

Bogside, Fountain &  
Bishop Street

# DERRY~ LONDONDERRY



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



August 2016

# DERRY~ LONDON

URBAN VILLAGES INITIATIVE



The  
**Executive Office**

[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)



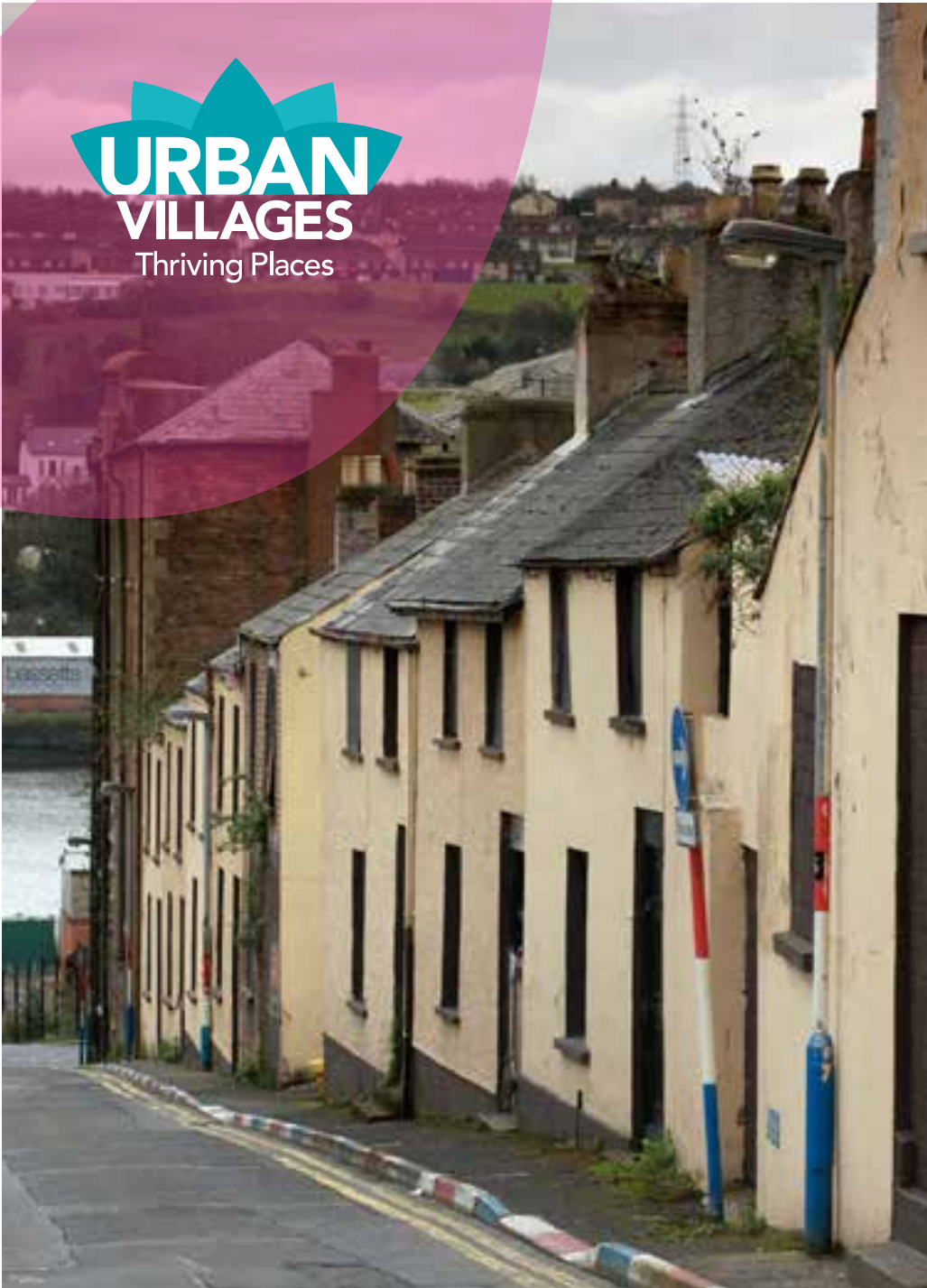
# ANDERRY



<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BOGSIDE, FOUNTAIN AND BISHOP ST TODAY</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>THE FUTURE</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>SUPPORTING DELIVERY</b>	<b>102</b>

# URBAN VILLAGES

Thriving Places





# 01

## INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

1

## PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This Strategic Framework is intended to provide a reference point for anyone involved in shaping investment decisions or identifying collaborative opportunities in the Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street Urban Village area. The Framework presents findings from a creative process of analysis and reflection which involved individual members of the community, as well as representatives from local and central government. It provides an analysis of place and is a tool for informing action and investment.

The Framework is intended to be used as a working document so that emerging opportunities can be identified and changing circumstances acknowledged.

It begins by presenting information on what the Urban Villages Initiative is, what it is trying to achieve and how it will work.

Section 2 then sets out the local context and presents key findings under three headings - strengths, symptoms and causes.

Section 3 looks towards the future and sets out Strategic Actions which emerged through the process of engagement, evidence gathering and analysis. These can help to inform future investment plans as well as identifying opportunities for alignment of effort and collaboration around shared outcomes.

Section 4 focuses on delivery. The Executive Office will take forward projects and programmes within its remit, and work with others to progress opportunities for shared delivery of outcomes, in keeping with the approach articulated in the draft Programme for Government Framework.



1

# WHAT IS THE URBAN VILLAGES INITIATIVE?

1

The Urban Villages Initiative is a key action within the Northern Ireland Executive's 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy. It is designed to improve good relations outcomes and to help develop thriving places where there has previously been a history of deprivation and community tension.



*Improve the physical environment*

*Build community capacity*



## There are three inter-connected aims:

- to foster positive community identities
- to build community capacity
- to improve the physical environment.

In working towards these aims, a key delivery mechanism will be aligning and influencing investment and finding better ways of 'doing more with what we've got'. The goal is to enable current and future investment to be targeted and delivered in more effective and sustainable ways. In practice this will mean:

- co-ordinating and aligning effort across Government Departments, local Councils and community organisations to deliver good relations outcomes
- identifying and building on what is working because sustainable change requires investment in social (people and communities) and in physical assets
- exploring ways of investing and trying new approaches which stimulate private investment and economic activity.

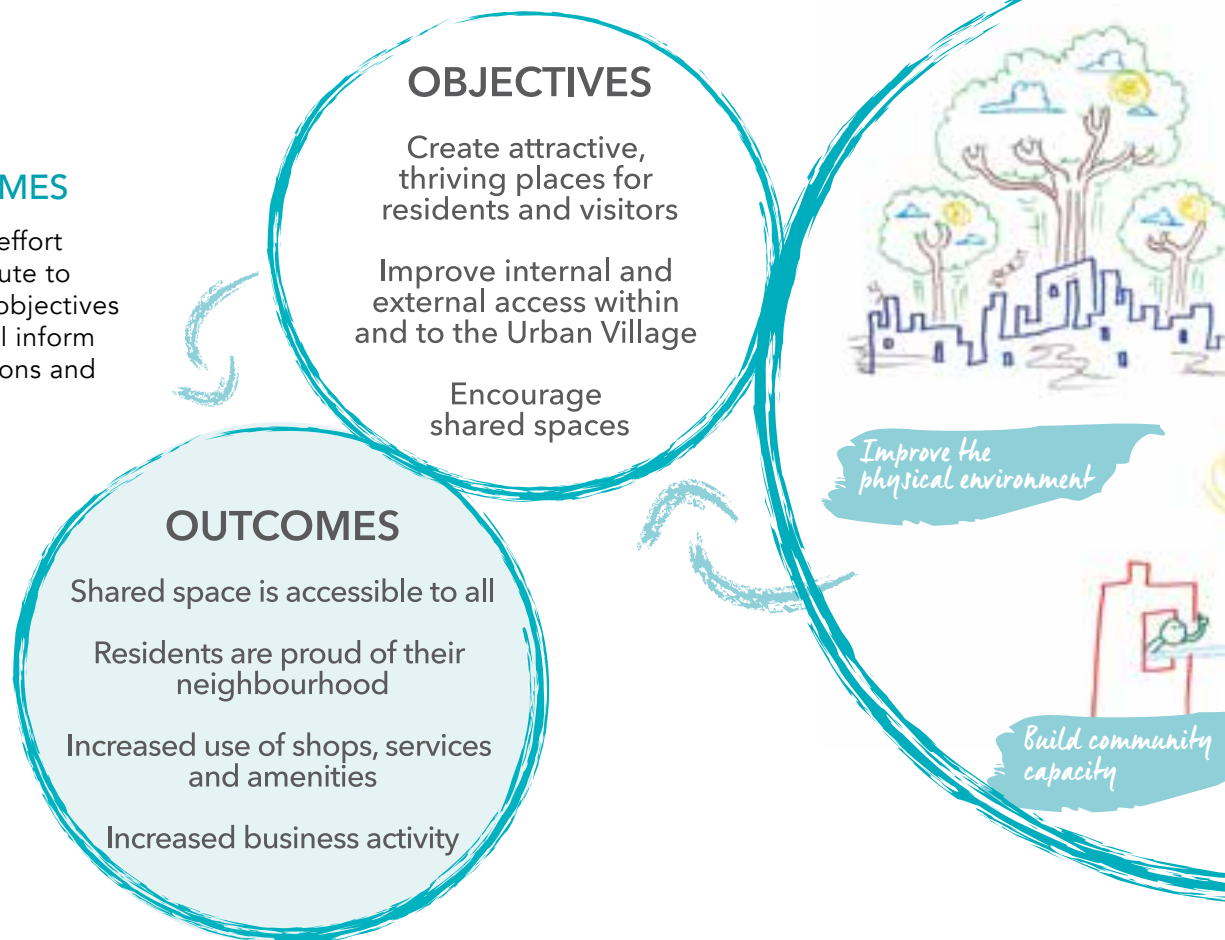


Foster positive  
community identities



## OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

In order to focus effort and set a clear route to delivery, a set of objectives and outcomes will inform investment decisions and actions.



