

PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan

'Thriving Together'



SEUPB Investment Area 1.1 supports the creation of **Co-Designed Local Community PEACEPLUS Action Plans**. This enables and empowers local community partnerships to self-determine and deliver priority projects on a cross-community basis; which will result in improved, shared, and inclusive local services, facilities, and spaces; and make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.

The Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Action Plan 'Thriving Together' has been developed by the PEACEPLUS Partnership Board, utilising a co-design approach involving comprehensive engagement with the local community and other key stakeholders including statutory providers, public bodies, businesses, and Council DEA (District Electoral Area) Forums.

The Plan focuses on a targeted and locally based response to the specific needs identified during the Plan's development, on meaningful and purposeful engagement, and on engaging people from different socio-economic and community backgrounds, with special consideration given to under-represented groups.

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How to get involved ?

If you would like to get involved in any of the projects that will be delivered throughout the Council Areas (DEA's) over the next two years please click on the link below or use the QR code and complete the online form to let us know which of the projects you are interested in. Please note these are only some of the projects that will be delivered through the lifetime of the programme so keep an eye out for future newsletters to ensure you don't miss out on the exciting opportunities being delivered through our PEACEPLUS Co-designed Action Plan.

If you would like to receive future newsletters please email peace@nmandd.org and ask to be placed on the PEACEPLUS database.

<https://forms.office.com/e/tkS47WStCi>



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Community Engagement Events



Below is a list of community engagement events taking place for you to hear more about the projects being delivered in your area and how to get involved please come along to one of the following events. Please call 0330 137 4949 or visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/newry-mourne-down-district-council

to confirm attendance.

Venue	Date	Time
Newry Leisure Centre	Wednesday 8th April	6-7.30 pm
Hilltown Community Centre	Thursday 9th April	6-7.30 pm
Newcastle Centre	Monday 13th April	6-7.30 pm
Crossmaglen Community Centre	Tuesday 14th April	6-7.30 pm
Down Leisure Centre	Thursday 16th April	6-7.30 pm
Castlewellan Centre	Tuesday 21st April	6-7.30 pm
Ballynahinch Community Centre	Wednesday 22nd April	6-7.30 pm
Online (Teams)	Thursday 23rd April	6-7 pm



A project supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

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What is coming up ?

If you want to get involved in any of the projects listed in this newsletter, please register your interest via the link or QR code on the front page.



District Wide projects

Cross community Civic Pride Programme Bloom and Branch

Inviting participants to participate in this community-led environmental action programme, focusing on enhancing pollinator-friendly native habitats and promoting awareness of pollinators' vital role in biodiversity, ecosystem health and food production across the district. The project will also increase tree cover, enhance biodiversity, and support climate change mitigation.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date Spring 2026

Community led Health and Wellbeing Programmes

This community-led health and wellbeing programme invites local people to get involved in expanding support across the district, improving holistic wellbeing, and reducing health inequalities. Built around four key themes: Active Lives (physical activity and confidence), Mind Matters (everyday wellbeing and resilience), Stress Less (support during stress and crisis), and Strong Choices (empowering healthy decision-making)—the programme offers inclusive opportunities to strengthen long-term community health.

[Register now](#) – Expected Start Date April 2026

The Art of Connection

This intergenerational project will bring participants together to collaborate on creating a meaningful and lasting piece of art, while sharing stories, experiences, and memories across generations. The finished artwork will be proudly displayed at Down Arts Centre, celebrating both creativity and connection. The project will conclude with a special celebration event, offering an opportunity to showcase the work and recognise the contributions of everyone involved.

[Register now](#) – Expected Start date April 2026

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District Wide projects

Delivering Community-Based Social Prescribing Programmes Across Newry, Mourne and Down

The Social Prescribing Programme will deliver 4 initiatives that address social prescribing needs using community-led approaches. Each of the 4 initiatives will be delivered across the Newry Mourne and Down District area. Initiatives will be delivered in the areas of **Social Support:** reducing loneliness and isolation, building confidence and social skills, linking people to community groups, clubs, and volunteering, befriending or peer-support programmes. **Emotional and Mental Wellbeing:** mindfulness, or stress management classes, art, music, or creative therapies, support groups for bereavement, carers, or specific conditions. **Physical Health and Lifestyle:** Exercise and walking groups, healthy eating or cooking classes. **Community Connection and Purpose:** Volunteering or skills-building opportunities and encouraging active citizenship and participation.

[Register now](#) – Expected Start Date April 2026

Council district area projects

Although the following projects are based within specific DEAs we welcome participants from across the Newry, Mourne and Down District area.

Crotlieve

Voices of the Land, Poetry and Songs from Crotlieve: Take part in an inspiring cultural programme combining workshops, guided site visits, and group writing sessions. Deepen your creative practice and discover the rich heritage of the Crotlieve area through shared learning and exploration.

