

# Greater Monkstown Place Shaping Pilot

## Engagement Report







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## **Greater Monkstown Place Shaping Pilot: Engagement Report**

Produced by PLACE, 2016

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### **PLACE**

Planning Landscape Architecture Community Environment Ltd.

[www.placeni.org](http://www.placeni.org)

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# 1. Introduction

In March 2016 Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council appointed PLACE, in partnership with The Paul Hogarth Company and Ulster University to undertake the Greater Monkstown Place Shaping Pilot.

The purpose of the Greater Monkstown Place Shaping Pilot study is to understand from a spatial planning perspective what can be achieved across this area underpinned by a structured engagement process. The study seeks to establish how assets can be developed or maximised as part of place shaping / community planning process. This document outlines the structured stakeholder and community engagement process and the subsequent findings. The findings and analysis are developed upon in an accompanying document, which outlines the vision for the Greater Monkstown area.

## **PLACE**

PLACE (Planning Landscape Architecture Community Environment Ltd.) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the making of great places across Northern Ireland. PLACE is composed of a multi-disciplinary team combining expertise and extensive experience in architecture, town planning, visual art, curation, design, social science, education, research, community engagement and event management.

## **Paul Hogarth Company**

The Paul Hogarth Company is an award winning placemaking practice, specialising in the related disciplines of Urban Design, Planning and Landscape Architecture. The company operates from three offices in Belfast, Edinburgh and Dublin and works across the UK and Ireland. The work of the practice from policy and strategy through to detailed design and delivery, has been highly regarded, bringing about transformation of urban and rural areas.

## **Ulster University**

Gavan Rafferty is a Lecturer in Spatial Planning and Development in the School of the Built Environment at Ulster University and is a member of the Built Environment Research Institute. He has research experience in the areas of community planning; land use planning and regeneration; and planning reform and modernisation.

Dr Neale Blair is a Senior Lecturer in Planning in the School of the Built Environment at Ulster University and is a member of the Built Environment Research Institute. He has twelve years of research experience in local and trans-national regeneration and development, working with communities and elected representatives in both urban and cross-border contexts.





## 2. Engagement Process

The structured engagement process explored the aspirations of stakeholders and local residents, and specifically how such aspirations could positively contribute to the future development of the Greater Monkstown area. Additionally, the challenges faced by both stakeholders and the local community were raised.

The engagement process involved, but was not limited to: public agencies; elected members; community organisations; voluntary groups; schools; churches; sports clubs; local businesses; and local residents. A series of meetings, engagement workshops and events were held to ensure widespread and effective involvement in the process. The open engagement events provided an opportunity for both local residents and stakeholders to come together to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing Greater Monkstown, in addition to their suggestions / aspirations.

Engagement provided information, insight and access to local knowledge and formed a significant part of the project, fundamental to informing the project outcomes. The following sections outline each engagement session, and the remainder of the document summarises the findings.



Stakeholder engagement at the interactive event, Monkstown Village Centre





MONKSTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

Welcome  
To  
Monkstown



### 3. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was undertaken in various forms throughout the process, inviting key stakeholders to actively contribute to the Greater Monkstown Place Shaping Pilot Project.

Face-to-face meetings were held with a range of stakeholders to include: community planning partners; elected members; Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council; community organisations; and local schools. A comprehensive list is outlined on the following pages. Discussion provided insights into the challenges, needs, assets and opportunities facing the Greater Monkstown area. In addition to a desk based meeting, Three Mile Water DEA Elected Members were invited to a walk around the study area.

All stakeholders were invited to the open interactive engagement events which provided an opportunity for both stakeholders and residents to come together to discuss the issues and opportunities facing the area. Additionally, aspirations and desired / planned developments were explored. During the open engagement events, additional stakeholders were involved, including additional local community organisations and groups.



Key stakeholders discussing issues together



# Stakeholders

## Community Planning Partners

### **Housing Executive NI**

Sharon Crooks (and Team)

South Antrim Area Manager

### **Northern Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT)**

Hugh Nelson

Planning and Improvement

10

### **Public Health Agency (PHA)**

Elaine O'Doherty

Health and Well-Being Improvement Manager

### **Libraries NI**

Michael Lynn

Area Manager

### **Education Authority**

Ray Gilbert

North Eastern Region

### **Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)**

Arthur Davidson

Chief Inspector, Antrim and Newtownabbey District Command

### **Invest NI**

Moirá Loughran

Regional Business Manager, Eastern Region

## Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

### **Areas at Risk**

Connor O'Dornan

Areas at Risk Co-Ordinator

## Elected Members

### **Alderman Fraser Agnew MBE**

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

### **Alderman Pamela Barr**

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

### **Councillor Stephen Ross**

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)



## Community Organisations

### **Monkstown Village Centre**

Alan Johnston

Development Manager

### **Monkstown Community Forum**

David Hunter

Director

### **Monkstown Community Association**

Mark Cooper

Representative for South Antrim Ctrl Housing

## Local Schools

### **Abbey Community College**

Maria Quinn

Principal

### **Hollybank Primary School**

Bill Fletcher

Principal



Meeting with Elected Members







## 4. Community Engagement

The structured community engagement process involved a series of workshops and events. An inclusive approach was adopted to ensure a range of public involvement, to subsequently inform the project outcomes.

Specific workshops were conducted with targeted groups, including; Good Morning Newtownabbey, Monkstown Boxing Club and Abbey Community College. The targeted approach ensured the participation of more vulnerable groups; older and younger people. The sessions allowed people to actively participate in a familiar setting, with the aim of encouraging engagement; an approach which proved successful. A number of unique activities, tailored to each group, included: gathering historic photographs with older people; and photo uploads to social media by young people.

Additionally, two open and interactive community engagement events were held. The events were open to everyone and were widely promoted through social media, mailing lists, flyers and posters in local shops, businesses, community organisations, schools and churches. These were also successful in engaging with a variety of local residents and stakeholders. Unique activities undertaken included: creating a 'wish line'; and completing Place Standard.

All community engagement took place in an interactive format to encourage active input. Engagement identified the opportunities and challenges faced by local people and explored participant's aspirations and desired / planned developments.



Young people outlining their key issues, Monkstown Boxing Club







## Good Morning Newtownabbey: Older People's Group

*Wednesday 11 May: 12noon - 2pm*

A group of 17 older people living in Monkstown participated in an interactive engagement workshop. Over lunch the group showed and discussed old photographs they had brought along to the session, illustrating how the area had changed over the years. The group reflected on changes in Monkstown, which proved an effective method in provoking discussion.

Secondly, in an interactive mapping exercise, participants explored their use of the physical environment. In smaller groups, they illustrated their daily routes by drawing directly onto large maps and discussed the challenges and opportunities faced in the built environment. The group also discussed how they felt in certain parts of the environment and outlined their aspirations. Each small group was facilitated by a colleague from PLACE or Ulster University.