## OBJECTIVES

Build trust  
and relationships

Enhance pride and  
confidence in  
Urban Village areas

Create welcoming places  
where people feel safe  
and connected,  
regardless of religious  
or ethnic background

## OUTCOMES

Improved relationships  
between and  
within communities

Cultural diversity is celebrated

A community where places  
and spaces are safe for all

Increased sense of  
community belonging

## OBJECTIVES

Encourage and support  
communities to express their  
views and influence  
what happens in their areas

Enhance the capacity and  
confidence of communities to work  
and socialise within and outside their  
immediate neighbourhoods

Enhance community  
capacity to participate in local and  
regional networks and recognise  
shared needs and priorities

## OUTCOMES

Increased use of shared  
spaces and services

Greater voice and influence

Confident and enterprising  
community

*Faster positive  
community identities*

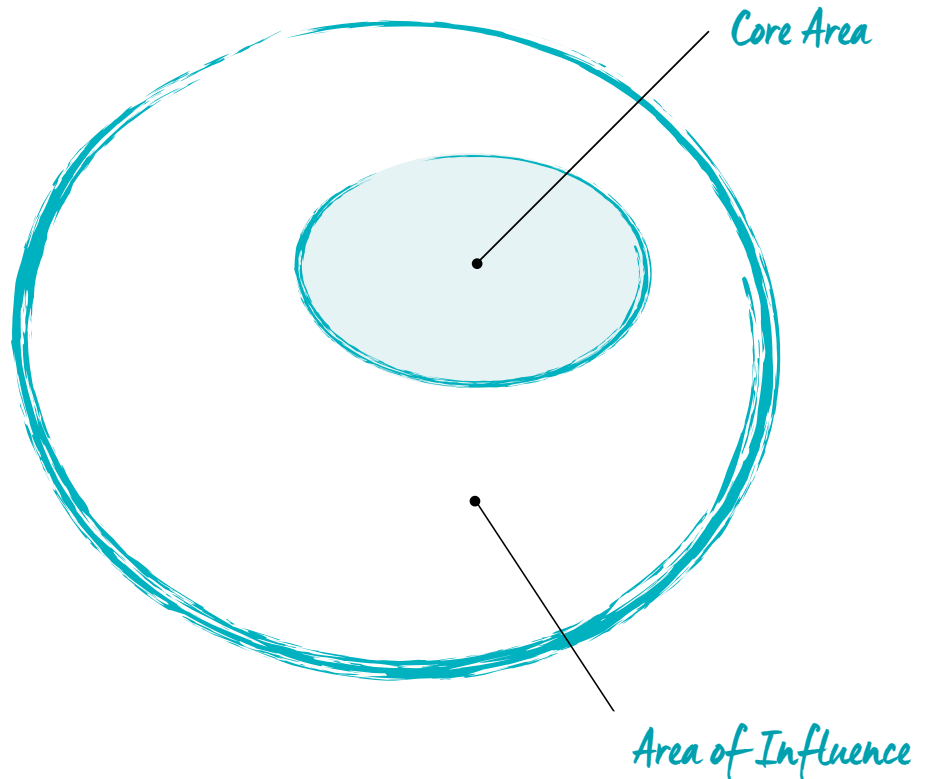


## PLACES

Delivery will be focussed on five 'core' areas in:

- Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan (North Belfast)
- Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street (Derry~Londonderry)
- Colin (West Belfast)
- EastSide (East Belfast)
- Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets (South Belfast)

The core area provides a focal point for action and investment. The concept of a wider area of influence, that is not sharply defined, acknowledges that thriving places require wider connection to both physical and social assets. Investment decisions and actions will be informed by the likely impact on core areas.



## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The Strategic Actions in this Framework document are intended to inform discussion about how to best deliver positive outcomes in each place. In order to ensure that expertise is harnessed at a neighbourhood level, local Reference Groups are being developed - to provide a first point of contact and sense-check for project ideas, to build civic stewardship and sustainability around specific interventions and to ensure that delivery is built from shared priorities.

### *Transform places*

- Tackle dereliction and vacancy
- Create a well designed, sustainable and thriving place
- Maximise connections
- Create effective shared space
- Address challenges of interface walls

### *Build a more resilient and self sufficient community*

- Develop and promote social enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Improve and increase allotments community gardens and growing

### *Health and well being*

- Encourage participation in sport and physical activity
- Support and sustain positive lifestyle choices
- Collaborate to tackle social isolation

### *Enterprising communities*

- Connect and collaborate
- Increase education, training & employment opportunities

### *Motivate, support and inspire our young people*

- Encourage youth engagement opportunities
- Support multi-discipline activity
- Increase support for lifelong learning

### *Celebrate and promote cultural diversity*

- Promote and develop a programme of festivals, events and cultural activity
- Celebrate and foster cultural diversity
- Encourage partnerships with local, national and international organisations

### *Maximise tourism offering*

- Unlock latent tourism offer
- Creatively re-use/ conserve physical assets
- Increase the spin-off benefits of existing tourism

# INTRODUCING THE PLACE

1

THE GASYARD  
CENTRE

Lecky Road

Bishop Street





CITY WALLS

Wapping Lane

RIVERVIEW PARK

The core area encompasses the Fountain, Bogside and Bishop Street areas. Located just beyond Derry's historic walls, these are unique and distinctive places that reflect their strong cultural identities.

Panoramic views from the city walls take in the relatively low lying Bogside area to the west.

Its tight knit hilly terraced streets rise to its western boundary – the Lonemoor Road, an offshoot of the Old Letterkenny Road.

The Fountain is discrete and contained, bounded by the walled city on the north, Bishop Street (interface) on the northwest, and Carlisle Road and Abercorn Road on the southeast.

# METHODOLOGY

1

The process that informed this Strategic Framework began with an in-depth analysis process involving desktop research, site appraisal and extensive stakeholder consultation. This included 1-to-1 meetings, workshops, surveys, focus groups and public events.

The findings from each stage helped to ensure this Framework is specific to the place and people. It seeks to build on what is working and will continue to progress positive change to bring about real transformation, whilst significantly improving the living environment and area.

Central to the methodology was engagement with the people who live, work and spend time in the

area. Between January and March 2016 the Urban Villages team engaged with local people, community groups and wider stakeholders from both the public sector and local business through a series of workshop events. During the 'Visiting the Neighbours' walking workshop each participant tied gold ribbons to their 'Top Ten' favourite places and spaces in the area, and purple ribbons to ten things needing a helping hand. This demonstrated increased civic pride by collectively identifying and agreeing the area's top assets and opportunities.

A range of issues were explored in more depth. These included, for example, the role of illumination and lighting in regeneration; children's play spaces; community gardens and allotments; and the role of business associations.

This informed the findings and Strategic Actions in parallel with the valuable contributions and participation throughout the process.

A Reference Group was established as an informal group of stakeholders in April 2016 as an expansion of a previous DSD led steering group. This includes key statutory, community and traders' voices. This Reference Group provides a point of contact for continued engagement, sharing of information for dissemination within the wider community.

A commitment to sustained consultation and engagement with all local stakeholders is made for all stages of delivery and as such this is a working document forming the basis for discussion and delivery.





## CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

*Key to the project methodology was engagement with the people who live, work and spend time in the area.*

A wide variety of engagement events, one to one consultation meetings, and supporting research surveys highlighted the area's existing strengths, possibilities, and needs.

The process included 302 people who played their part in nine interactive, inquiry and co-creative workshops, two of which were delivered as part of a Peace Walls Project conference.

141 people responded to a community relations survey during Culture Night 2015. This informed a presentation at a Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) Community Relations and Cultural Awareness event, in collaboration with Urban Villages in support of the Peace Walls Project.

Seasonal cultural events such as the Christmas Market and Spring Festival also achieved wider engagement and captured views from people about the places where they live. A 'Christmas tree survey' attracted 75 respondents and 17 'vox-pop' contributors.

Over 2000 people attended various Spring Festival events with 296 people completing the Spring Festival Survey. All events were positively received reinforcing the contribution that arts & culture can make to this area and demonstrating its future potential.

Five community led events included a film project by Cathedral Youth Club documenting Fountain resident's hopes and aspirations. Following cross community consultation delivered by Gasyard Wall Féile and Londonderry Bands Forum, scripts for theatre projects on the Easter Rising and Battle of The Somme were developed and written for performance later in the year. Health & wellbeing events across the neighbourhood saw 400+ people of all ages participate in a wide range of sporting, fitness and holistic therapy events.



1

STREET SOCIETY



512

SURVEY  
RETURNS



5

COMMUNITY  
LED EVENTS



9

WORKSHOP  
EVENTS



2

FESTIVALS



125

CONSULTATION  
MEETINGS

## STREET SOCIETY

1

Three Street Society projects were delivered in the area over a week in March 2016. Three groups of architecture, engineering and anthropology students from Queen's University Belfast worked with community client representatives to tackle current challenges and suggest solutions.

The projects produced information, recommendations and opportunities to help community groups look at potential opportunities and also informed the Strategic Actions within this Strategic Framework.

### *The Bishops Return*

involved working with the Peace Walls project to explore a series of new gable end structures into the interface - each equipped with a gate fronting Bishop Street and the Fountain Estate, to facilitate through movement when desired.

### *Cultural Activations*

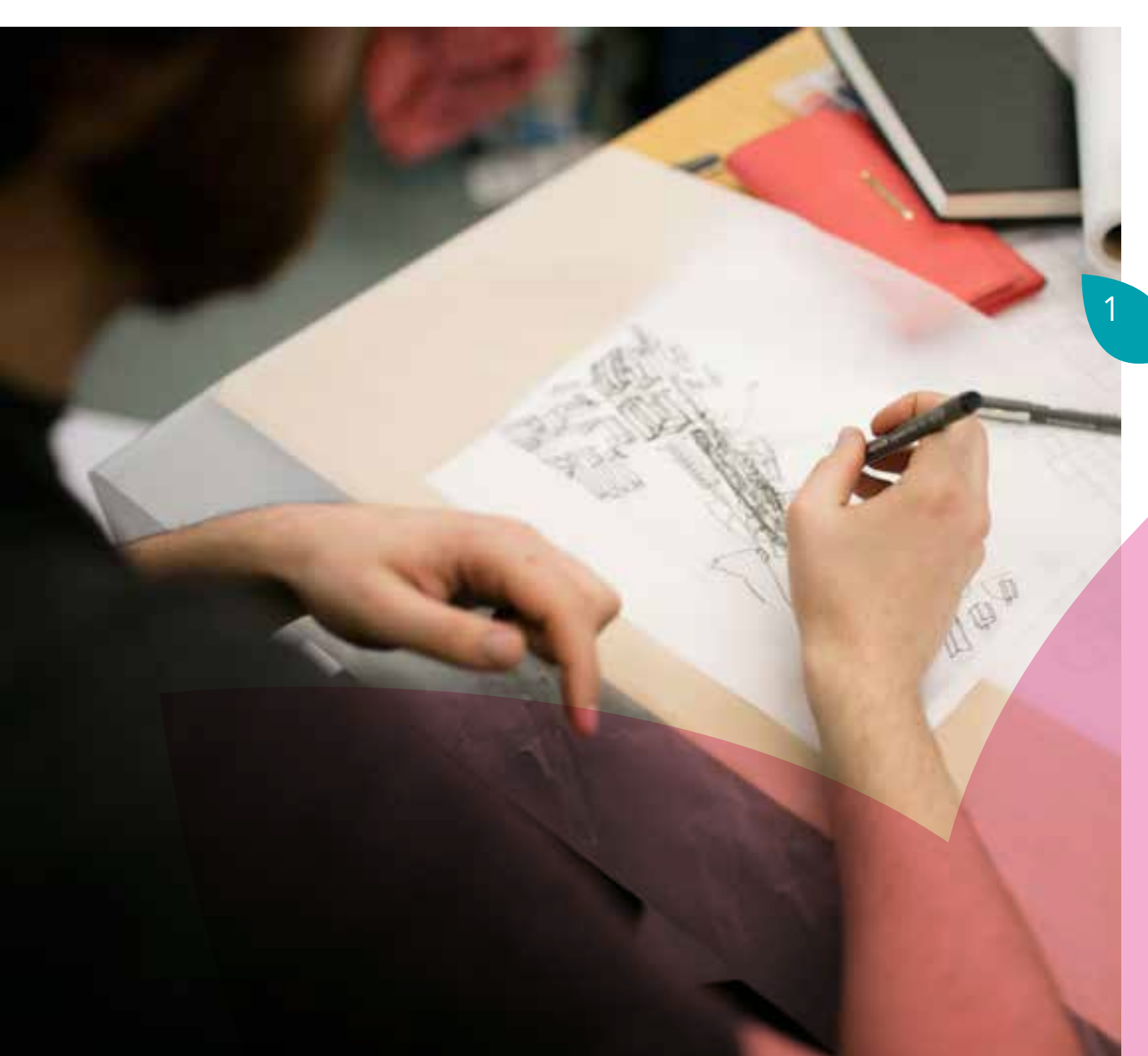
explored possibilities for transforming 20-22 Hawkin Street in the Fountain – into an Arts and Cultural Hub. The client group included representatives of Londonderry Bands Forum, Bob Harte Memorial Trust, Blue Eagle Theatre Productions and Solus Cultural Productions. Within the week the students had presented an entirely plausible three phase concept.

