

Shaping the future

Your Vision for Portaferry



Since May 2024 Ards and North Down Borough Council have been undertaking a comprehensive engagement process to develop a new Portaferry 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 Market House on the 28 August 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 St Mary's Primary School and Portaferry Integrated 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 or scan the QR code.



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

For further information visit www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/villageplans or email us at village.plans@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

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How you currently view Portaferry...

What you think are the Unique Selling Points for Portaferry...

- 1 The most recognised unique selling point for Portaferry is its **Blue Connections** offered by its location on Strangford Lough, complimented by the Ferry Service along with a marina and scenic shorefront that provides picturesque views and scenery, making it an attractive destination for both leisure and exploring.
- 2 Portaferry boasts **Unique Facilities** including the only aquarium and seal sanctuary in Northern Ireland, Exploris Aquarium. Additionally, The Portico of Ards hosts a variety of cultural events for residents and tourists alike to enjoy.
- 3 The **Community** in Portaferry was highly recognised as being very welcoming and friendly, with locals having a very caring ethos.
- 4 Portaferry's **Heritage** was recognised as it is steeped in rich history with links to both maritime and agricultural history from the surrounding areas all brought together in this market town.



What you told us is desirable about Portaferry...

- The **People** of the village are highly recognised for their friendliness. The strong **Community Spirit** and active community groups create a sense of belonging amongst residents. The Gala Week, organised by the community collective, was highly complimented for its professionalism and ability to bring the community together for the celebration.
- The **Blue Connections** to the lough are highly desirable, offering breathtaking scenery, stunning views and access to the water and nature, making it an appealing destination for everyone to enjoy.
- The village's unique settings make this a **Unique Destination** with picturesque scenery, charming rural atmosphere, combined with ease of accessibility, making it highly desirable.

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Why you think people visit Portaferry...

How you feel about Portaferry...

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

"I love it"

"It's been my home for over 60 years and I have no plans to leave it because I love everything about it"

"Friendly, community spirited"

"Wonderful village with wonderful people"

"I love Portaferry. I could think of nowhere better on earth. Again, our community spirit, our spectacular views far out reach those of other "AONB". It is definitely a hidden gem"

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

"Not enough investment in it"

"Dereliction an issue"

"Becoming congested and parking is difficult at times especially at shore front"

"I feel it needs a bit of attention, there are a lot of big old buildings which suited the old industries of the town but now they're all listed and unsuitable for what we need now. There are small business parks but no central client to draw people to them and bring local employment"



What you told us is undesirable about Portaferry...

- The main undesirable regarding the village was the **lack of ongoing maintenance**. General maintenance such as litter, dog waste and overgrown weeds were highlighted, and the condition of the existing infrastructure such as poor pavement conditions potholes and lack of adequate footpaths.
- Concerns were raised about the **lack of adequate facilities** in the village, particularly the limited options available for young people and inadequate public toilet provisions.
- Respondents identified **traffic and car parking** as significant issues, primarily due to the high volume of vehicles, excessive speeds and insufficient car parking facilities, which collectively contribute to safety concerns.
- Respondents acknowledge the prevalence of **dereliction and vacancy** within the village, both residential and commercial.

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



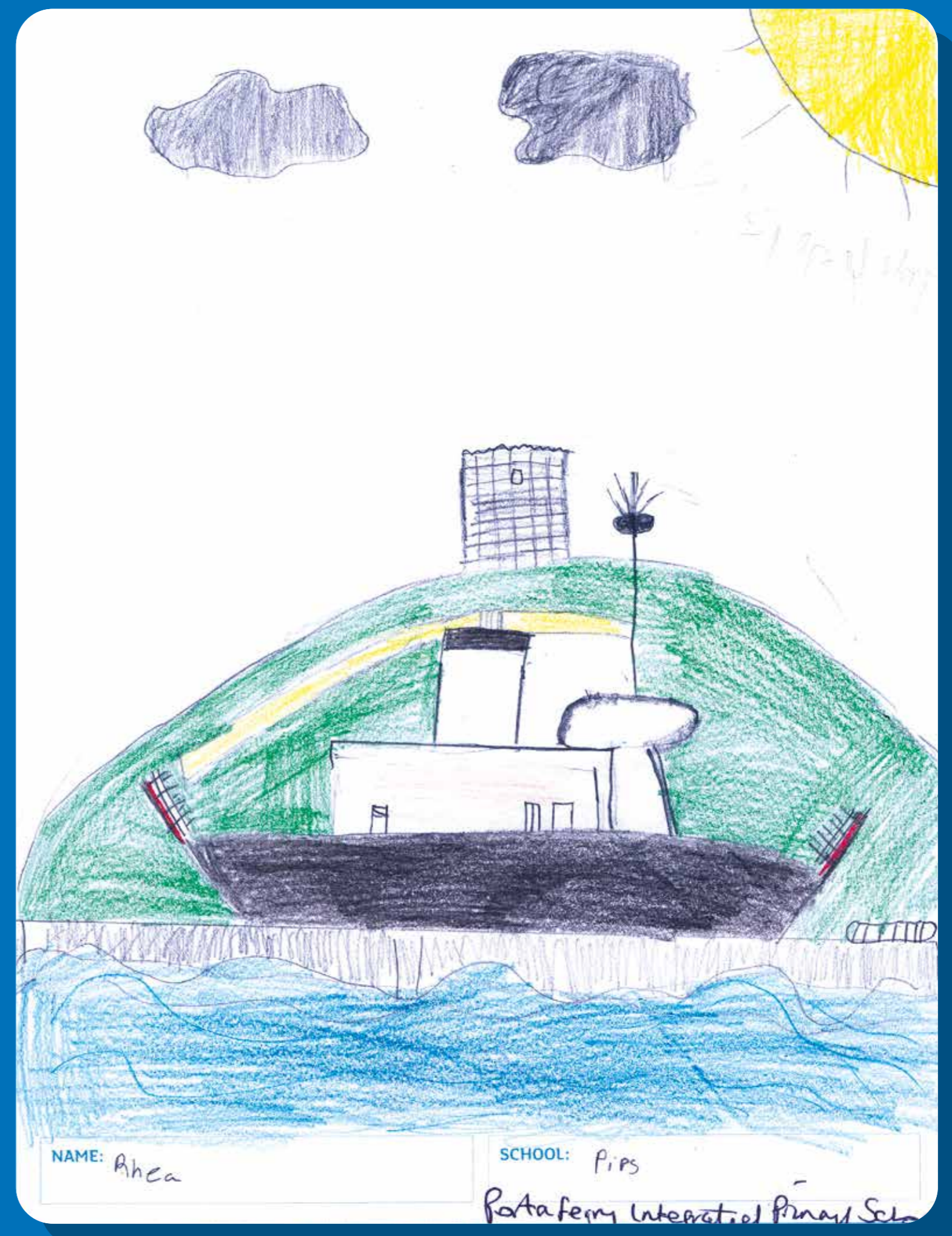
What the young people of Portaferry like about their village...