Additionally, older people identified their priorities around both service provision and the built environment. They discussed the required / desired changes to better enhance their quality of life.





# Good Morning Newtownabbey: Historic Photographs



Contrast between the boundaries in a current image (left) and a photograph from the late 1960's / early 1970's (right)



In a unique activity during the workshop, participants of the Good Morning group were asked to bring along old photographs. With many of the group having lived in Monkstown for between 30 and 50 years, This provided a unique insight into how the area had changed. generally the group responded positively to changes, often reflecting fondly on their residence in Monkstown.

Participants from the Good Morning Newtownabbey Group showing a selection historic photographs they had gathered







## Monkstown Boxing Club: Young People's Group

*Thursday 12 May: 7pm - 8pm*

Nine young people formed a group from Monkstown Boxing Club. Initially, an introductory session was held with the young people. The purpose of their involvement in the project was outlined. In a unique task, the group were encouraged to explore and critique their surrounding environment and take photos and upload them to social media over the following week, before the next session. As an incentive, the person with the most uploads to social media received a cinema gift voucher. The hashtag #monkstownni was used, allowing all images to be found online.

*Thursday 19 May: 7pm - 9pm*

At the subsequent workshop, the enthusiastic group presented and discussed the photos they had uploaded to social media. They outlined their opinion on specific aspects of the local environment and services. This provoked discussion among the group regarding their vision for the area, in addition to conversation about their own opportunities and future in the area.

Additionally, the young people engaged in an interactive session to map their use of the physical environment. They discussed local assets, opportunities and challenges, and also explored service provision. These were drawn directly onto large maps; one of the immediate area and one of the wider geography. Comments were added with coloured post-it notes. The young people expressed how they felt in different parts of the environment and their links with particular services.



Young people's group, Monkstown Boxing Club



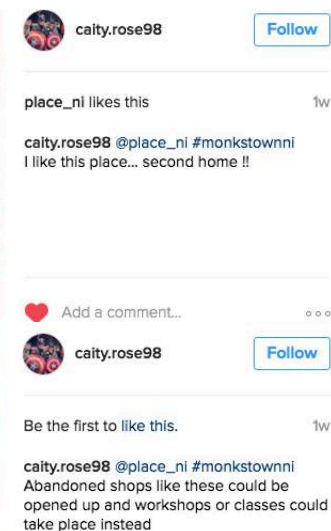
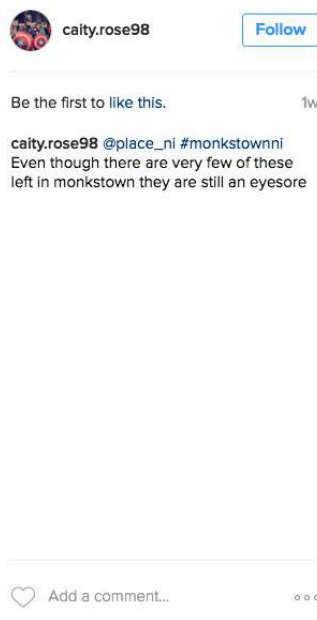
A young person presenting her photo uploads to social media



# Monkstown Boxing Club: Social Media Photo Uploads

## #monkstownni

20



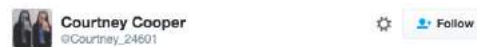
During the workshop the young people presented and discussed the images and comments they had uploaded to social media of Monkstown



The green bridge in Monkstown, Newtownabbey. It is falling apart. @PLACENI



4



Monkstown bonnie area in a state @PLACENI #monkstownni



1



Be the first to like this. 1w

caity.rose98 @place\_ni #monkstownni  
I really like this idea of building allotments for the community and I think there should be more

♡ Add a comment...



27 images were uploaded in total. All photos are available at #monkstownni on Twitter and Instagram







## Abbey Community College: Young People's Group

*Thursday 26 May: 9am - 10.30am*

A group of ten young people participated in an interactive engagement workshop. The group formed by the School Council offered representation across a range of ages. The objective was to understand the relationship young people have with the area. This was particularly insightful given that a significant proportion lived outside Monkstown, and generally only spend time in Monkstown to attend school.

The exploration focused on both their physical and spatial use of the environment, which was mapped throughout the workshop; both in the immediate area and the wider geography. Participants identified their common routes and places they visit, drawn directly onto large maps. This provoked both the positive and negative aspects to be discussed. The group indicated how they felt in the area. They also identified places where they felt welcome and unwelcome / unsafe, and subsequently made suggestions for required improvements.

Additionally, the young people explored the services throughout the area. They identified these on the maps and attached post-it notes to comment on each. They identified which aspects worked well, suggested where additions were required, and where some services needed to be more accessible.



Young people's group, Abbey Community College



Mapping session with young people's group



**CCTV  
WARNING**  
IMAGERY MAY BE USED IN SUPPORT OF  
THE POLICE FOR CRIME PREVENTION  
AND FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION  
AND THE PROTECTION OF YOUR  
PROPERTY AND PERSONAL SAFETY  
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT  
www.cctvwarning.co.uk

# Monkstown Village Centre

Registered Office: Monkstown Community Forum





## Monkstown Village Centre: Open Community Engagement Event

*Thursday 2 June: 3pm - 5pm*

Local residents and stakeholders were invited to engage with the process of developing a vision for the Greater Monkstown area. In addition to widespread promotion, the pop-up event was held outdoors on a summer's day to maximise visibility and encourage involvement. The event provided an opportunity to discuss the study with a wider audience in an informal setting, encouraging people to actively engage.

The event consisted of a number of informal activities to capture information, insights, local knowledge and the views of participants. In an interactive activity, people were asked to write a vision for the area which was hung on the 'wish line'. More specific desires were drawn and written on large maps and post-its. Participants were encouraged to discuss the wider geography around large base maps. Each participant also completed a Place Standard survey to evaluate what aspects work well and which require improvement in their area.

Over twenty people participated in the event, and included local residents, a number of key stakeholders. Stakeholder representation included: NIHE; Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council; Libraries NI; The Woodland Trust; South Antrim Community Network; Abbey Presbyterian Church; and Hollybank Primary School.



Stakeholders and residents in discussion at engagement event



Participants outlining their vision for the area







## Monkstown Jubilee Centre: Open Community Engagement Event

*Thursday 2 June: 7pm - 9pm*

The engagement event held at the Jubilee Centre followed the same format to the earlier event at Monkstown Village Centre. Similarly over twenty participants were in attendance. Key stakeholders provided representation from: NIHE; Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council; the Church of the Good Shepard; and other local community organisations.