### *A Youthful Landscape*

explored possibilities around Lecky Road Flyover. Gasyard Development Trust, Bogside and Brandywell Health Forum, and Dove House as client group saw the Flyover transformed into an urban green space, a skateboarding park below, as a grass roofed Healthy Living Centre morphed out of the new urban green-space.







**URBAN  
VILLAGES**  
Thriving Places





# 02

## BOGSIDE, FOUNTAIN AND BISHOP STREET TODAY



## BOGSIDE & BISHOP STREET

The area's name is derived from boggy silting due to a retreating River Foyle evacuating its former route around the island 'Hill of Derry'.

Panoramic views from just about everywhere show off its tight network of historic, terraced hilly streets. Distinctive tessellated street patterns run uphill from Lecky Road to Lonemoor Road. Similarly at Bishop Street these frame views towards a majestic River Foyle.





## FOUNTAIN

The Fountain is home to a residential community of around 300 people. A legacy from days when the city was the shirt making capital of the British Isles is a collection of former shirt factories and associated workers' housing.

Bounded to the north by the historic Derry walls, a brick built interface wall divides it from Bishop Street and Upper Bennett Street to the west and south.



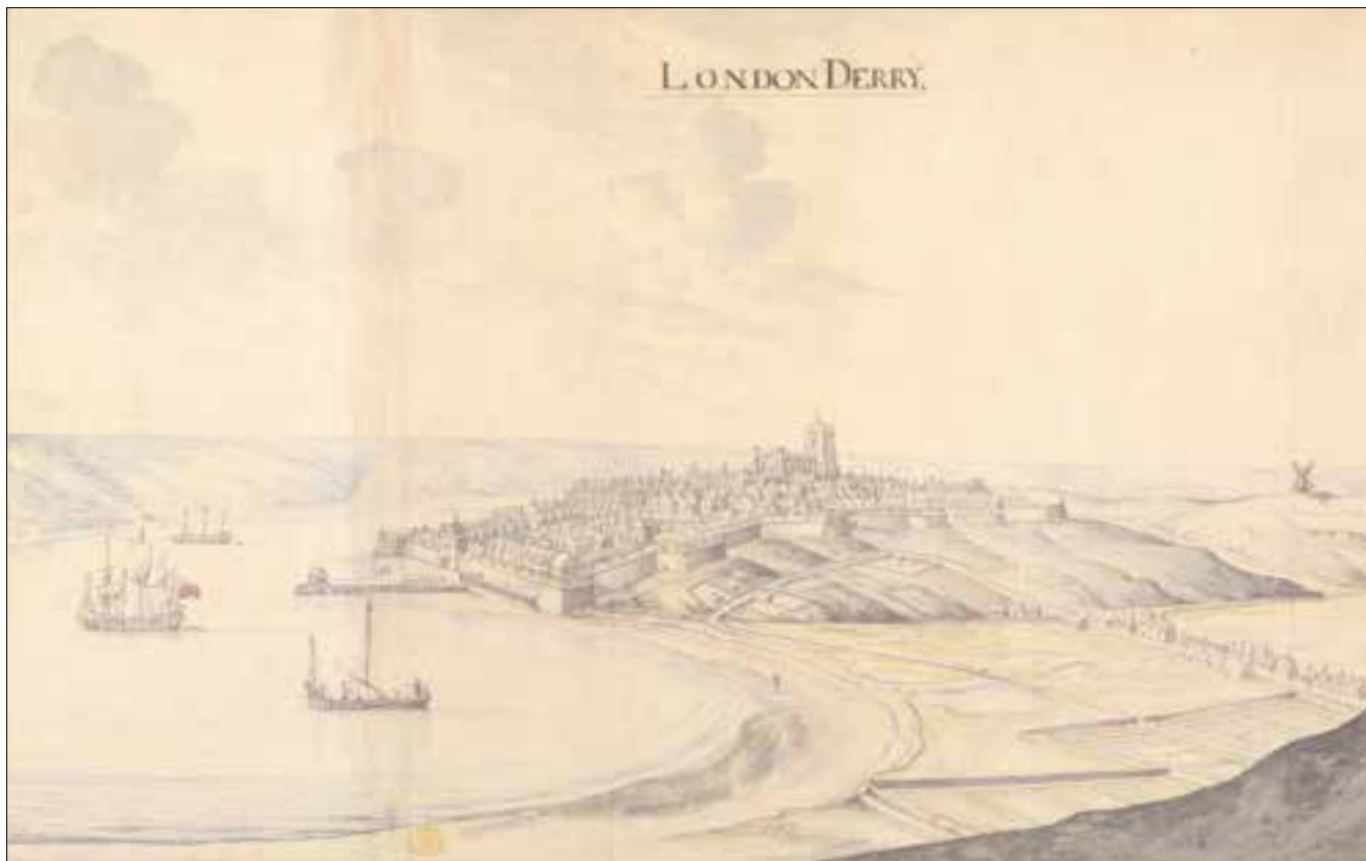


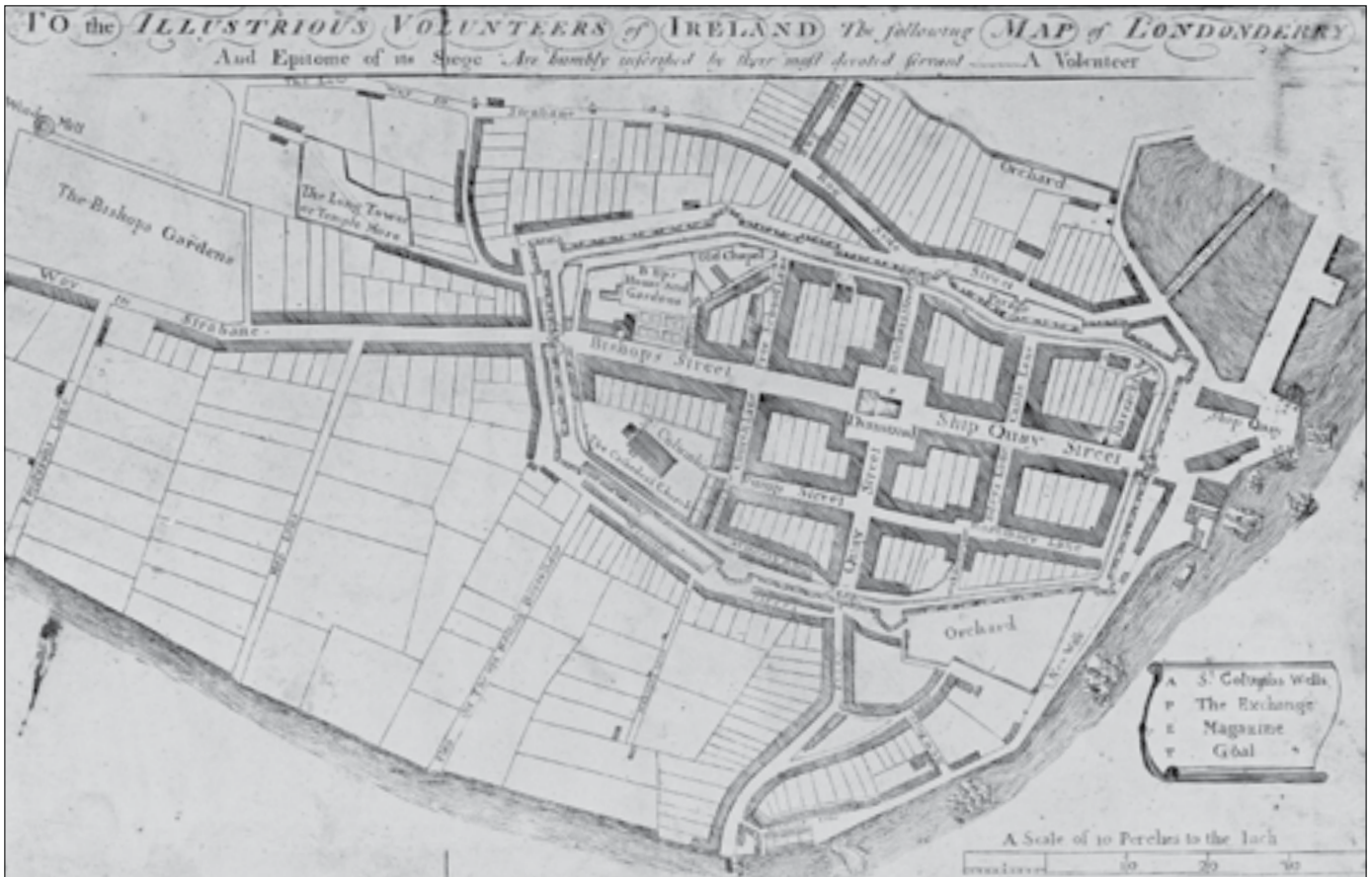
Plate 1. 'London Derry', 1685, by Thomas Phillips, pen and ink wash (British Library); original size 48 x 91 cm, reduced by approximately two fifths (Phillips view).

Irish Historic Towns Atlas

# 1685

## HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Located in the northwest of the island of Ireland, tucked away between the Sperrin Mountains and Inishowen Hills, within the Foyle's hilly valley, the Fountain, Bogside & Bishop Street area is geographically and topographically isolated within the city.



Map 16. Londonderry, c. 1780 (Trinity College Dublin); original scale 10 perches to an inch, size 42 x 27 cm, reduced by approximately two thirds (Volunteer).

