood Watch scheme		

<p><b>24.</b> Ask NIHE to establish demand and need for additional social housing in village</p>	<p>Community Association</p>	<p>NIHE</p>	<p>Short to medium term</p>
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**PRIORITY: IMPROVING TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT**

ACTIONS			
<p><b>25.</b> Lobby for improvements to sight lines at junction of Ballymoney Road with Dublin Road and for top of Bog Road, bottom of Mill Road, entrance to Mill Road at bridge</p>	<p>Community Association, Down District Council</p>	<p>Roads Service</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>
<p><b>26.</b> Lobby for traffic calming measures at specific locations</p>	<p>Community Association, Down District Council</p>	<p>Roads Service</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>
<p><b>27.</b> Ask police to monitor speeding around village</p>	<p>Community Association, Down District Council</p>		<p>Short to medium term</p>

<b>PRIORITY: DEVELOPING THE LOCAL ECONOMY</b>			
<b>ACTIONS</b>			
<b>28.</b> Improve area's tourism potential by developing lough as angling resource with boats for hire etc and perhaps developing walkway round lough	Community Association, Down District Council	DRAP, Down District Council	Short to medium term
<b>29.</b> Encourage local shop to expand by providing off-licence	Community Association		Short to medium term
<b>30.</b> Lobby for improved broadband access	Community Association, Down Business Centre		Short to medium term
<b>31.</b> Explore demand for public transport to facilitate workers travelling to work	Community Association		Short to medium term