The objective of both events was to provide an informal and relaxed environment to capture and understand local perspectives on both the physical characteristics of the area and of service provision. In both events this was conducted over light refreshments provided by local bakeries. Participants were encouraged to engage directly with the facilitators and to actively draw directly onto maps, make notes on post-its, add their vision to the 'wish line' and provoke discussion with each other. The informal setting also facilitated discussion between residents and key stakeholders.



Interactive community engagement event at Monkstown Jubilee Centre



Discussing people's vision for the area



# Tweets: Promotion and Feedback #monkstownni

28

**Antrim&Newtownabbey**  
@ANBorough

Following

Help shape the future of your place - All welcome. Light refreshments provided



## Help shape the future of your place.

**Thursday 2 June**  
Monkstown Village Centre: 3 - 5pm  
Monkstown Jubilee Centre: 7- 9pm  
All welcome. Light refreshments provided.

We invite you to an interactive event. Help us identify your priorities and shape the future of your area. This will develop a vision for regenerating Monkstown and its surrounding area.

RETWEETS 8 LIKES 5



12:30 PM - 31 May 2016

**Monkstownboxingclub**  
@monkstownboxing

Follow

Great planning session with @PLACENI @ANBorough developing vision for #monkstownni #youngwomensgroup



RETWEETS 3 LIKES 6



8:55 AM - 13 May 2016

**Monkstown Boxing Club** at Monkstown Boxing Club.  
31 May · 🌐

Want to help shape the future of community services? This consultation gives everyone in Monkstown an opportunity to have their say.



Like Comment Share

PLACE Built Environment Centre, Pamela Barr, Molly Douglas and 3 others

Write a comment...

Engagement events were promoted widely and feedback captured through social media



**ThePaulHogarthCo**  
 @PaulHogarthCo



Following

Great days #MonkstownNI consultation in collaboration with @PLACENI @UlsterUni for @ANBorough & @nihecommunity



RETWEETS

4

LIKES

9



8:24 PM - 2 Jun 2016


 4
  9
 



**Monkstownboxingclub**  
 @monkstownboxing



Follow

Helping shape a new #vision for #monkstownni with #MBC #youngwomensgroup @PLACENI @ANBorough #communityplanning



RETWEETS

6

LIKES

12



7:38 PM - 19 May 2016

Monkstown, Northern Ireland


 6
  12
 



**Gavan Rafferty**  
 @grafferty



Following

Locals actively shaping the vision of their area #MonkstownNI #engagement #place-shaping #communityplanning



RETWEETS

5

LIKES

10



8:22 PM - 2 Jun 2016

Monkstown Community Centre


 5
  10
 





## 5. Findings: Stakeholders

This section outlines the key issues raised by each of the stakeholders during individual meetings.

### NI Housing Executive

- Desired regeneration around Abbey Town Square, new housing development and the impact of bonfire sites was raised.
- The need for alternative temporary accommodation for the homeless with greater support was noted.
- Mental health issues and the subsequent impact on managing a home, and the need to provide practical support for vulnerable people was highlighted.
- The need to sustain and build upon assets including a strong sense of community in Monkstown and established community organisations was raised.
- Opportunities for social enterprise were encouraged.
- Further community capacity building was called for.

### Health and Social Care Trust

- Suggested that addressing health inequalities should be integrated into all sectors and must become a priority, encouraging a preventative approach to overcoming / addressing health challenges.

- People must be encouraged to improve their own health.
- Ensure spatial planning facilitates a healthy, supportive and dementia friendly environment.
- Centralised services must become more visible with people encouraged to travel to them, and minor issues addressed on a local / community scale.
- Advocated a less buildings based community health service, encouraging well-being hubs.
- Called for communities to be empowered through training and for community infrastructure to be supported to create strong and resilient communities.
- Social enterprise was encouraged.

### PHA

- Focus on mental and emotional well-being and develop a good quality of life.
- Highlighted the need for improved connections to health services as many are often perceived as not being local.
- Raised the importance of the surrounding geography and advocated enhancing mobility and health and well-being mobility through spatial planning.
- Ensure partnership working to address inequalities effectively.
- The positive impact of community planning was noted.

### Libraries NI

- The integration of library services was called for to ensure



sustainability.

- Highlighted the need to positively promote libraries and engage with deprived communities and young people in particular.

### **Educational Authority NI**

- Highlighted negative perceptions around schools in Monkstown and consequently the decision by often middle-class families to enrol children in schools outside the area, which deepens divisions between low and mid attaining young people.
- Called for middle class parents to be encouraged to send children to local schools with an opportunity to integrate across socio-economic divisions.
- The opportunity for schools to open facilities to the local community and to further enhance partnerships.
- The need to further build community capacity was suggested.
- The integration of health and well-being was highlighted as a priority.

### **PSNI**

- The positive work of volunteers within the community sector was noted and suggestions made for more sustainable community infrastructure. The community organisations in Monkstown were commended for their positive impact.
- Calls were made for the exchange of information between organisations to become easier and more efficient.
- Consequence management was raised as a huge challenge.

- The need for small and positive things to happen was advocated and for the 'broken window' theory to be implemented. (i.e. for the community to take pride in addressing small issues, before larger problems occur.)
- Challenges around governance were highlighted with suggestions of a single entity with overarching responsibility to release funds.
- Suggested more support for community groups, particularly in regard to administration.
- The need for a space to hold pop-up parks as distraction events from anti-social behaviour was raised. Highlighted the need to focus on the youth.

### **Invest NI**

- Encouraged building on the close proximity of Monkstown to Belfast.
- Advocated encouraging a change in people's mind-set in regard to traveling for employment outside the area, particularly to Belfast.
- Suggested the focus of Monkstown should be on matching skills to jobs in Belfast, accessibility to jobs in Belfast and providing appropriate accommodation.
- The lack of demand in area by businesses for space and subsequently the sufficient growing space for businesses in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Council area was noted.
- Highlighted the positive impact upon thinking as a result of Community Planning.

## Areas at Risk

- Raised the issue of a heavy reliance upon volunteers within the community sector and noted its potential unsustainability.
- The need to further enhance community capacity building and the sustainability of services was advocated.
- Called for local positive assets including community organisations, local churches, shops and green spaces to be built upon.

## Elected Members

- Noted that surrounding affluent areas are disadvantaged in regard to the lack of facilities.
- Called for the need to ensure Monkstown is more sustainable.
- The need for more health services, particularly around men's health and domestic violence was raised.
- Called for greater education around dog fouling.
- Opportunities for a greenway were raised as controversial among residents. Nevertheless, the potential for it to be lit, busy and a positive asset was noted.
- It was highlighted that Hollybank Primary School gravel pitch and allotments are closed during school holidays. Calls were made for greater community involvement in such facilities.
- Members called for new housing developments have good physical linkages to the surrounding area.
- Encouraging people to think more inspirationally was suggested.
- Action orientated project outcomes were advocated, requiring both short term and long term goals.

