

# Shaping the future

## Your Vision for Ballygowan



**Since May 2024 Ards and North Down Borough Council have been undertaking a comprehensive engagement process to develop a new Ballygowan Village Plan.**

The engagement process was designed to gather a diverse range of input through various methods, including public workshops, involvement of community groups and local schools, engagement at public events, on-street surveys and online surveys. This approach helped to ensure all members of the community were provided an opportunity to share their views.



Primary School Drawing Competition winners with Mayor of Ards and North Down, Alistair Cathcart Bangor City Hall 2024.

- Thank you for your participation in the engagement process and the invaluable feedback you provided.
- Did you meet us at Ballygowan Community Centre on the 25 June 2024 when we held a public engagement drop-in session?
- Did you catch us in your village completing on-street surveys, or did you complete your survey online?
- We enjoyed a visit to meet with the pupils at Alexander Dickson Primary School and Carrickmannon Primary School.

We have collated all the information received through the various forms of engagement and developed a series of proposed priorities and actions. Please have a read and tell us what you think. Feedback can be provided online at [www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/article/2141/Current-Engagement-Opportunities](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/article/2141/Current-Engagement-Opportunities) or scan the QR code.



Closing date for feedback on proposals: 12noon on Friday 28 February 2025

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## How you currently view Ballygowan...



## What you told us is desirable about Ballygowan...

- Respondents identified the **retail heart** of the village with a wide selection of shops owned by local people providing high quality local produce as highly desirable. The shops provide a wide range of produce while still remaining local and in walkable distance for a majority of the residents
- Respondents appreciated the **connectivity** links from the village to surrounding areas, which allows rapid commutes to Belfast City Centre for work or leisure. These transport links also allow residents to travel to Downpatrick, Comber or Newtownards with ease. Additionally, links to Strangford Lough and the surrounding countryside were mentioned.
- The **community spirit** is very prevalent in the village with people identifying the friendly and welcoming nature of locals to everybody and anybody who uses the village. The village hall was also noted for providing community events throughout the year for all to enjoy. The schools are also shown as highly desirable from respondents and detailed as “fantastic and community driven”, and also the playparks available.

## What you think are the Unique Selling Points for Ballygowan...

- 1 Respondents stated that the most unique selling point of Ballygowan is the **rural location combined with strong connectivity and transport links** to the surrounding areas. The village as such serves as a quiet, peaceful residential area but remains close to larger settlements including Belfast, Downpatrick, Comber and Newtownards.
- 2 The **community** in the village was identified as a unique selling point, with Ballygowan described as friendly and welcoming. Respondents highlighted that many families have lived in the area for several generations, contributing to the close-knit community spirit.
- 3 Ballygowan is home to a variety of **high-quality, family-owned businesses** providing local amenities to the village population. Despite its small size, the village enjoys a variety of different shops, takeaway options and other amenities.

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Why you think people visit Ballygowan...



## How you feel about Ballygowan...

104 respondents shared their **positive** feelings about the Village, some of the comments received:

*"It's a great wee place"*

*"I wouldn't think of living anywhere else"*

*"Love living here and raising my young family"*

*"Living there for 9 years and love the community spirit, fundraising within the village and the rural life"*

*"The people are lovely"*

120 respondents shared their **negative** feelings about the Village, some of the comments received:

*"Needs modernising"*

*"Lacks a 'heart', suffers from unsightly area adjacent to pharmacy."*

*"It could be a lovely village if it was tidied up"*

*"Nothing to do for children within the village"*

*"It is not invested in and never seems to get a decent budget from the council or local government. It seems like it's forgotten about"*

*"I feel there could be improvements as quite often people who drive through the village do so at speed and without care for the area"*

## What you told us is undesirable about Ballygowan...

- The most undesirable aspect of Ballygowan was identified as **traffic and parking conditions**. Lack of suitable parking in the village centre and for Park & Ride along with consistent speeding by by-passers was identified as undesirable. This also extends to the road network with potholes and resurfacing needs being highly mentioned.
- The **lack of a wider variety of facilities** was identified as undesirable. Respondents state that there is a need for more amenities in the area aimed at occupying children and young people, which may help to address the concerns relating to anti-social behaviour.
- **Dereliction** ranked highly undesirable with the main emphasis on the area beside the pharmacy due to the location being in the village centre and causing an eyesore for any visitors to the village. In terms of the visual appeal of the area, many residents also raised their concerns over the **presence of flags**.
- Concerns were also raised over the **lack of maintenance** including weeds, litter and dog fouling. Grass cutting in green spaces was also mentioned with emphasis on children's play parks needing attended to.