Irish Historic Towns Atlas

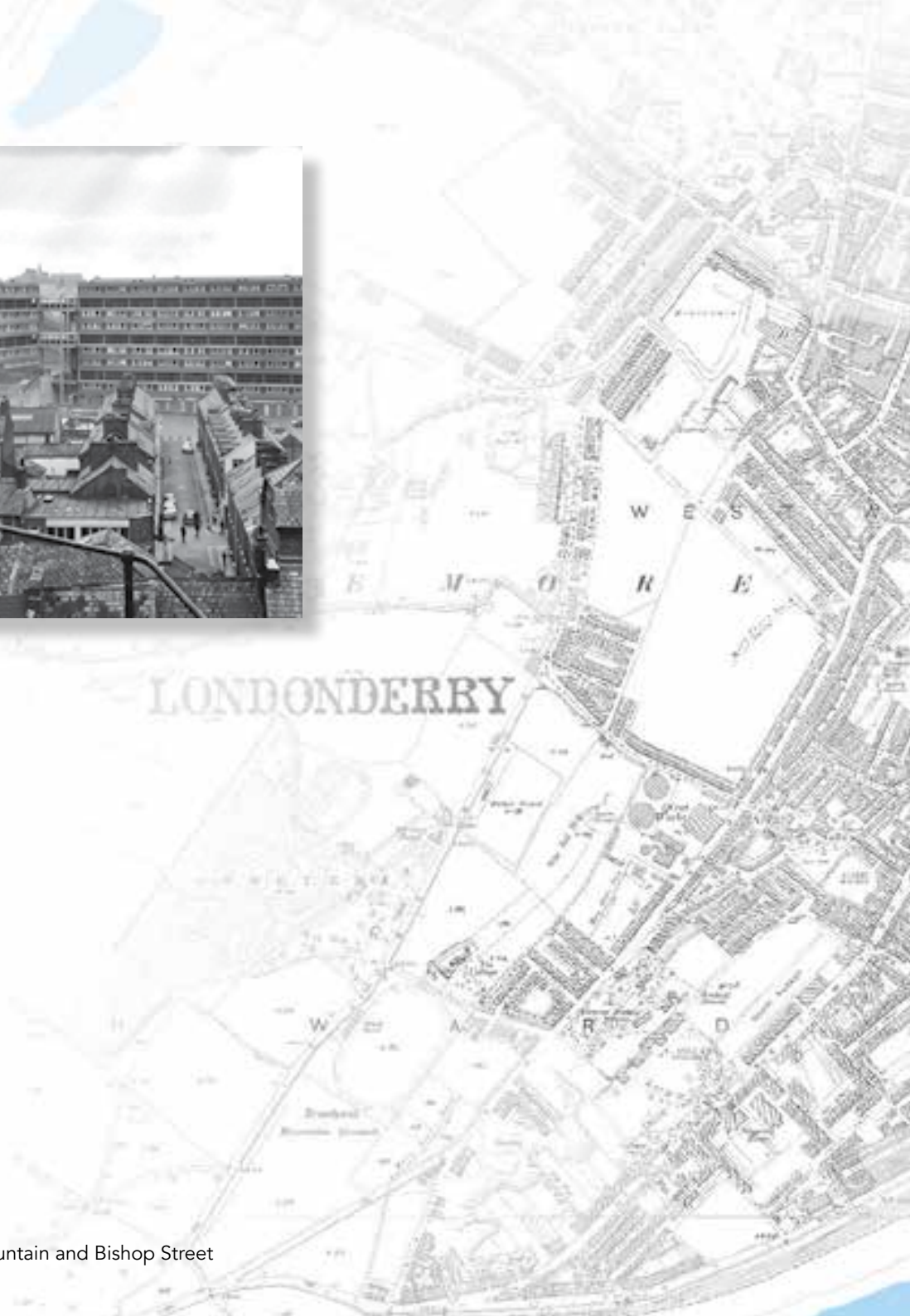
1780

The adjacent Walled City's reputation as a signature tourist destination continues to grow. The Walled City is the first example of true urban planning in Ireland and the only remaining intact walled city on the island. With a street grid pattern of European, classical origins, it is also the jewel in the crown of Ulster Plantation's collection of urban heritage.

By the time of the Siege of Derry in 1689, expansion beyond the city walls boundaries shows clearly the emerging alignment of Bishop Street and Fountain Street. This gives both streets considerable historic significance.

Bishop Street is a major arterial route between the two cathedral towns of Derry and Raphoe. It has a rich story to tell of journeys made by the bishops.







A historical map of the Urban Village area in 1905. The map shows a dense, irregular street grid with many small lots. A large body of water, likely a river or canal, is visible on the left side of the map. The map is rendered in a sepia or light brown tone, typical of old documents. The year '1905' is written in a large, white, stylized font over a dark grey rectangular background in the lower-left quadrant of the map.

1905

The footprint of the Urban Village area at its most dense. This condensed development footprint, which persisted into the 1960s ensured a lively street life and still accommodated considerable open space – some of it agricultural. Former residents recount that ‘Old Rossville Street was a great street’. Others remember when every street in the Bogside was full of music, with enough musicians of its own to form a band.





# 2016

Comparison between 2016 and 1905 figure-ground maps (previous) reveals that while substantial tracts of the area's Plantation and 19th century historic street pattern is still evident, the density of development within the area has been substantially eroded. This is due to insertion of 1970s roads infrastructure, construction of lower density post 1960s public housing, and more recent building demolition, especially along the river.



## GREEN SPACES, GAP SITES AND SURFACE CAR PARKS

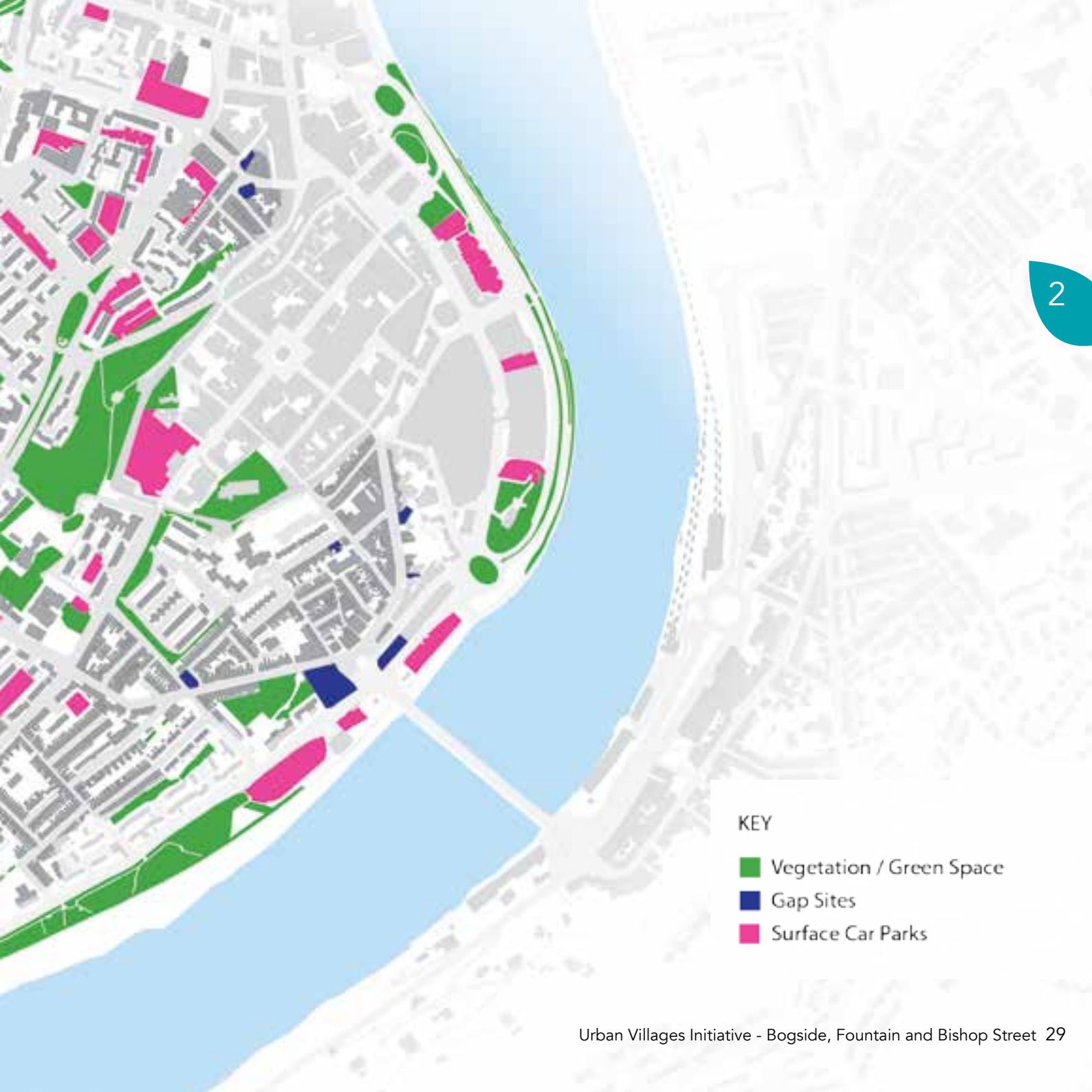
There are extensive open spaces in the area that provide recreational and visual amenity. However due to topography, perceived and physical barriers some of these have limited benefits for the residents of the area.