## Monkstown Village Centre / Monkstown Community Forum

- A significant number of single older people living in larger houses were noted, with the need to make them available for families by providing retirement dwellings.
- Encouraging social enterprise was advocated.
- Highlighted the need for increased resources, including physical buildings and funding.
- The enhancement of the edges of Monkstown to better connect with surrounding areas and to increase footfall for the shops and services in Monkstown was put forward.
- Noted the need to develop skills before job opportunities arise.
- It was outlined that generally good relationships exist across the community, however greater cooperation between community groups was requested.
- Moylinney House was suggested as a potential development for mixed housing or incubator units for business start-up. Abbey Town Square was suggested as potential site for training.
- A proposed vision for a self-sustaining, vibrant, productive place where people want to live and stay was expressed.

## Monkstown Community Association

- More housing in the area was called for.
- Suggestions for increased social enterprise and improved sustainability were put forward.
- Raised the need for increased inclusiveness for older people and the need for more events and interaction.





- Encouraged a focus upon integrating health and well-being.
- Noted the assets in the area including Monkstown Boxing Club and support groups such as Lifeline.
- Opportunity for Moylinney House as a potential social enterprise and/or emergency accommodation were proposed.

### **Abbey Community College**

- Highlighted the substantial problem of drugs, alcohol and mental health among young people and the need for appropriate services to address such issues.
- Commended the work of and positive relationships with local community organisations, particularly of Monkstown Boxing Club and Monkstown Village Centre.

### **Hollybank Primary School**

- Noted the negative impact of murals on perceptions of the area registration numbers to the school and consequently the re-imaging of murals was called for. Suggestions were made that re-imaging should be undertaken along side social housing development.
- The need to encourage families into the area and need to increase pupil numbers by ensuring Monkstown is welcoming to all was raised.
- A lack of things for older young people to do (14-17yrs) to do was highlighted and suggestions made for a potential focus on dance and music in a similar capacity to the positive impact of Monkstown Boxing Club.

- Antisocial behaviour on the school pitch / grounds in the evenings and weekends was highlighted.
- Need to re-energize the school as a hub of the community was proposed.
- The opportunity for school pitches to be managed by a comprehensive community forum and to form a self supporting hub of the community, with the potential for a dance studio, similar to facilities at Nettlefield Primary School was proposed.

### **In summary, key findings include:**

- Developing healthy communities
- Housing for the life cycle
- Building on existing assets and services
- Developing community capacity and sustainability
- Ensuring a good quality of life and overcoming divisions
- Implementing opportunities for physical regeneration and enhancement



“Monkstown is a good  
place to grow old in”

COMMUNITY BUS  
FROM MONKSTOWN  
TO TEXAS/HOUSE

## 6. Findings: Community

### Good Morning Newtownabbey, Older People's Group

The key themes from the engagement workshop with the Good Morning Newtownabbey group include:

#### **Maintenance of the local area**

The need to improve the maintenance of the estate was widely raised. This included: repairing footpaths and pavements, removing weeds, improving green spaces, removing rubbish left outside people's houses and addressing dog fouling. There was a general feeling for a need to upgrade Monkstown estate:

*"(Address) cleanliness and presentation for all the estate – presentation of inside of the estate"*

#### **Housing Provision**

The need for housing generally was raised as a priority. There were more specific calls for bungalows from the older group.

*"Social housing is required including (for the) older age group"*

#### **Accessibility and Infrastructure**

The Three Mile Water walkway was considered a huge asset for walking and cycling. Additionally, it's positive connection to the Lough Shore was

noted. However, the lack of a railway halt and metro system were raised as negative aspects. The challenge of accessing hospitals was raised specifically.

*"(It is) difficult to get to hospitals other than Whiteabbey (Hospital)"*

#### **Growing Old in Monkstown**

Generally Monkstown was considered a good place to grow old, however some improvements were suggested. Safety concerns of crossing the main roads, particularly as the Spar shop on the Jordanstown Road, were highlighted. Participants suggested the need for a path to provide easier access to the bungalows for the elderly. Others noted the need to improve the alleyways, explaining that they are often used as an alternative to the steeper walk up the main road. Night classes and 'special places of piece and quiet' were suggested. Assets in the area were noted, however some suggested there was not enough for older people to do.

*"Good Morning Newtownabbey (is) a good system, especially for widows and widowers. (The) social side is important."*



A close-up photograph of a person's hands. The right hand holds an orange marker with the word "CHUNKY" on it, writing on a yellow sticky note. The left hand is visible, wearing a silver bracelet. There are other sticky notes (green, pink) and a pen on a desk surface.

“I would like to see the area have a good reputation”

# Monkstown Boxing Club, Young People's Group

The key themes from the engagement workshop with the Monkstown Boxing Club group include:

## Local Community Assets

Local businesses, churches, schools and youth groups in the area were all noted as assets. Monkstown Boxing Club in particular received exceptional and genuine praise by the young people.

## Murals and Bonfires

Debate occurred around the need for murals and bonfires, with some considering them an eye sore and others expressing the need to retain their heritage. However, more positive mural were called for:

*"Paint more positive murals"*

## Natural and Green Space

A significant number of safety concerns were raised in regard to the Three Mile Water walkway. Young people were keen to use this space but called for improvements. These include: signage, lighting and for it to be better maintained. They also felt unsafe and intimidated at the area around the viaduct and therefore avoided the area.

*"Three Mile Water (is) an asset for recreation and to clear your head"*

*"The Bridge - (it's an) area of intimidation - interface between*

*Whiteabbey and Monkstown - makes it feel unsafe along the walkway."*

## Allotments

A number of the participants were keen for the allotments at the Village Centre to be more widely accessible to the whole community. They called for the use of allotments to be further encouraged and for more allotments and community gardens in the future.

*"Use additional spaces for growing and allotments"*

## A Change in Perceptions

The young people were very keen for Monkstown to be reflected in a positive light. They called for: the negative stigma they had identified to be address; for divisions to be overcome; and for Monkstown to be "known for something good" and to hold "more positive events".

*"I would like to see one community - no unnecessary divisions"*

## Future Opportunities

The majority of the young people felt they would have to move out of Monkstown, and in many cases beyond Northern Ireland, to seek opportunities in the future that they feel are not currently available to them.

*"There are not enough opportunities (here)"*



“Not enough opportunities in the local area for young people”



# Abbey Community College, Young People's Group

The key themes from the engagement workshop with the young people at Abbey Community College include:

## Community Facilities

Monkstown Boxing Club, Abbey Community College and the local churches were highlighted as huge assets. Nevertheless, calls were made for: more summer activities in the area; improved football pitch facilities; and greater openness of the Village Centre. Some young people claimed: *"I didn't know we were allowed in the Village Centre"* and *"(They) don't let the older ones into the Green Hut (Village Centre) anymore"*. Concern was raised among younger people of a potential large food store having a detrimental effect on independent shops. A number of participants come to Monkstown only to attend school but were keen to get to know more about the local Monkstown area.