# Shaping the future

How the young people of Ballygowan describe their village...



What the young people of Ballygowan like about their village...

## ✓ Play Facilities

Play Park | Football Pitch

## ✓ Shopping

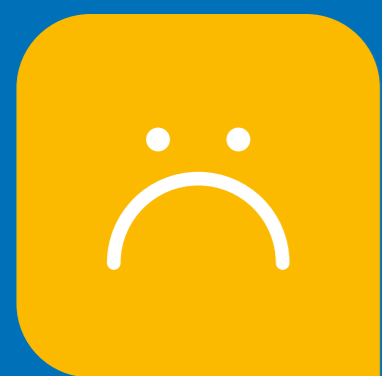
Wide Variety of Shops Available

## ✓ Hospitality

High Quality Takeaway Restaurants

## ✓ Community

Community Spirit and Summer Schemes



What the young people of Ballygowan do not like about their village...

## ✗ Lack of activities and facilities for older children

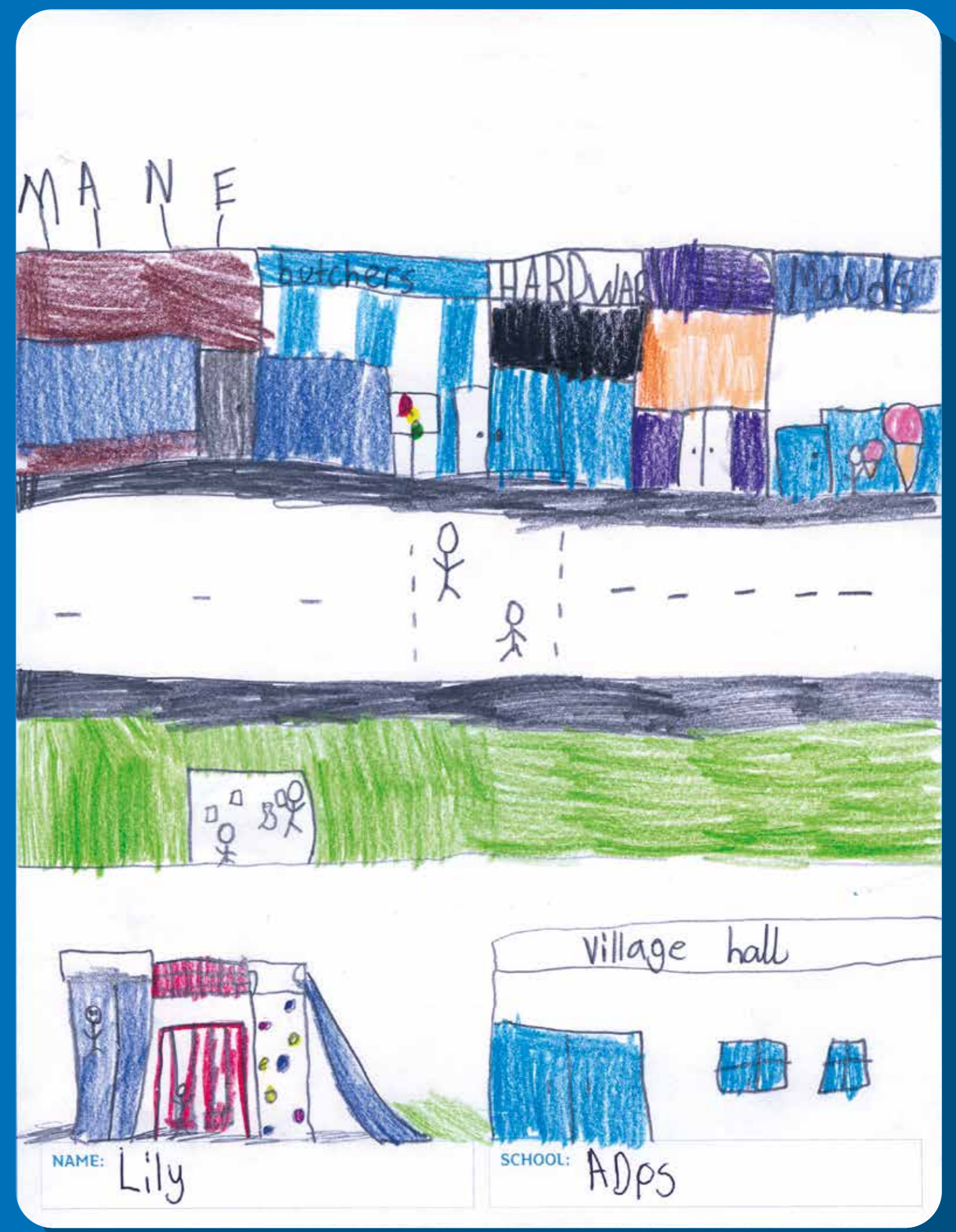
Not enough clubs available to join and some facilities are aimed at younger children