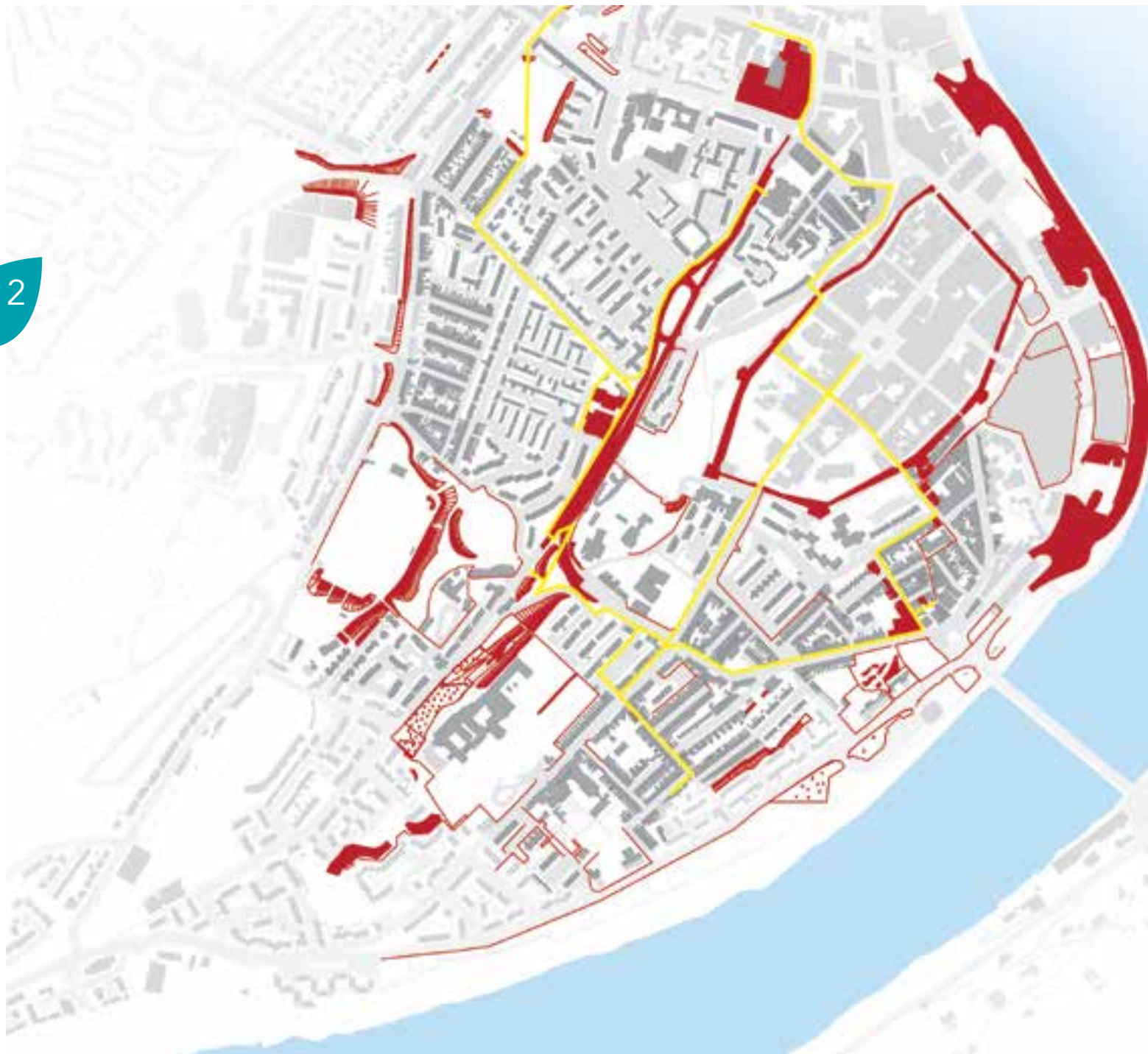
The existing green spaces within the core area are identified on the adjacent plan. These are concentrated on the grassy banking that slopes up the city walls and Long Tower Church, Bull Park, Riverview Park and the Gasyard Park. There is also a riverside park which is a city wide amenity, although it would benefit from improvements. There is also a linear riverside park at Foyle Road. There are pleasant spacious grounds at Lumen Christi College although relatively inaccessible. Brooke Park is located northwest of the area and will reopen after a £5.6m make-over in 2016. In addition, there are many smaller green open spaces in the area.

The adjacent plan also identifies a number of gap sites and/or surface car parks which have the potential for future change. These vary in ownership, scale and potential.









## PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND BARRIERS TO MOVEMENT

There are various barriers to movement through the area both physical and perceived. This analysis has been informed by participants in workshops when the most commonly walked routes were mapped which revealed that many residents faced a variety of barriers while going about their daily routine i.e. going to school, work and shopping. These include Lecky Road dual carriageway, the city walls, steep embankments, the Bishop Street interface, and palisade security fences around buildings and between housing developments.

Safety and perceived safety also impact on the routes people choose to walk and factors may include the levels of lighting, extent of vacant buildings and sites, traffic speeds and fear of falling debris from buildings in poor repair. Topography is also a barrier especially to elderly, adults with small children and people with disabilities.

### KEY

- Barriers to Movement
- Pedestrian Routes



# STRENGTHS

The engagement process and analysis identifies many positive aspects and strengths that include people, activities and places which are summarised over the following pages.

2

## STRATEGIC LOCATION



## COMMUNITY SPIRIT



## BUILT HERITAGE



## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE





CULTURAL  
HERITAGE



FESTIVALS &  
EVENTS



## STRATEGIC LOCATION

2

When it comes to location this place has it, lying close to stunning countryside and coastal landscapes, and a stone's throw from the Wild Atlantic Way.

Less than five minutes walk takes residents to the heart of the city centre and the associated facilities. The area is also right beside the River Foyle and Northern Ireland's largest scheduled monument, the four hundred year old city walls.







## BUILT HERITAGE

2

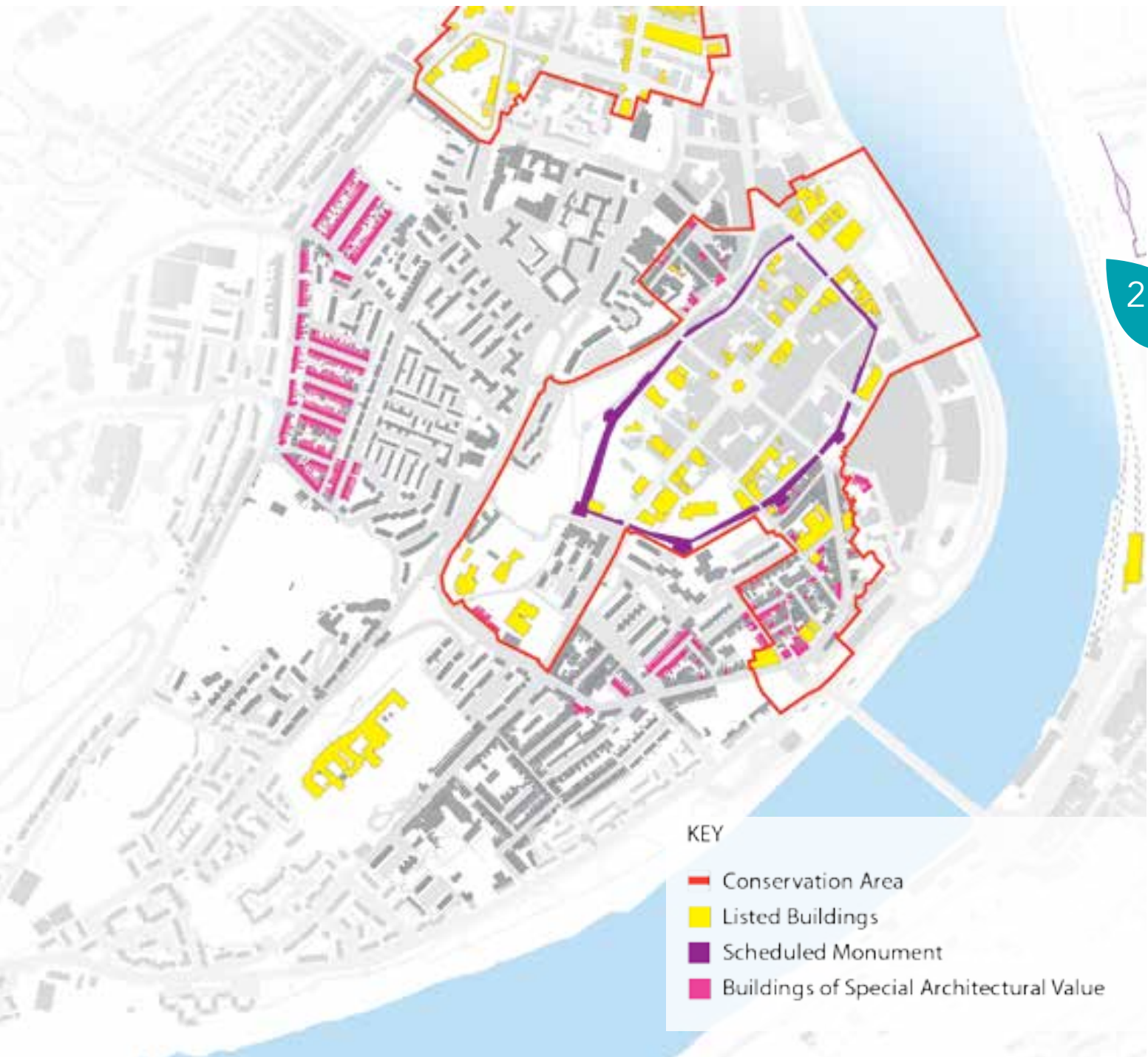
A number of historic streets fall within the Historic City Conservation Area. Though suffering varying degrees of dereliction, these streets are the most visible and tangible expression of the area's architectural heritage past and present.

The built heritage in the area is of varying quality and states of repair however it all contributes to the sense of place. Much of the built heritage in poor repair was highlighted

with purple ribbons through the engagement process - as things in need of a helping hand.

Collectively, they are a legacy of thriving 19th and early 20th century shirt making activity in the area. The Fountain Estate contains two B+ listed former shirt factories and associated worker's housing. These tell the story of the city that was the global capital of shirt making in its heyday.





## COMMUNITY SPIRIT

The events and community engagement process identifies a strong sense of belonging and community spirit in the area with resilient groups and many stories shared. This reflects the essence of a great community, a place where people know how to support each other and care for those in need.

There has been a resurgence in traditional crafts such as knitting, patchwork, crochet, and jewellery making via initiatives including Keep Her Knit and Crafty Corner. Also Men's Shed and increased interest in growing food in the local allotments are also providing opportunities for activities to increase community spirit.







2



## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

An inspiring spirit of self-help is at the root of the area's community organisations. Emerging from the worst years of conflict, sustained collaborative grass roots work created a host of robust, established organisations serving a wide range of needs.

Cross-community interaction has laid solid foundations for strong relationships developing between and within the local community.

Initiatives including TRIAX, The Gasyard Development Trust, Dove House, Bogside Brandywell Health Forum, Cathedral Youth Club,

2





Bogside and Brandywell Initiative, the Derry Credit Union, Pilots Row Community Centre, North West Cultural Forum and Holywell Trust provide scope and inspiration for further positive collaborative work and development.

2







## CULTURAL HERITAGE

The city has been a hotbed of creativity for many years producing internationally acclaimed artists, musicians, playwrights, poets and writers. High levels of creativity and energy again bubbled to the surface in the aftermath of conflict resulting in a wide number of culture and arts facilities across the fields of sport, art, drama and history. This remains a relatively unexploited jewel in the area's cultural tourism offer.

From famous Irish tenor, Josef Locke to influential punk band, The Undertones, the area punches well above its weight, consistently producing top class musicians over the years. Songwriters including Declan McLaughlin, Roy Arbuckle and Eamon Friel, choirs

including the acclaimed Colmcille Ladies Choir and flute bands including the William King Memorial Flute Band are among the other acts from the area that have achieved national and international success.

Dance in all its forms remains strong in the area with Irish dancing, highland dance, ballet, hip-hop and contemporary dance classes proving especially popular.

Also the former St Columb's College on Bishop St (now Lumen Christi College) has schooled several literary giants including Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney and the world renowned playwright Brian Friel.