*"(There is) not enough to keep the younger kids on the straight and narrow"*

## Natural and Green space

The Three Mile Water walkway was considered an asset and many of the young people were keen to use the path as an alternative route home. However they raised the need for lighting.

*"The Wood is good for walking home as it's a nice change of scenery"*

## Traffic and Transport

Young people considered the area outside Abbey Community College to be dangerous in regard to traffic. They called for a zebra crossing or an extension on the pedestrian crossing, particularly at peak times. Buses were noted, in a negative light, as being extremely busy during peak school times.

*"The cars needs to be more careful around pedestrians"*

## Future Opportunities

Similar to the group at the Boxing Club, the majority of the young people felt they would have to leave Monkstown in the future as they considered there not to be enough opportunities for them. Some extended this as a need / desire to move beyond Northern Ireland.

*"In the future I would like to move away - new chances"*

*"Not enough opportunities in the local area - jobs etc."*





“My vision is to have improvements to the physical environment”



# Monkstown Village Centre, Open Engagement

The key themes from the open engagement event with the community and stakeholders at Monkstown Village Centre include:

## Community Assets, Events and Hubs

Both Monkstown Boxing Club and Monkstown Village Centre were highlighted as particular assets. Hollybank Primary School was discussed in regard to being developed as a community hub. There were also calls for more clubs and also more places for groups to meet. An emphasis was placed on opportunities for intergenerational activities.

*“(Hollybank) Primary school should be a hub rather than an institution”*

## Murals and Bonfires

Discussion was varied around murals and bonfires. Some participants claimed that the bonfires did not impact them, while others expressed their preference for a beacon, and some would prefer not to have one at all. A number of people also expressed that they would prefer not to have murals and feel they have to apologize to people visiting the estate because of intimidating murals.

*“If I had my way there would be no bonfires and flags”*

## Natural and Green Space

Both Monkstown Wood and the Three Mile Water walkway were considered assets, however a number of suggestions were made to improve their use and safety. Safety was raised as a major concern. Paths were considered to be too narrow by some. Improved access and signage was raised in regard to both. The benefits of making greater use of green spaces was raised.

*“‘The Bridge’ (is a) hot spot for anti-social behaviour”*

## Housing

Suggestions were put forward for greater flexibility in housing choices, appropriate housing for older people in particular, and the need to speed up the house building process to meet needs.

*“Need more appropriate housing – bungalows are not just for older people”*

## Maintenance of Local Area

Calls were raised for the estate to be better maintained, rubbish to be lifted, and for more respect to be given to the area.

*“Enforce dog fouling fines – need to have a warden in the estate”*





“My vision is to make Monkstown a safe, clean and vibrant community for all”

# Monkstown Jubilee Centre, Open Engagement

The key themes from the open engagement event with the community and stakeholders at Monkstown Jubilee Centre include:

## Physical Regeneration

Abbey Town Square and Moylinney dominated discussion in regard to physical regeneration. Participants were very keen for both sites to be regenerated. The community was particularly concerned that many old people are now having to be relocated to nursing homes outside the area as a result of Moylinney's closure.

*"Abbey Town Square (needs) cleaned up and rebuilt"*

## Maintenance and Vacancy

A number of participants commented on the need to address vacancy and local vandalism in the area. The need to generally clean up the estate and address dog fouling was raised.

*"(Address) empty shops, the loss of jobs and incomes, and an untidy and unsafe area"*

## Accessibility and Communication

Suggestions were made for the need to make the Jubilee Centre feel more accessible. It was also suggested that simple additions are made

to community facilities in the area to ensure people know what is on, such as more prominent notice boards and signage.

*"Simple things such as signs to show what is on in the community centre"*

## Community Facilities

The need to make better use of community facilities was raised, particularly the local churches. It was advocated that the churches are integrated into the community, by holding more events, where everyone is made to feel welcome. Calls were made for more facilities at the bottom of the estate, such as a play park.

*"Use the facilities of the churches for events"*

## Facilities for Younger People

Concerns were raised that there was not enough for young people to do. The subject of drugs and alcohol was discussed, with the need to break the cycle and educate very young children about the impact. Calls were made for a facility similar to that of the successful Monkstown Boxing Club, around music, dance and drama to be established.

*"A music and dance youth group is needed to engage young people and keep (them) out of trouble"*





“My vision is for  
housing for all ages”

Help shape the  
future of your place  
This way



# Developing a Vision

Participants of the two interactive open engagement events at Monkstown Village Centre and Monkstown Jubilee Centre were asked to express their vision for the Greater Monkstown area. Participants were given a vision card to complete. They were asked to complete the sentence: “my vision is...” This provided an opportunity for the community to think of the area more widely, and encouraged them to identify the most important aspects to them. Completed cards were then pegged to the ‘wish line’, allowing others to read the anonymous comments, which provoked discussion.

37 vision cards were completed across the two events. A range of themes were covered across the cards. These included: housing; community facilities; the physical environment; enhancing existing assets; developing relationships; improving communication; further enhancing community pride; and improving quality of life for vulnerable people.

The vision cards, in addition to the other engagement findings led the development of the project outcomes.



Residents completing vision cards, Monkstown Jubilee Centre



Vision cards displayed on a visionary 'wish line', Monkstown Village Centre



# Vision Cards: 'Shaping Your Place'

## Shaping YOUR Place

My vision is...

to have a village  
market, which could be  
linked to the allotments.

## Shaping YOUR Place

My vision is...

a lovely Clean  
AREA So all people young  
& Old can enjoy  
Monkstown

Selected vision cards completed by participants during the interactive open engagement events

## Shaping YOUR Place

My vision is...

A place that  
the whole community  
enjoys and ~~is~~ proud of .

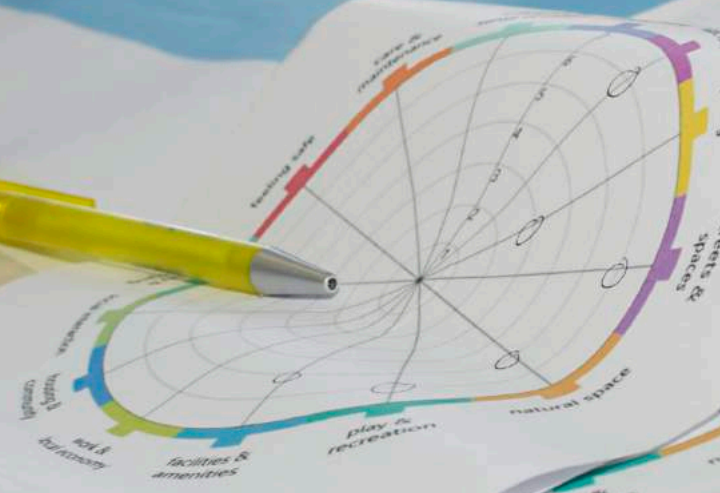
## Shaping YOUR Place

My vision is...

