

# 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.

Your DEA	
Crotlieve	4
Downpatrick	4
Newry	5
Rowallane	6
Slieve Croob	7
Slieve Gullion	8
The Mournes	8
Good News Stories	9
SERC	10

### 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](mailto:peace@nmandd.org) and ask to be placed on the PEACEPLUS database.

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



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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

#### 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 March 2026

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

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### District Wide projects

#### Transformation and Reimaging Programme



Transformation and Reimaging Programmes are designed to transform and re-image individual or collective areas within a community in a manner which challenge initial perceptions and increases levels of shared pride. Across the District these programmes will take place in 21 areas; Hilltown, Ballyholland, Warrenpoint, Ballyhornan, Ardglass, Killough, Armagh Road/Greater Linenhall Area, Carnagat / Derrybeg, Dublin Road, Ballynahinch, Crossgar/ Kilmore, Shrigley/ Derryboye /Darragh Cross, Drumaness, Drumaroad, Annsborough, Jonnesborough, Newtownhamilton, Cullyhanna, Newcastle, Annalong, Bryansford.

[Register now to join these programmes](#)

#### Community-Based Social Prescribing Programmes

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 District area. Social Prescribing 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 to join these programmes](#)

#### Social and Emotional Support programmes

Community groups, youth organisations, and interested individuals across Newry, Mourne and Down are invited to register for a place in our upcoming Social and Emotional Support Programmes.

A dedicated facilitator will deliver 21 programmes, three in each District Electoral Area, designed for young people aged 12–18. Each programme will focus on building resilience, addressing bullying (including online bullying), and developing key skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, self-confidence, and positive peer support.

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

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### 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**

#### **Cultural programme 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. Lead by singer Collen Savage from Oriel event and singer, songwriter and storyteller Colum Sands.

**Register Now – Dates 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> June 10am – 1pm**

#### **Sustainably Served from Kitchen to Market**

This project will support local home-based and small-scale food and drink enterprises to adopt sustainable and environmentally responsible business practices, develop market readiness, and build new relationships across the industry. The project will culminate in a showcase event, where participants will have the opportunity to sell their products directly to customers, through a pop-up store or market stall.

**Register Now – Expected Start date June 2026**

#### **Downpatrick**

#### **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 June/July 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 to join this programme](#)

### Cross-community Festival Programme Celebrating Languages Together

The Celebrating Languages Together project will comprise of 2 community led festivals (1 located in Newry DEA, 1 located in Downpatrick DEA) 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 District. 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 District area.

[Register Now to join this programme](#)

## 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 June 2026](#)

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### **Newry**

#### **Sustainably Made, Ready to Trade**

This programme will work directly with local producers, makers, growers, creatives, and early-stage enterprises, supporting them to improve sustainability, develop market readiness, and build new relationships across local home industries. The project will culminate in a showcase event, where participants will have the opportunity to sell their products directly to customers, through a pop-up store or market stall.

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

### **Rowallane**

#### **Rowallane People and Places**

A community led project focused on celebrating the people, places, and traditions of the Rowallane area. The project brings together two key strands: oral histories of residents and 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 to join this programme](#)

#### **Rowallane and Beyond Tastes and Traditions Festival**

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 to join this programme](#)

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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.



### 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 to join this programme](#)

#### 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 legacy through creative participation, public celebration and documentation.

[Register now to join this programme](#)

#### Voices and Traditions Shared Summer Scheme - Drumaroad

This one-week programme brings children from different community backgrounds together to explore the diverse cultural traditions found across the island of Ireland. Through music, sport, storytelling, crafts and shared creative experiences, the programme aims to build friendships, understanding and confidence among young participants. This project will use culture, arts and sport as a shared space for peacebuilding, enabling children from different community backgrounds to learn, play and create together.

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

#### Create & Connect Programme – Ballykinlar

A cross-community capacity building and creative skills programme designed to bring together people from different community backgrounds in Ballykinlar and surrounding areas. Through a blend of creative workshops, team building, and a shared excursion, participants will build confidence, develop traditional Arts, Crafts and Sporting skills, while strengthening local connections.

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

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### Slieve Gullion

#### Sacred Spaces: Chapels, Churches and Meeting Houses of Slieve Gullion

We are seeking participants for "Sacred Spaces: Churches, Chapels and Meeting Houses of Slieve Gullion," 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 to join this programme](#)

### The Mournes

#### Disability and Creativity Festival

Register your interest to attend the Blooming Brilliant Arts Festival on:

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### 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 to Join this programme](#)

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## On the PLUS side



### "Flowering in the Mournes" Programme Blossoms at Bagnall's Castle Launch

Flowering in the Mournes launched on Wednesday 14th May at Bagnall's Castle, bringing together 22 women from across the district for a unique journey into local heritage. The programme aims to reconnect participants with traditional practices while promoting learning, wellbeing, and community connection. The event opened with a talk from curator Shan McAnena, who explored the history and cultural significance of flowering in the Mournes, followed by a guided museum tour. One attendee shared how discovering flowering pieces among her late grandmother's belongings inspired her to join and reconnect with her family history, reflecting the programme's emotional impact. Artist Úna Curley will support participants in creating their own flowering handkerchiefs, while a planned visit to the Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum will further explore traditional crafts. The programme promises a meaningful and enriching experience, offering a supportive space for participants to learn, reflect, and connect.

### Newry Canal and Our Engineering Heritage Project Launches at Bagnall's Castle

A new and exciting Newry Canal project was officially launched on the evening of 6th May at Bagnall's Castle, drawing almost 30 attendees for an inspiring start. The event opened with a fascinating historical talk by Geraldine Foley, titled *Bogs, Battles and Barges*, which offered a rich insight into one of the oldest pieces of infrastructure on the island of Ireland and the first summit-level canal in both the UK and Ireland. The project focuses on connection, creativity, and celebrating the engineering heritage that shaped Newry. The launch marked the beginning of a journey that will see participants explore the canal more closely, uncovering its hidden stories and unlocking the secrets of its past in a meaningful and engaging way.

### Beautiful Warrenpoint' Committee enjoys inspiring visit to Randalstown

Members of the Beautiful Warrenpoint committee recently undertook a successful and informative study visit to Randalstown as part of their ongoing efforts to enhance the town's environmental and aesthetic appeal.

This study visit formed part of a wider capacity-building initiative aimed at strengthening local organisations through meaningful cross-community collaboration.

Randalstown, which was proudly named Ireland's Best Kept Town 2024, welcomed the group for a guided tour showcasing its award-winning approach to community collaboration, sustainability, and presentation. During the visit, committee members had the opportunity to explore the town's initiatives firsthand, gaining valuable insight into best practices and innovative ideas that contributed to its national recognition.

The visit included a comprehensive walk through Randalstown, where local representatives shared their experiences, challenges, and successes in achieving and maintaining such a high standard. The exchange of knowledge and ideas proved both practical and inspiring for the Warrenpoint delegation.

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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](http://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).