2





## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The area is well known for its love of celebratory events. Home to two of the city's largest festivals, Maiden City Festival and Gasyard Wall Féile, the neighbourhood was a key location for many of the largest City of Culture events in 2013 including The Return of Colmcille, Lumiere, Walled City Marathon.

The Bogside, Bishop Street and Fountain neighbourhood is a perfect arena for both indoor and outdoor cultural events.





# CHALLENGES

Unsurprisingly all three neighbourhoods face similar challenges. Adjacent to the city centre, they all express the city's evolving historic development phases, social and economic contexts.

2

DERELICTION  
AND VACANCY



LIMITED  
ACCESS





## SOCIAL ISOLATION



## PERCEPTION





## DERELICTION AND VACANCY

There are concentrated areas of dereliction and vacancy in the area, including Meenan Square, Hawkin Street and Wapping Lane. These cause blight and become an economic and physical eyesore for residents and visitors alike due to poor states of repair and vacancy.

Of almost 800 buildings examined in the Urban Village area, 36 have been identified as being 'at risk' and in need of priority repair. These 'at risk' buildings are mostly located within the Fountain and Chamberlain Street areas.



The scale of the opportunity varies from individual properties to extensive sites with various land owners and different levels of work required to bring these opportunities forward. Addressing dereliction, particularly where this

coincides with vacancy, is a priority given the extent and prominence of derelict properties close to the city centre.







## LIMITED ACCESS

Weak inter-regional infrastructure links persist and proposals to improve the road and rail networks are paramount to improving access to the city. This access would create better conditions for improved business development, job creation, tourism and potential commuting opportunities to other places where employment options and availability are greater.

At a local level, access is limited due to the physical and perceived barriers in the area as explained earlier in this section. This includes infrastructure such as the Lecky Road flyover and dual carriageway, Craigavon Bridge, the city walls, River Foyle, steep embankments, the Bishop Street interface, and palisade security fences around buildings and between housing developments, topography and level of safety. Also the cost of public transport restricts access to and from the area.





## SOCIAL ISOLATION

The effects of conflict and changing demographic patterns, have, over time, resulted in physical changes to neighbourhoods. The erection of walls, security fences, gates on back alleys, and 'gated communities' are a noticeable physical change throughout. The physical and perceived barriers in the area segregate neighbourhoods regardless of cultural background and contribute to social isolation.

Isolation, loneliness and health continue to be a feature in today's society. In the TRIAX area a recent survey by the Bogside and Brandywell Health Forum suggests that 1 in 3 of participants (aged 60- 90) live alone. Almost one in five of those surveyed reported they did not socialise outside their homes because of a lack of motivation.

Other health challenges include; obesity, mental health, drugs & alcohol and a lack of exercise.





2

## PERCEPTION

Anti-social behaviour in the area has reduced substantially in recent times owing to the collective efforts of residents and organisations, offering a range of intervention programmes to encourage and enable more positive behaviour. Positive perception and expression is challenged annually however, during the summer bonfire season.

The Urban Villages Spring Festival Survey 2016, receiving 296 responses, reveals over 36% of residents still believe the area is perceived negatively by both local residents and those not living in the area.



# URBAN VILLAGES

Thriving Places

3





# 03

## THE FUTURE

*'Our Beautiful Place'  
acrostic poem, created  
by participants at  
Urban Villages  
Initiative workshop.*

## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

3

The Strategic Actions have been developed through a comprehensive process of information gathering, analysis and extensive engagement with a wide and diverse audience. They seek to build on what is working, highlighting opportunities for sustaining positive change. Each of the Strategic Actions sits within one of seven overarching themes and will lead to various projects and/or alignment with other projects.



### TRANSFORM PLACES

- *Tackle dereliction and vacancy*
- *Create a well designed, sustainable and thriving place*
- *Maximise connections*
- *Create effective shared space*
- *Address challenges of interface walls*



### BUILD A MORE RESILIENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT COMMUNITY

- *Develop and promote social enterprise and entrepreneurship*
- *Improve and increase allotments, community gardens and growing*



### HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- *Encourage participation in sport and physical activity*
- *Support and sustain positive lifestyle choices*
- *Collaborate to tackle social isolation*





## ENTERPRISING COMMUNITIES

- *Connect and collaborate*
- *Increase education, training & employment opportunities*



## MOTIVATE, SUPPORT AND INSPIRE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

- *Encourage youth engagement opportunities*
- *Support multi-discipline activity*
- *Increase support for lifelong learning*

3



## CELEBRATE AND PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- *Promote and develop a programme of festivals, events and cultural activity*
- *Celebrate and foster cultural diversity*
- *Encourage partnerships with local, national and international organisations*



## MAXIMISE TOURISM OFFERING

- *Unlock latent tourism offer*
- *Creatively re-use/ conserve physical assets*
- *Increase the spin-off benefits of existing tourism*

# TRANSFORM PLACES

3

TACKLE  
DERELICTION  
AND VACANCY



CREATE A WELL  
DESIGNED,  
SUSTAINABLE  
AND THRIVING  
PLACE



MAXIMISE  
CONNECTIONS



CREATE  
EFFECTIVE  
SHARED SPACE



ADDRESS CHALLENGES  
OF INTERFACE WALLS





## TACKLE DERELICTION AND VACANCY

3

The scale of the opportunity varies from individual properties to extensive sites which could transform the area. These range from empty upper floors of buildings to vacant shop units, historic buildings and cleared sites. Each will require a different level of work to bring these opportunities forward with different individuals, groups, voluntary, private and public sector organisations.

Consideration will need to be given to short, medium and long term opportunities and could range from frontage improvements to repair and re-use projects and potential redevelopment proposals for key sites.

Due to timescales to deliver redevelopment proposals potential exists to transform some of the vacant spaces through the innovative application of meanwhile uses. These temporary interventions would add value to an area and its people. They could include community gardens, performance spaces, outdoor galleries/markets, wildlife gardens and many other imaginative proposals, considered and developed with local residents, organisations, schools and landowners. It is critical that from the outset there is commitment to supporting the management of these spaces and a clear understanding that ultimately they will be redeveloped.



## CREATE A WELL DESIGNED, SUSTAINABLE AND THRIVING PLACE

There are significant opportunities to enhance the area with new development that is well designed and contributes to animation. Inner city brownfield, gap and underutilised sites should be consolidated and redeveloped to increase the population living and working in the area. This would in turn support facilities and amenities in the area in a sustainable manner and increase vibrancy and viability.

The potential to create design/ development briefs and possibly design competitions should be explored. This would support innovation and the creation of high quality places that reflects the local character whilst introducing innovation in design and technology including renewable energies and materials.

3







## CREATE EFFECTIVE SHARED SPACE

Creating shared space that is accessible to all is central to the Urban Villages Initiative outcomes. There are opportunities to improve and increase access for a wider community to existing spaces, through physical interventions and/or activities and events.

In designing new spaces, careful consideration needs to be given to the adjacent uses, to ensure they maximise the positive animation that provides the feeling of safety and encourages the use of the space for all. Regular positioning of doors and windows along frontages increases overlooking of the space.

Also note the importance of designing shared spaces for all ages and abilities and encouraging inter-generational use of the spaces.

Shared movement through spaces should also be considered, where appropriate. The concept is to improve the visual appearance of spaces, whilst giving pedestrians and cyclists increased priority, reduce traffic speeds and create flexible spaces to accommodate different events and activities.

## MAXIMISE CONNECTIONS

There are possibilities to maximise connections in the short, medium and long term. The quality and range of connections across, within and beyond the area including links to the city centre, River Foyle and other community assets need to be considered. Interventions may range from removing a railing, creating safe pedestrian links, to the longer term goal of considering the removal of the Lecky Road Flyover and re-making 21st century streets.

Priority should be given to increasing connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people, whilst

overcoming topographical challenges through creative urban design. The balance between commuter parking and residential amenity should be addressed and consider the potential for creating home-zone play areas integral to residential streets.

Potential cycle routes and riverside walkways/parks, bridges and links to the city walls should be increased. Similar schemes in other areas have seen an increased uptake in running, walking and cycling which promotes healthy lifestyles and provides opportunities for tourism.

## ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF INTERFACE WALLS

In the 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy, the Northern Ireland Executive made a commitment to remove interface barriers by 2023.

As a headline action in that Strategy, we will work with local people and other stakeholders to address the challenges of interface walls in Urban Village areas as appropriate in each place. Clearly this is not a simple task and fulfilling such an objective must be carefully undertaken.

In each Urban Village area it is proposed that local people and those with responsibility for taking action on issues around interfaces are involved in shaping delivery of any capital or other schemes. There is no prescribed approach to this task.

Delivery may include increasing levels of communication and positive interaction, protecting original and potential points of connection, maximising opportunities for

regular communication and shared programmes and activities and introducing flexibility to physical barriers where there is community support to do so.

Work could also be undertaken to address non-physical barriers that exist between neighbourhoods, in keeping with Urban Village's three aims of fostering positive identities, building community capacity and improving the physical environment.



# BUILD A MORE RESILIENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT COMMUNITY

3

DEVELOP AND PROMOTE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



IMPROVE AND INCREASE  
ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY  
GARDENS AND GROWING



### DEVELOP AND PROMOTE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Strategically well located, the area has the potential to become a key place for investment, private business and social enterprise. This should be proactively pursued collectively with partners including: TRIAX, Derry City & Strabane District Council, residents, City Centre Initiative and Londonderry Chamber of Commerce.

A collaborative working relationship with businesses and their representative organisations could identify a series of practical measures and learning tools to support employment opportunities in the area.

These may include business incentives, marketing support, digital connectivity and targeting training support. More importantly, the conditions must be in place to ensure that the area can provide, attract and retain the workforce needed to supply any employment created.



## IMPROVE AND INCREASE ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY GARDENS AND GROWING

As a strong, vibrant community the area enjoys many assets including community gardens and allotments. These are a precious resource, providing local people with the opportunity to grow fresh produce, eat it and learn about it, making it a positive social activity.

There are already a number of well-utilised allotments throughout the neighbourhoods. The community could be further transformed by creating allotments and community gardens on vacant sites as meanwhile uses as well as other existing open spaces.

There's also potential to bring former gardens back to life including private front and back gardens. This would increase self-sufficiency and provide opportunities for residents to develop skills in horticulture and vegetable growing and offer them opportunities to participate in themed community events in a social setting.

# HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

3

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION  
IN SPORT AND  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY





SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN  
POSITIVE LIFESTYLE  
CHOICES



COLLABORATE TO  
TACKLE SOCIAL ISOLATION





## ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Homegrown sporting stars who have competed at the highest level across several disciplines hail from the area. Boasting several of the city's key sports facilities, namely Brandywell Stadium, Celtic Park, City Baths, Pilots Row Community Centre, The Gasyard Centre and Fountain MUGA the area provides great opportunity to support

and nurture talent. The River Foyle offers further activity with potential to introduce many to water sports enabling people to see it as a positive asset and amenity.