MAKE BETTER USE  
OF MONKSTOWN  
WOODS .

Thirty-seven vision cards were completed by the community





# Place Standard

A novel Place Standard<sup>1</sup> tool was introduced at the two open and interactive community engagement events, one at Monkstown Village Centre and another at Monkstown Jubilee Centre. The purpose of this exercise was to let local residents assess what works well in their locality and what aspects of their place could be improved. In particular, it encouraged people to think about the physical and social environment around them, to quickly illustrate what can be considered as assets in the area, and what needs to be prioritised to enhance community well-being and the quality of the place. It's a fun and simple exercise that anyone, whatever their age or background, can quickly complete.

At the event, the paper-based exercise consisted of a compass (wheel) diagram with a different Place Standard theme/topic along each line (axis), which each participant rated using the scale 1 to 7, where 1 indicates there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement.

The Place Standard exercise was valuable for both residents and facilitators, as it generated conversation about the local place and encouraged everyone to justify how they rated each theme. The thirty fully completed diagrams were collected and an average rating for each theme was generated based for each engagement location - Monkstown Village Centre and Monkstown Jubilee Centre – and combined to consider any comparisons.



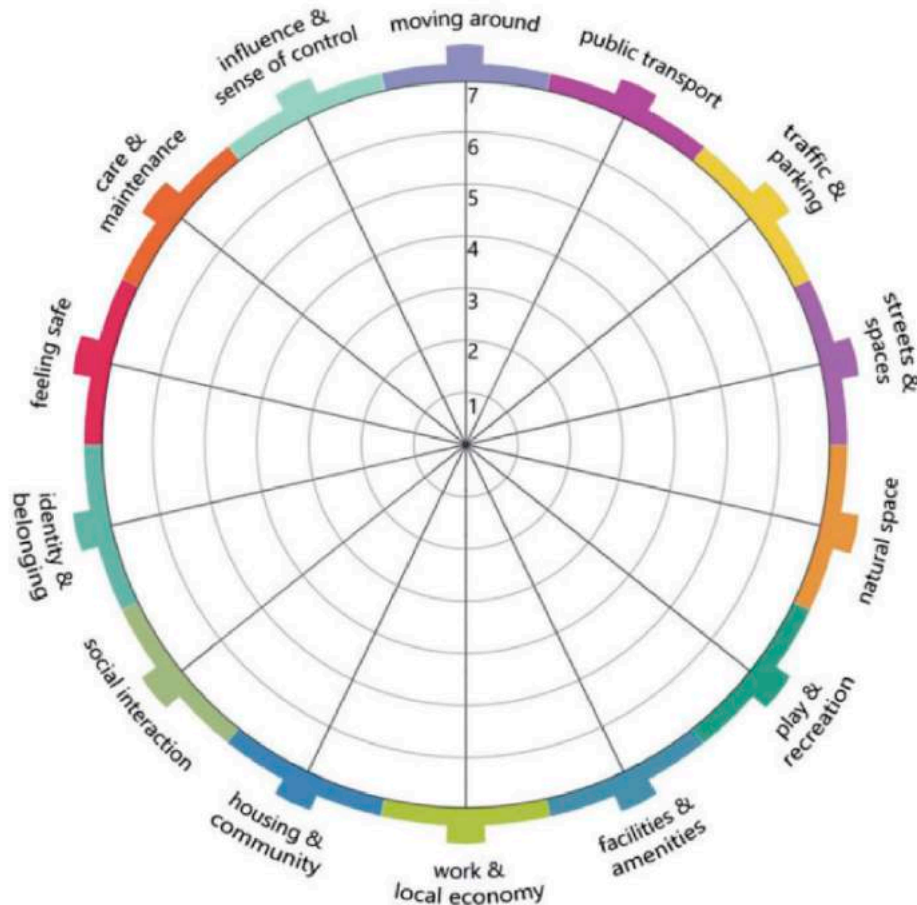
Residents completing Place Standard, Monkstown Jubilee Centre



Stakeholders completing Place Standard, Monkstown Village Centre



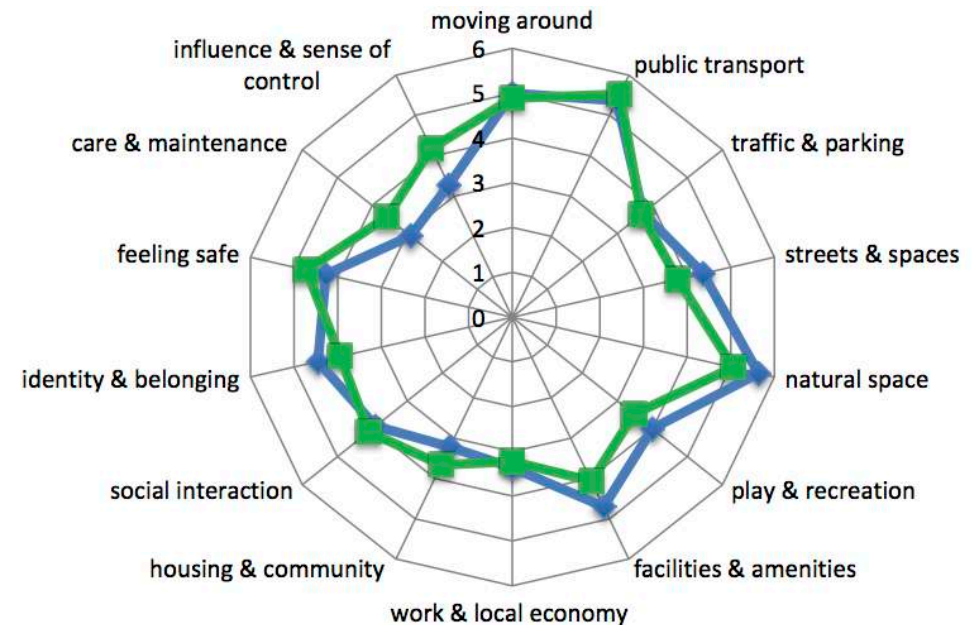
# Place Standard



Place Standard compass diagram

<sup>1</sup> The new 'Place Standard' tool has been designed in partnership with the Scottish Government, Architecture and Design Scotland and NHS Health Scotland to support the delivery of high quality public places. Further information available at: [www.placestandard.scot](http://www.placestandard.scot)

The findings from the Place Standard exercise are illustrated on the diagram below. Results from the Village Centre are represented in green, and those from the Jubilee Centre are illustrated in blue. The overlaying of results allows the two to be easily compared and illustrates the similarities in opinion between the people at both engagement events.