## ✗ Lack of maintenance

Litter and dog fouling prevalent on streets

## ✗ Speeding vehicles

Anti-social behaviour at night and unsafe driving/speeding during the day



Alexander Dickson Primary School – Competition Winner  
“Draw what you think makes your village the best”

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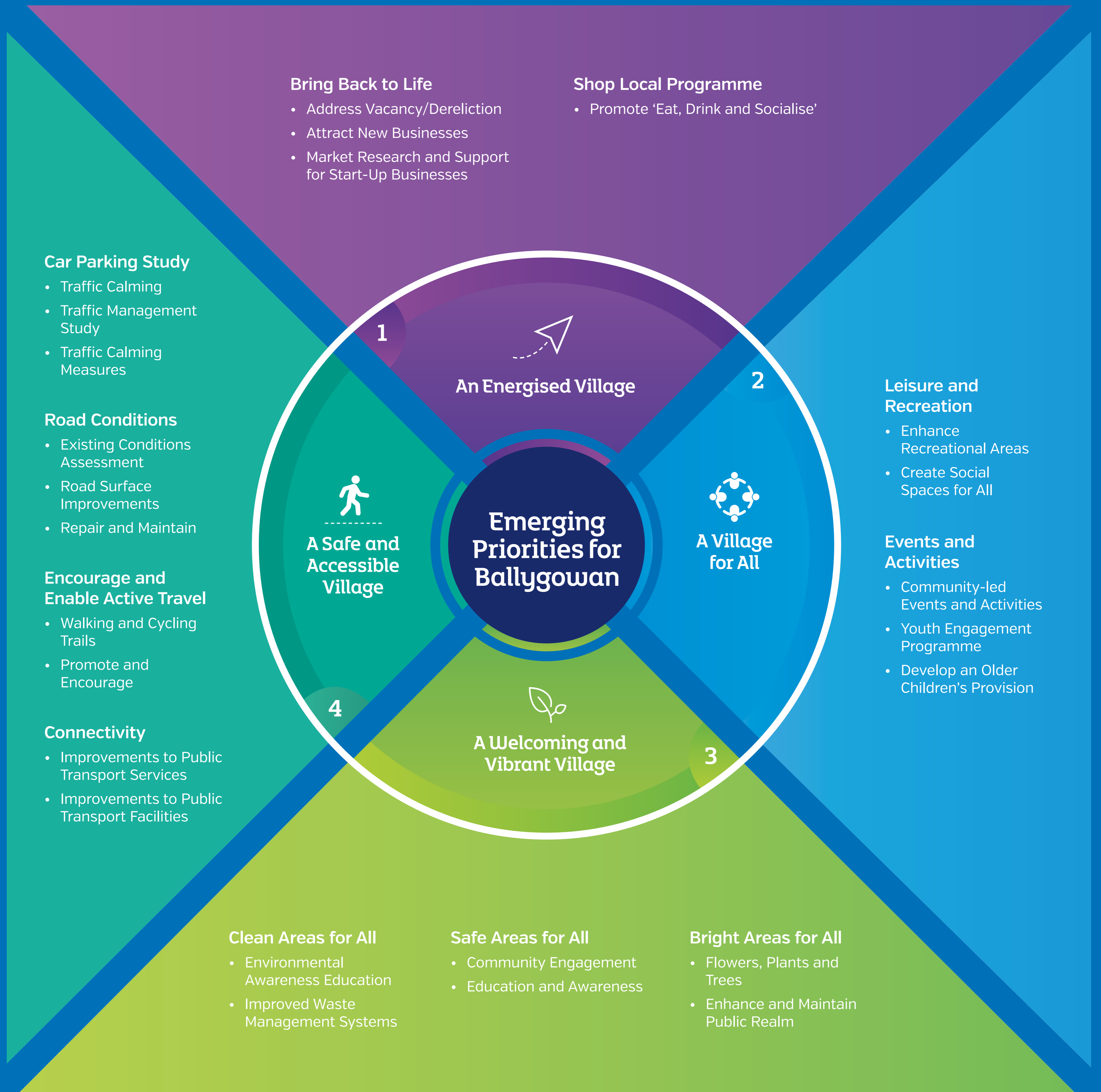
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## The Vision

“To be a sustainable village which is a thriving place for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services as well as being a great place to live”

High Street Task Force, NI Executive



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