The young people expressed their happiness with the green spaces and parks in their village as well as the connection to the Lough through Exploris Aquarium and the Ferry. Additionally, they also highlighted the sports facilities including the football pitch and the hurley park.



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

The young people expressed concerns about the maintenance of their village, particularly issues with dog waste and litter.



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

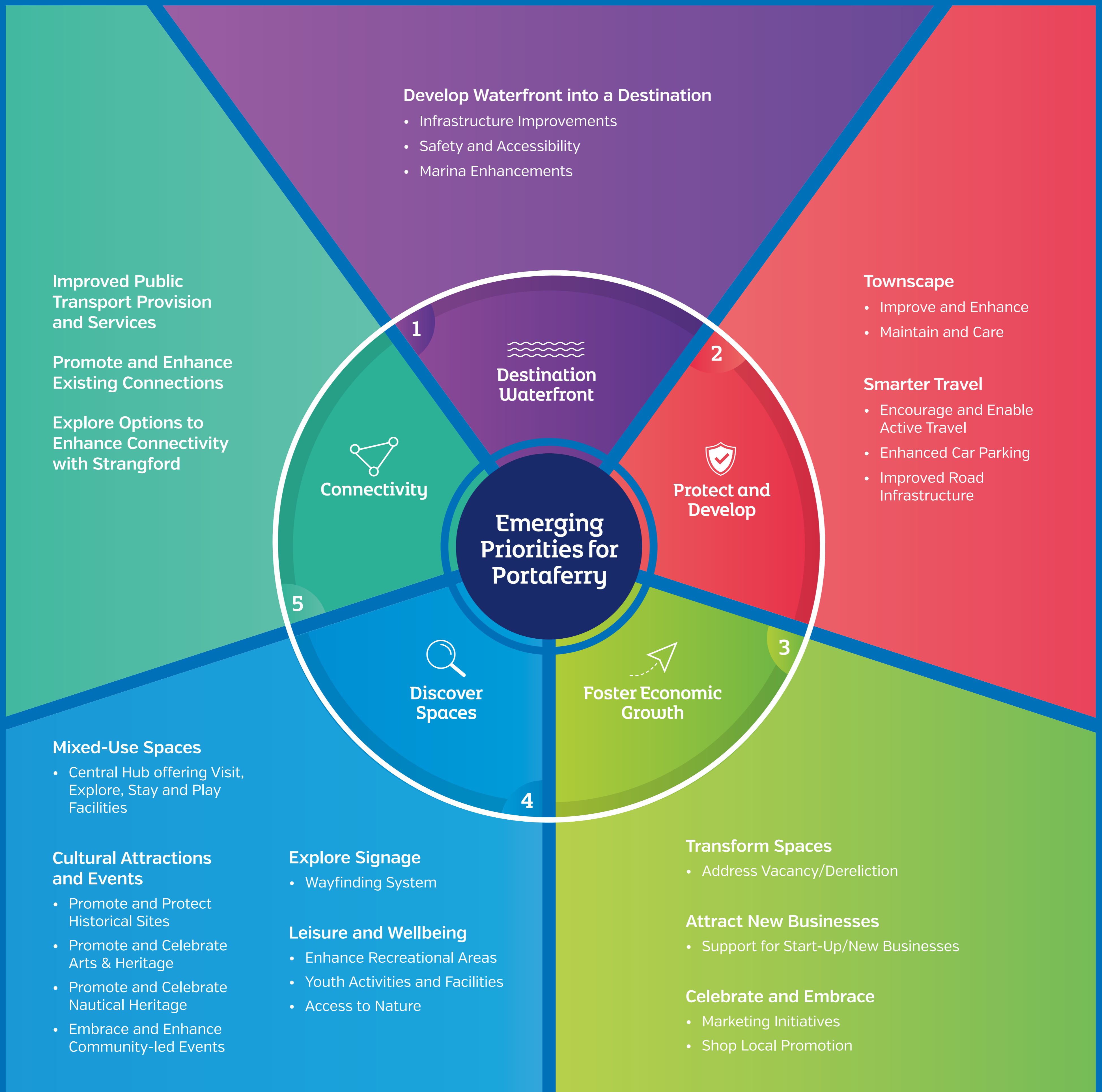
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The Vision

“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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