Results of Place Standard analysis

# Place Standard: Analysis

The simple framework does show that the results from both engagement venues are similar. Most of the highly ranked themes – or assets – of Monkstown are ‘public transport’ and ‘natural space’, followed by ‘moving around’ and ‘feeling safe and identity & belonging’.

## Public Transport

Many of those that attended the events thought public transport services do, generally, meet their needs. No substantial issues were raised in discussions with people about the quality of the public transport in the area. This may indicate that the public transport services are, generally, very good and cater for a range of users.

## Natural Space

People appeared to appreciate the range of different environments in the area, for example, the woodlands to the southwest of Monkstown, and the surrounding green spaces and views of Carnmoney Hill. However, further exploration with participants at the workshops highlighted that the connection between Monkstown (estate) and ‘The Woods’ could be improved. There were concerns about personal safety and anti-social behaviour that hinder people using ‘The Woods’ and accessing the green corridor linking Glen Park (to the SE) and Three Mile Water Conservation Park (to the NW). There was very little reference made to using these natural spaces for health and well-being reasons

and benefits. The surrounding natural spaces appear to be valued, but underused.

## Moving Around

There was a general perception that the routes in the local neighbourhood were easy to navigate, which may be because of the intimate knowledge local residents have of their surrounding geography. Most routes do provide direct links to local services, such as shops and to public transport. However, some comments were raised about the mobility of older people, particularly those lower down in the estate, having to walk up to access shops and services. There was no mention of cycling by those at the workshops.

## Feeling Safe and Identity & Belonging

Generally, most people feel safe in the area, but some negative features affect how people ‘feel’ about their place. For example, a number of people stated that empty/derelict properties are an eyesore. In addition, some people referred to anti-social behaviour in the area, particularly from young people, and some highlighted this occurring in the green spaces (‘The Woods’). In part, feeling safe may also be due to the fact that people have a strong sense of belonging to the place and a collective community identity associated with Monkstown. However, some mentioned that further work to promote the historical, heritage and cultural assets of the place could be enhanced to strengthen (intergenerational and community) bonds, attract tourism and to present the place in a more positive way.

Some place qualities that require a degree of improvement would be



traffic & parking, work & local economy, housing & community, care & maintenance, and influence & sense of control.

### **Traffic & Parking**

The average mid-range rating may indicate that there are traffic and parking issues. The place appears to be dominated by traffic and parked cars, particularly around the Village Centre, which has a negative impact on people's daily lives – and how they perceive the Village Centre as a civic space for the surrounding community. Several participants highlighted car parking issues around apartment complexes in the estate.

### **Work & Local Economy**

54

It appears that there is room for improvement in creating a thriving local economy, so local people have job opportunities and/or the support services to find and keep work. There are vacant units in the Village Centre. Some of the challenges of improving employment and economic well-being in the area may be related to the value placed on education and/or long-term (mental) health issues.

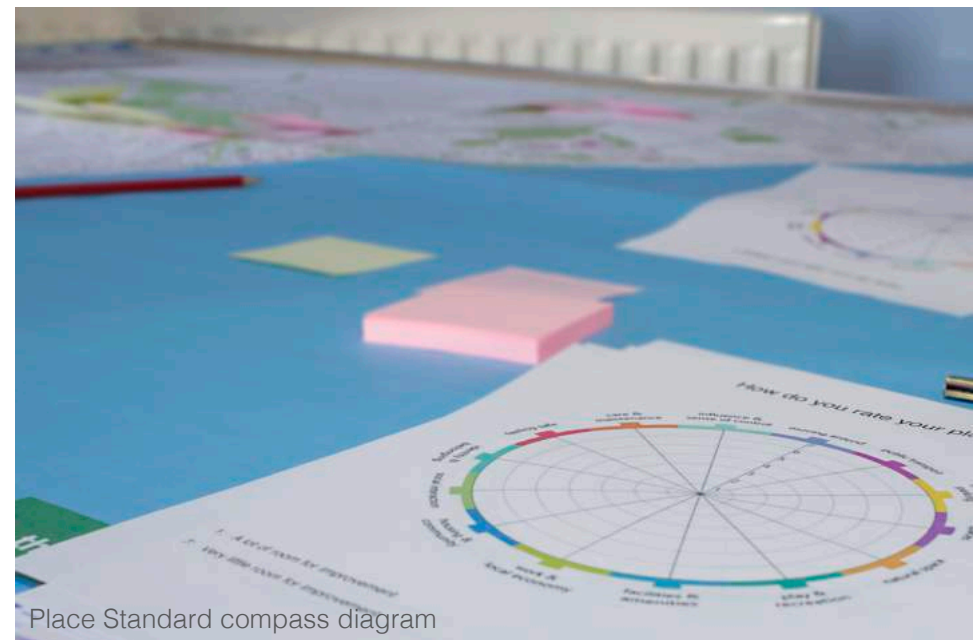
### **Housing and Community**

While there is a mid-range rating for housing, quite a lot of participants highlighted the need for a better range of housing types and tenures to meet the demands of those living longer and for younger people from the community being able to access social or affordable housing. Linked to this is the care and maintenance quality, because several participants also mentioned that some residents do not look after their

property. Some of the challenges, for example, the ability for residents to maintain a household or possess adequate life-skills for independent living, are compounded by the lack of different service providers sharing information and sharing responsibility to address complex, interconnected social problems.

### **Influence & sense of control**

Linked to the above, people also thought that they are unable to contribute to decisions that affect them. There could be further room for improvement in empowering local people to actively work with the local council and service providers to co-design solutions and, where possible, for the community to deliver solutions.



Place Standard compass diagram

## 7. Key Themes

The key themes derived from the engagement findings are outlined:

<b>Community:</b>	A clear sense of identity and affinity with Monkstown amongst its residents.
<b>Housing:</b>	A perception of housing need to include a more sustainable mix of type.
<b>Facilities:</b>	A relatively good range of services and facilities in comparison to adjacent, predominantly residential suburban areas. Some notable absences however (e.g. Health, Large Supermarkets).
<b>Centres:</b>	An evolution of small but important neighbourhood centres, currently the 'Village Centre' and Jennings Park and previously Abbeytown Square. Future sustainability of these a key issue.
<b>Health:</b>	Concern over health issues, including addiction and associated behaviours.
<b>Fragmentation:</b>	A complex dynamic of spatial and social divisions occurring across socio-economic factors (income, health, education etc), generations,

local organisations, housing tenures and loyalist identities. Also physical barriers caused by transport infrastructure, street networks, natural features and landuse distribution. Fragmentation coupled with issues of communication.