[Register Now](#) – Start date April 2026

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Downpatrick

World Textiles Cultural Programme: Inviting participants to take part in a Cultural Programme "World Textiles" to bring together people from different backgrounds. The aim is to help them learn about textiles, fashion, and costume traditions from different cultures, including local traditions and those from around the world. The programme will explore how textiles and clothing are connected to personal identity, family history, and the wider history of communities.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date April 2026

Cross-community Festival Programme Celebrating Languages Together: The Celebrating Languages Together project will comprise of 2 community led festivals (1 located in Newry and 1 located in Downpatrick) and a series of workshops that will create opportunities for sustained and meaningful contact between groups from different backgrounds. Participants will deliver and design festivals that celebrate shared language skills and celebrate the unique, diverse and multi-cultural language, arts and cultural scene in the NMANDD area. Recruitment will be from P6/7 pupils attending Irish Medium Primary Schools, Integrated Primary Schools, Controlled Primary Schools, Maintained Primary Schools, Polish and other language schools/group in the NMANDD area.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date May 2026

The history of mental health care in Down District: Inviting participants to engage in a project that will use art to explore shared mental health history, challenge stigma, and uncover overlooked narratives at Down County Museum.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date May 2026

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Newry

Capacity Building Events Training for Community Groups:

Inviting participants from community groups to take part in events training. Learn how to plan and manage safe, inclusive and financially sustainable community events. This course will cover first aid and emergency preparedness, safeguarding, stewarding, volunteer coordination and financial management.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date May 2026

Newry Canal and Our Engineering Heritage: Inviting Participants to take part in workshops, talks, and site visits to explore the region's canal history and engineering. You will learn about construction, key engineers, and technical drawing through hands-on activities and guided research.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date April 2026

A History of Social Housing in Newry and Mourne: Inviting participants to participate in this cultural programme that will celebrate the history of social housing communities in Newry Mourne & Down and raise the consciousness of the contribution of socially housed communities in Newry to the history and politics of the city and provide a forum for grassroots engagement regarding the challenges and opportunities of social housing.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start date April 2026

Castles and Tower Houses of East Ulster and Louth: Inviting participants to participate in this cultural programme highlight the rich network of medieval tower houses and castles across East Ulster and County Louth, showing how they illuminate the region's built heritage, shifting settlement patterns, community relationships, land use and ownership, internal and external conflicts, cultural and economic change, maritime heritage, and the development of towns.

[Register Now](#) – Expected Start April 2026

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Although the following projects are based within specific DEAs we welcome participants from across the Newry, Mourne and Down District area.



Rowallane

Rowallane People and Places: is a community led project focused on celebrating the people, places, and traditions of the Rowallane area. The project brings together two key strands: 1. Oral histories of residents, 2. Exploration of significant local landmarks, particularly religious and historic sites of different denominations that relate to these oral histories. The project will capture personal stories, documenting place based culture and heritage. This project aims to strengthen community identity, promote intergenerational engagement, preserve local culture and history for future generations and highlight how these are connected across the communities.

[Register now – Expected start date Spring 2026](#)

Rowallane and Beyond Tastes and Traditions: participants are invited to explore good practice in creating inclusive celebrations, with a particular emphasis on the rich relationship between food and cultural traditions both within the local Rowallane area and around the world. Participants will work collaboratively to plan and deliver a final community event.

[Register now – Expected start date Spring 2026](#)

Slieve Croob

Martin Waddell Project: We are seeking participants for a programme celebrating the work of internationally acclaimed children's author Martin Waddell, whose stories have inspired generations. A Newcastle native, Waddell draws much of his inspiration from the Slieve Croob area. The project will use his works to engage the community, foster cross-community connections, promote literacy, and encourage cultural exploration rooted in the local environment.

[Register now – Expected start date Spring 2026](#)

PEACE Maze: The 'Castlewellan Peace Maze: Connecting Generations' project will be a comprehensive cultural, heritage and community engagement programme marking the 25th anniversary of the Peace Maze at Castlewellan Forest Park. The programme aims to celebrate shared heritage, strengthen cross-community relationships, and create a lasting legacy through creative participation, public celebration and documentation.

[Register now – Expected start date Spring 2026](#)

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Slieve Croob

Nature and Heritage in Harmony Programme: This programme aims to bring people together across Castlewellan through shared environmental, horticultural, and cultural activities. Participants build sustainable living skills, learn about biodiversity, and celebrate local traditions. By encouraging stewardship, collaboration, and cross-community connection, the project strengthens community identity and lays the groundwork for future cultural and environmental initiatives.