Significant sporting events like the Walled City Marathon, City of Derry Triathlon and Jog in the Bog have

3



inspired hundreds of people of all ages to get involved in regular sporting activity. More sporting events/festivals would provide further inspiration for people to get involved in sport.

It is crucial to create a sustainable culture and environment in which sport and physical activity is intertwined

to become the norm from an early age. There are opportunities to offer a wider menu of sporting options and programmes to members of the community who do not participate in traditional sports and regular activity. For example; teenage girls, senior citizens, disabled groups and members of the LGBT community.



## SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN POSITIVE LIFESTYLE CHOICES

3

Given the health issues and inequalities in the area there is a need for people to be better informed of their lifestyle choices. This could be through events, courses and information sessions that address a wide range of issues from life expectancy to suicide rates, the prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders to disability benefit uptake.

For most, this is best placed in the local community making it more accessible for all to take up an opportunity to have a health check completed, discuss personal details in a confidential space within close proximity of their home, saving them cost and time. Having support to know and understand their rights would enable participants to maximise their household potential with a confidence and drive that would trigger an inter-generational shift with better knowledge and understanding of their rights and health requirements.

---

## COLLABORATE TO TACKLE SOCIAL ISOLATION

The community continues to deal with a challenging economic climate, social inequalities threaten to deplete community energy and resilience. This makes partnership approaches critical to the sustenance and well being of members of the community, to ensure the best use of our collective skills and resources.

Lower socioeconomic groups have a greater risk of poor health, isolation and reduced life expectancy. Opportunities should be sought to address this by collectively harnessing and supporting a continued collaborative focus across the area. This direct positive impact could improve the standard of living for all

by providing a service that encourages communication through listening and supporting the views, strengths and relationships of people in the community.

Organisations such as Western Health Social Care Trust and Public Health Agency working in partnership with community groups such as Dove House and Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum will be key to building effective approaches that improve inclusion, health and wellbeing.





3

# ENTERPRISING COMMUNITIES

3

CONNECT AND  
COLLABORATE



INCREASE EDUCATION,  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES





## CONNECT AND COLLABORATE

We are living in an era of transformation with the creation and sharing of knowledge. There are many community, training, schools and college establishments in the area and their skills and knowledge could be shared more effectively through collaboration and collective thinking. A partnership approach on a cross sector basis is critical to support and enable learning progression and achievement, with a particular focus on those who have traditionally 'fallen through the gaps' and need more support to build confidence and capacity before re-entering the labour market.

There is currently great potential to connect and further develop technologies and social processes to provide the next generation with positive learning experiences that can open doors to partnership working, academic achievement and economic opportunity. A more effective sharing of information via social media and e-zines would complement and better promote information and educational opportunity that is available to all.



## INCREASE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Unemployment and economic inactivity continue to threaten the vibrancy and potential of the community. Collective planning and continued promotion of a positive learning ethos within families, the community and local businesses are crucial steps towards an educated, well skilled, employed community.

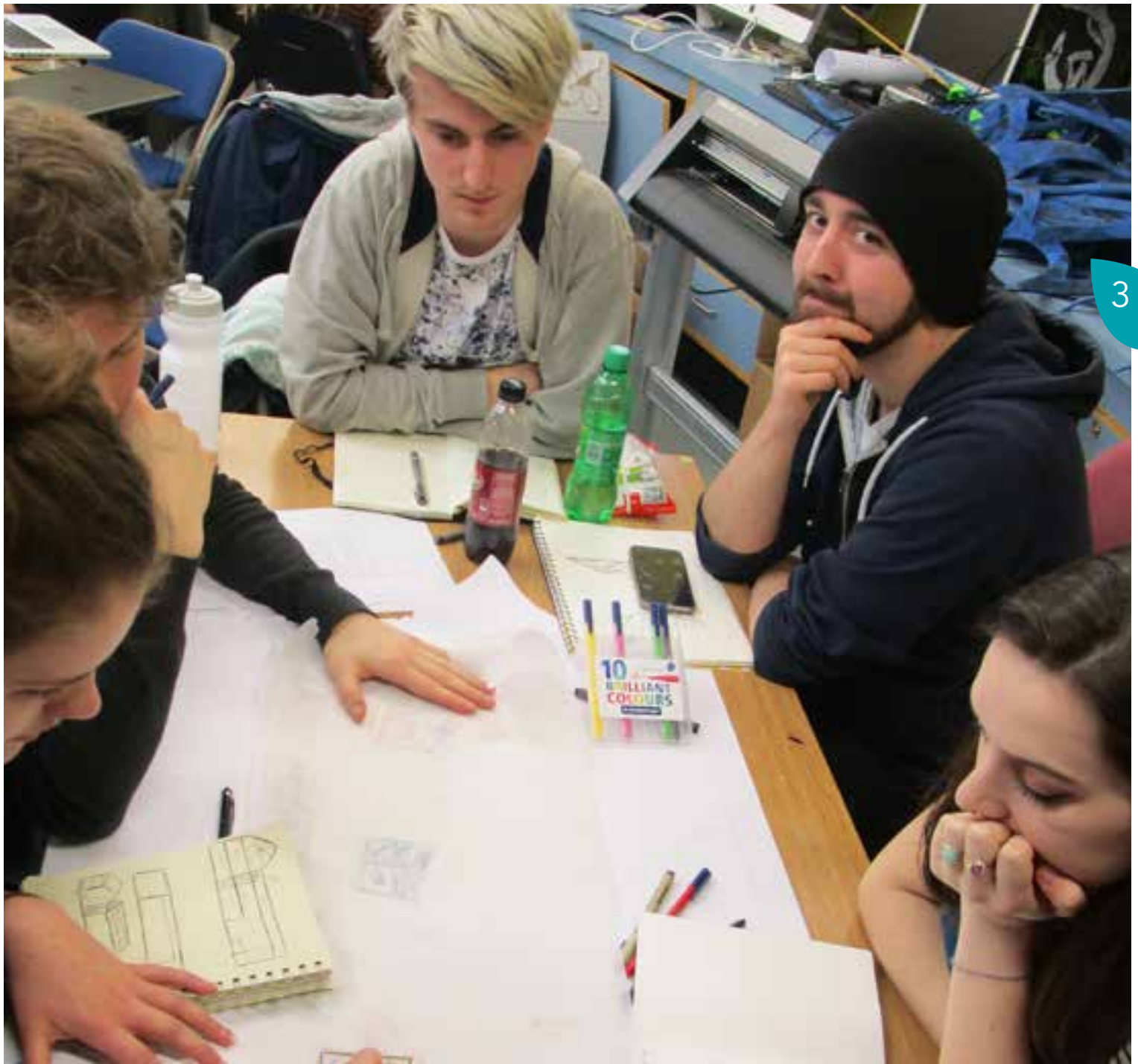
There are opportunities to tackle barriers to employment with a collaborative approach to learning. Starting in the community, the potential to increase local skills would enhance and support the work of schools and colleges to develop better employment opportunities. Accreditation centres could be harnessed to ensure a wide range of accredited training is available to address the immediate needs of the area.

Apprenticeships in trades and other professions are placing the vocational qualification firmly back on the agenda to offer an alternative road map to skills and qualifications whilst

earning. Working collaboratively, local businesses and organisations could offer an all round training opportunity by enabling participants to maximise their own learning potential by working and developing their strengths both practically and academically.

Empowerment and motivation are key to enabling learners to pursue knowledge and develop expertise that takes advantage of their unique interests and potential. This unique learning landscape could be achieved with a partnership approach to training, through a variety of learning environments and specialist training providers to promote and support local talent with skills that are unique to the area. Training in areas like; social media, graphic design, 3d printing, heritage skills and event management/production would allow local people to bring specialist qualifications to the area for the area.





# MOTIVATE, SUPPORT AND INSPIRE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

3

ENCOURAGE YOUTH  
ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



SUPPORT MULTI-DISCIPLINE  
ACTIVITY





INCREASE SUPPORT  
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING





## ENCOURAGE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

3

The legacy of the conflict demanded that the majority of children attend schools that are mainly Catholic or Protestant. This means that young people continue to have limited opportunities to meet young people from different backgrounds.

More programmes, events and initiatives that bring young people together would strengthen relationships, break down barriers

and provide the youth with a better understanding of the world around them and the potential they have to achieve goals with ambition and drive.

Engagement opportunities could be further supported and utilised when diversionary work is needed, especially during times of heightened tension when it is critical to create events/trips with a youth focus.



## SUPPORT MULTI-DISCIPLINE ACTIVITY

Urban Villages inter-generational community engagement workshops reported that participants welcomed the opportunity to share and discuss their own life experiences. This was done with a range of age groups and varied environments.

Further innovative collaboration would support youth groups and other local groups to work together in a sharing capacity. This would enable skills to be harnessed both inter-generationally and cross community. This sharing of ideas could be further appreciated through intercultural activity in a range of programmes, allowing people to use their voice and opinions in a safe confidential space that recognises and respects all voices.