<b>Perceptions:</b>	Some negative, largely external perceptions of Monkstown influenced by historical events, perceived antisocial behaviour and the physical environment (including vacant buildings and spaces, litter and paramilitary symbols).
<b>Landscape:</b>	A major natural resource on the doorstep of Monkstown, although local usage influenced by perceptions of safety.
<b>Opportunities:</b>	Specific sites with development potential, including housing, Moylinney House, Abbeytown Square and Village Square allotment site.

The findings and analysis are developed upon in the accompanying document, which outlines the vision for the Greater Monkstown area.







## 8. Feedback

### Monkstown Community Day: Open Feedback Event

*Saturday 13 August: 10am - 4pm*

Monkstown Community Association held a community day titled 'Love Your Monkstown'. Throughout the day a clean-up of the estate was conducted. This was followed by a BBQ and the provision of a range of family events including a bouncy castle and face painting. The findings and draft objectives of the Monkstown Place-Shaping Pilot project were presented. Six large boards were displayed on easels and people were encouraged to provide feedback: verbally, by attaching post-it notes with comments and completing anonymous feedback forms. Young people were also encouraged to take part through drawing their 'Future Monkstown'.

### Antrim and Newtownabbey Council: Briefing to Elected Members and Council Officers

*Monday 15th August: 4.30pm - 6pm*

Together the project partners presented the Greater Monkstown Place-Shaping Pilot to Elected Members and Council Officers. The extensive engagement process, subsequent analysis findings, and draft objectives were outlined by the project team. This was followed by questions from members and officers, discussion and feedback.



Monkstown community clean up event



Briefing to Elected Members and Council Officers



# GREATER MONKSTOWN



Antim and Newlabbey  
Housing Executive

INT  
PLACES

# GREATER MONKSTOWN

### HOUSING

A photograph of a modern housing development with several houses and a green lawn.

### FACILITIES

A map showing various facilities in the area, including schools, parks, and community centers, marked with different colors and symbols.

### FRAGMENTATION

A map showing fragmentation of the area, with a pink outline indicating a specific zone and labels for distances like 2.5 km and 1.5 km.

### OPPORTUNITIES

A map showing opportunities in the area, with pink and green shapes indicating different zones or potential developments.

LOT

ING PILOT



# Feedback: Community

## Main Issues and Opportunities for the Area

The issues and opportunities raised during the feedback event were consistent with those highlighted throughout the community engagement process. A number of people at the event had previously been involved in prior events / workshops, while others were new to the process. Discussion centred on maintenance, vacancy, anti-social behaviour, access to services and communication. This clarified the importance of the themes identified from the analysis of engagement findings.

## Draft Strategic Objectives

The draft objectives were presented on the large boards. When questioned about which aspects of the draft objectives were the most important, the general feedback was that there was not one single objective that was more important than the another. The following responses were provided:

“All aspects (from the draft objectives) are important - they link together to help provide better community infrastructure and outlook”

“Cohesive Community - but it really requires the whole mix (of objectives) together”

“Housing, Landscape and Community”

Additionally, the idea of strengthening the core of Monkstown (along the Jordanstown Road) was generally well received.









## Additional Ideas

When asked to provide any other creative ideas for Greater Monkstown, responses included a sensory garden along the walkway, special needs facilities, and more groups for younger children.

## Reinstate Linkages

Generally participants were keen for a link to be reinstated at Jack's Lane, between the Monkstown Estate and residential area of The Brambles and Mount Pleasant:

“(I) would like to see the link at Jacks Lane (reinstated)”.

Several people commented on the positive impact this could have on the independent shops on the Jordanstown Road. Nevertheless, some participants felt the link had been removed to separate social and private housing developments and had since become comfortable with that. A change in mindset around social and private housing is required.

## The Engagement Process

Participants commented on their positive experience throughout the engagement process of the Greater Monkstown Place-Shaping Pilot.

“The whole process was brilliant. The manner and helpfulness of everyone running it was brilliant”

However, others noted their desire to be keep updated.

“(I) would like to be told what is happening in Monkstown”

The importance of maintaining the direct communication with residents on the future of this process is therefore necessary.



Participants completed feedback forms on the draft strategic objectives



Young people illustrated their 'future Monkstown'



# GREATER MONKSTOWN

<b>COMMUNITY</b> 	<b>HOUSING</b> 	<b>FACILITIES</b> 
<b>CENTRES</b> 	<b>HEALTH</b> 	<b>FRAGMENTATION</b> 
<b>PERCEPTIONS</b> 	<b>LANDSCAPE</b> 	<b>OTHER</b> 

**FINDINGS**  
**PLACESHAPING**



# GREATER MONKSTOWN

**POSITIVE CONNECTIONS**



**SHED**  
**CAPE**  
**OBJECTIVE**  
**APIN**

# GREATER MONKSTOWN





# Feedback: Elected Members & Council Officers

## Future Physical Development and Regeneration

- The process was recognised as a good opportunity to discuss how potential sites should be developed in the future and how they should be considered in the context of the whole area.
- It was recognised that the current proposal for the Nortel site has similar layout issues as in the Brambles area, where as a result of the layout, permeability is poor. Discussion centred on avoiding this occurring again.
- The desire to engage with Housing Executive to discuss the future of Abbey Town Square and the process going forward was raised. It was acknowledged that some people who have bought dwellings in Abbey Town Square will now have trouble selling their properties given the poor state of the development.

## Increase Green Space Use

- Highlighted the opportunity to better use the green space to the front of the Church of the Good Shepard.
- In regard to the potential of a greenway, there was a call made for elected members to visit successful examples such as the Conswater Greenway.
- The need to undertake further survey work along the Three Mile Water walkway was discussed.

## Improve Health & Well-Being

- Opportunities to encourage greater use of the Three Mile Water walkway and natural resources was raised, coupled with improving

heath and well-being, through initiatives such as Couch to 5k. The potential of introducing Beat The Street, which encourages walking in a particular area through the provision of distance markers was also raised. An opportunity for Highway to Health to be introduced was also raised.

## Developing Community Pride and Relations

- The importance of building community moral and pride in the area was discussed.
- Put forward the need to change the mind set of people around social and private housing.

## Maintaining Momentum and Immediate Initiatives

- The importance of maintaining momentum with the project was noted.
- The potential for a group of community representatives to be formed to pursue the implementation of the strategy was put forward.
- Consistent programming was a considered as a positive way of maintaining momentum and building moral and pride within the community.
- Improved signage was also noted as a possibility in the short term.
- The need to address simple aspects around the viaduct was noted, for example signage and the need to offer improved orientation for people.





Lake  
Wabigoon  
Pond  
+  
Wabigoon  
Cave

Wabigoon

Wabigoon

PLACE and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council would like to thank everyone involved in the engagement process, including: community planning partners, elected members, community organisations, local schools; and local residents. PLACE would also like to thank the individuals, groups and organisations for assisting in the organisation of workshops and events, and in extending their hospitality to host workshops / events.