[Register now](#) – Expected start date Spring 2026

Slieve Gullion

Men's Shed Podcasting Initiative: We are seeking participants for a collaborative Men's Sheds project. This initiative will bring local sheds together to build practical digital skills such as: recording, editing, and online promotion, while also creating a safe space for open conversations about men's health. The project aims to strengthen connections between sheds and leave a lasting legacy of shared skills, equipment, and experience.

[Register now](#) – Expected start Spring 2026

Sacred Spaces: Chapels, Churches and Meeting Houses of Slieve Gullion: We are seeking participants for a new programme exploring the shared history and cultural significance of the area's historic places of worship. The project will create inclusive opportunities for engagement, strengthen community connections through shared storytelling and digital heritage preservation, and support sustainable communities by celebrating, safeguarding, and digitally archiving culturally and historically important local assets.

[Register now](#) – Expected start date spring 2026

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The Mournes

Disability and Creativity Festival: Register your interest to attend the Blooming Brilliant Arts Festival on **Friday 19th June from 1-4pm**. This celebration runs during learning disability week. It will include Interactive Walkabouts, Green Fairy Storytelling, Face Painting, Circus Workshop, Disco and Participatory Mural Painting.

Our Mournes Our Stories: Inviting participants aged 50+ to join a community film and storytelling project celebrating our shared heritage through interviews, workshops and film. Learn digital and storytelling skills. Meet new people and build connections, be a part of a televised documentary, preserve your story for future generations.

[Register Now Expected Start Date Spring/Summer 2026](#)

Weaving Our Past Into Our Future: This project seeks to revive and celebrate heritage skills through a series of weaving workshops and oral history story circles. By engaging directly with young people and the older generation in the Mournes, the initiative will foster learning and encourage participants to explore innovative ways of preserving and adapting these crafts for the future. Through hands-on experience and storytelling, the project aims to ensure that the legacy of loom weaving remains a living tradition within the community.

[Register Now Expected Start Date Spring/Summer 2026](#)

Flowering in the Mournes

Join us for fun, hands-on workshops, heritage site visits, and inspiring guest talks as we explore the needlework traditions of Newry, Mourne and Down. Learn new stitching skills, help create a beautiful collaborative artwork, and share your story in a digital exhibition celebrating our local heritage. No experience needed, just bring your creativity!

[Register Now Expected start date April 2026](#)

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On the PLUS side



Empowering local voices across the district.

Local volunteers and community representatives have completed training in **Community Journalism and Media skills**. The six-week programme took place in January and February, in the Newry DEA.

Bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and community organisations, the workshops fostered collaboration, connection, and shared learning, empowering local voices across the district.

Participants developed practical skills in storytelling, interviewing, editorial planning, and basic video editing, while building confidence in creating digital content for their communities. The programme also provided a valuable space for dialogue, helping to strengthen relationships and encourage ongoing collaboration between local groups.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with attendees praising both the inclusive atmosphere and the practical value of the sessions.

"Excellent tuition. I learnt a great deal, and it will help me into the future. There should be more projects like this".

The initiative leaves a lasting impact, equipping participants with the tools and confidence to share stories, highlight local issues, and celebrate community achievements, supporting stronger, more connected communities beyond the life of the project.

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Our Delivery Partner **SERC** are delivering the following programmes:

Project Management and Volunteering:

This exciting programme will support participants to identify, plan and deliver a volunteering project in the local community. Participants will undertake the Level 3 qualifications in Project Management and the OCN Level 2 qualification in Volunteering Skills, that will develop planning, management and stakeholder engagement skills.

Introduction to digital skills:

This programme will be delivered through a series of tailored workshops and mentoring to support the development of skills in Social Media and Digital Marketing, Office 365 applications and a greater understanding of the funding landscape. The Skills Development Programme is ideal for anyone engaged in supporting groups across the community and voluntary sector or for anyone who would like to expand their skills in these areas.

Skills for employment:

The Skills for Employment will provide participants with the support they need to develop skills and build confidence and motivation to support their journey onto employment. Participants will undertake the City and Guilds Level 1 Qualification in Employability that will develop the skills, attributes and values that are needed to enter and succeed in the workplace.

Civic Leadership and mentoring:

The programme aims to increase civic participation on a multigenerational basis, including minority and newcomer communities. This is an introductory programme to enable 'tomorrow's community leaders' to develop the necessary skills and knowledge, supported by group mentoring to help build confidence and capability and develop lasting cross-community relationships.

Gender Empowerment:

This programme will provide fun, engaging and innovative activity programmes for single identity gender groups across Newry, Mourne and Down. Through a six-week workshop-based programme, participants can engage in new skills activity based on the needs of the groups.

To get further details on the above and how to register please visit :
www.serc.ac.uk/Peace-Plus-Programmes-for-Newry-Mourne-and-Down-District-Council

A project supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).