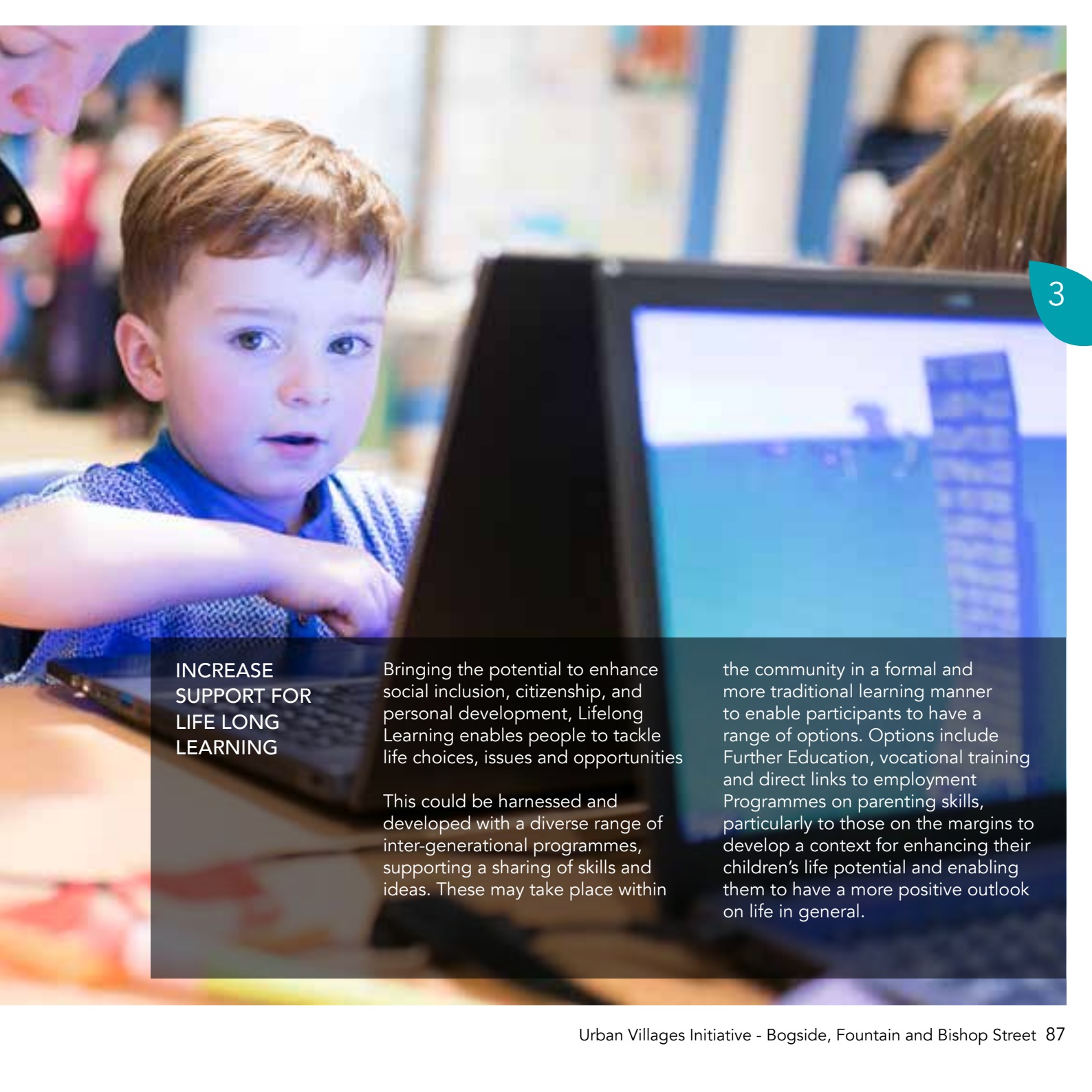
3





3





### INCREASE SUPPORT FOR LIFE LONG LEARNING

Bringing the potential to enhance social inclusion, citizenship, and personal development, Lifelong Learning enables people to tackle life choices, issues and opportunities

This could be harnessed and developed with a diverse range of inter-generational programmes, supporting a sharing of skills and ideas. These may take place within

the community in a formal and more traditional learning manner to enable participants to have a range of options. Options include Further Education, vocational training and direct links to employment Programmes on parenting skills, particularly to those on the margins to develop a context for enhancing their children's life potential and enabling them to have a more positive outlook on life in general.

# CELEBRATE AND PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

3

PROMOTE AND DEVELOP A PROGRAMME OF FESTIVALS, EVENTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY

CELEBRATE AND FOC  
CULTURAL DIVERSIT







ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH LOCAL, NATIONAL AND  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS





## PROMOTE AND DEVELOP A PROGRAMME OF FESTIVALS, EVENTS, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY

3

Gasyard Wall Féile and the Maiden City Festival are locally produced and managed festivals, unique to the area that celebrate the area's history, culture and people. They have become highlights in the wider city's cultural calendar and complement the well established city wide celebrations including; Halloween, St Patrick's Day, City of Derry Jazz Festival, Foyle Film Festival, Celtronic, Music City and Feis Doire Colmcille.

Increasing awareness of these key local festivals and offering support to existing practices and events would increase their wider benefits. This could be achieved with the implementation of a co-ordinated overarching approach to the management of resources and the

promotion/ marketing of opportunities that may arise within the community in all areas of participation including; marshalling, volunteering, timekeeping, organising packs and enabling a full family participation.

The City of Culture year demonstrated the transformative power of arts and culture which have been increasingly linked to social and economic regeneration, well being and contributing to a shared future. Scope for festivals and events throughout the year should continue to be pursued for all ages around different themes including arts, crafts, music and sport.





## CELEBRATE AND FOSTER CULTURAL DIVERSITY

3

The city is becoming increasingly diverse with people of many nationalities, backgrounds and cultures choosing to settle and make the city, including the Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street, their home.

Continued positive engagement between people living in the area is now needed more than ever in this ever evolving community. The opportunity to encourage the involvement of all people in the community should continue to emphasize fun, a sense of belonging, inclusivity, respect and a place to be proud of.

Further support and opportunities are needed to ensure that all cultural traditions, including those of newer communities are developed and promoted in a positive, inclusive, integrated manner. Communication and understanding about the history, ethos and practices of cultural traditions should be better shared and encouraged to aid wider understanding and participation, whilst also instilling community pride locally.









3





**ENCOURAGE  
PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH LOCAL,  
NATIONAL AND  
INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANISATIONS**

There has been great collaborative work carried out by local organisations with national and international groups in recent years. Examples include creative events company Artichoke collaborating with Gasyard Wall Féile and Apprentice Boys of Derry at the Lumiere event in 2013 which attracted 200,000 visitors.

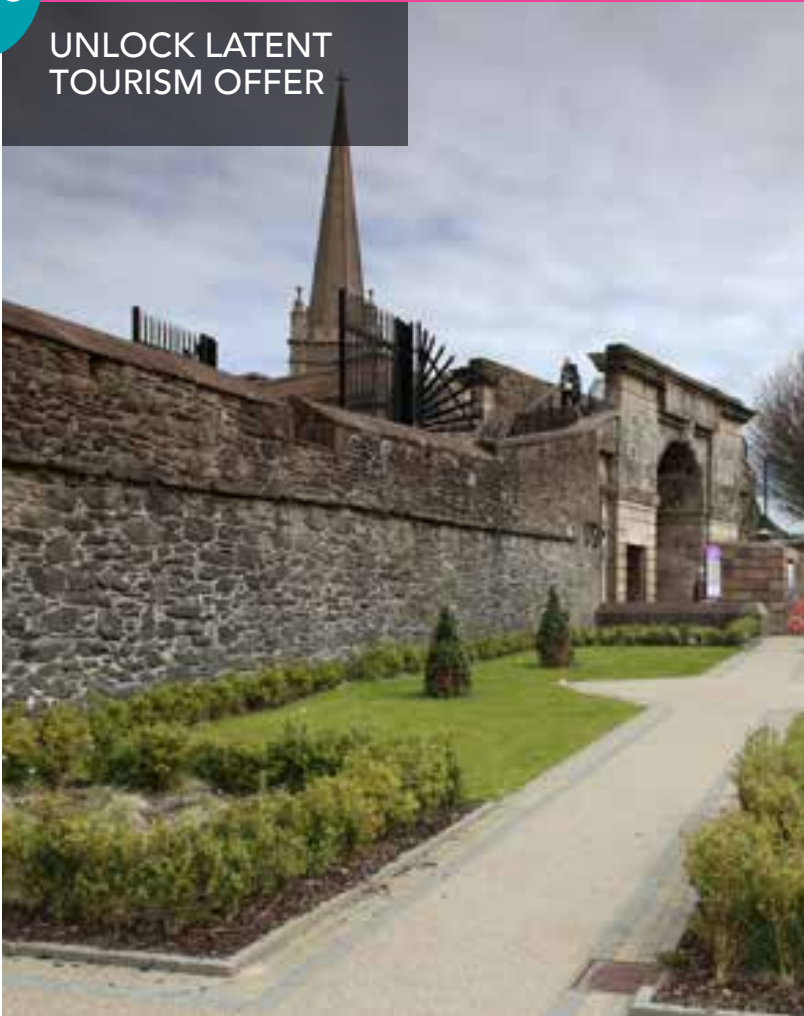
The development of further strategic partnerships with local, national and international organisations focusing on the arts, culture, leadership, health, child development, heritage, and education sectors should be harnessed, explored and encouraged where possible. Done collaboratively on a cross sector basis to include the local community, this could provide an opportunity to see and experience other communities and places outside of their immediate environment.



# MAXIMISE TOURISM OFFERING

3

UNLOCK LATENT  
TOURISM OFFER



CREATIVELY RE-USE/ CONSERVE  
PHYSICAL ASSETS



INCREASE THE SPIN-OFF  
BENEFITS OF EXISTING TOURISM



## UNLOCK LATENT TOURISM OFFER WITHIN THE AREA

3

Having boasted some 500,000 visitors in recent years, the city has become a popular tourist destination. Several key tourist sites are located in or close to the area including the City Walls, Free Derry Corner, Museum of Free Derry, Bogside Murals, Long Tower Chapel/ Áras Colmcille, St Columb's Cathedral, putting the area on the tourist trail.

There is potential to expand and build on the area's valuable tourism offer. The city's impressive history of shirt making remains largely untold. There are also opportunities to offer literary links to the Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, world renowned playwright Brian Friel as well as 'the Shakespeare of Derry', George Farquhar. The majestic River Foyle continues to be an asset that offers great potential both to the community and visitors.





## CREATIVELY RE- USE / CONSERVE PHYSICAL ASSETS

Unlocking the latent potential in the area's existing shirt factories and associated worker's housing both in Bogside and Fountain could provide an opportunity to sustainably re-use these to meet everyday needs.

Job creation possibilities in this sector include heritage construction (trades and professionals), hospitality and leisure and community heritage management.

3



### INCREASE THE SPIN-OFF BENEFITS OF EXISTING TOURISM

There is potential to introduce more creative ways to improve access from and to the city walls that will remain sensitive to the monument and its story. This can only be achieved through robust community discussions with local businesses, organisations and local residents to ensure all are involved in the areas evolving nature.

This could take place with a series of innovative events, highlighting the city's assets and the potential to engage in a fun and positive manner. An opportunity to harness visitors spending power by offering retail and hospitality opportunities to tourists before they move on to other destinations also offers potential for local businesses to progress and offer products.

The TRIAX community tourism group has been working on a voluntary basis to develop tourism infrastructure and promotional materials.

An opportunity to offer tour guide training, event marshalling and retail training would offer the potential to provide additional employment and income opportunities to the area.



3





**URBAN  
VILLAGES**  
Thriving Places





# 04

## SUPPORTING DELIVERY

# SUPPORTING DELIVERY

4

## STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

The Urban Villages Initiative is a headline action within the Executive's 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy. It is led by the Executive Office with the support of senior representatives from other government departments alongside Derry City and Strabane District Council.

This Strategic Framework is intended to be a useful point of reference for anyone with an interest in the Urban Village areas and a means for identifying opportunities to collaborate around shared Programme for Government outcomes and indicators.

## ROUTES TO DELIVERY

Although coordinated by the Executive Office, and overseen by Junior Ministers, capital and revenue investments made directly through the Urban Villages Initiative will be led and managed by organisations that best suit the particular project or programme. This means that work on parks, public realm projects and other physical interventions is likely to be led by the Council, the Department for Communities, NI Housing Executive or the Department for Infrastructure.

Support will be provided to projects and programmes in keeping with the good relations outcomes of the Urban Villages Initiative. We will draw from the most appropriate delivery partners including central and local government and community and voluntary groups.

Activity more focussed on community capacity building, cultural innovation and positive identities will be delivered by community and voluntary groups to maximise local networks and connections or through central or local government.







The  
**Executive Office**  
[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)

This material is based upon Crown Copyright and is reproduced with the permission of Land & Property Services under delegated authority from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright and database rights NIMA ES&LA 2006.