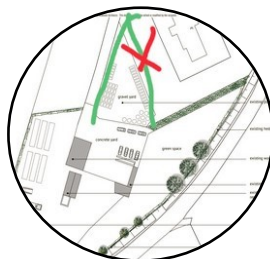
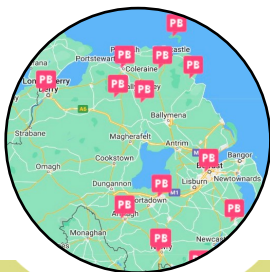


Community Places

2022

Annual Report

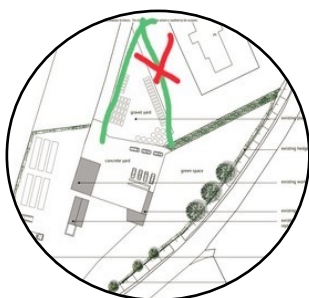


Planning Advice and Improving Engagement in Planning

We continued to deliver our free, impartial, confidential and independent **planning advice and support services** to people and community groups throughout the region. Demand for the service - which is part-funded by the **Department for Infrastructure** - remains high as people struggle to navigate the complexities of the planning system. This year we helped 36 groups and 86 individuals from all 11 local council areas.

Our advice casework covered a wide range of planning policy issues including development control and development management, and planning appeals, enforcement and complaints.

People contacted us for advice on planning policy relating to wind turbines, mushroom processing plants, infill dwellings, retrospective planning permission, housing, stables and other structures permitted in the countryside, housing in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a marine slipway, pig farming facilities and householder permitted development.



We gave advice to groups who have plans to undertake improvements and alterations to their own community facilities and helped

others who wanted to engage with the Local Development Plan preparation process.



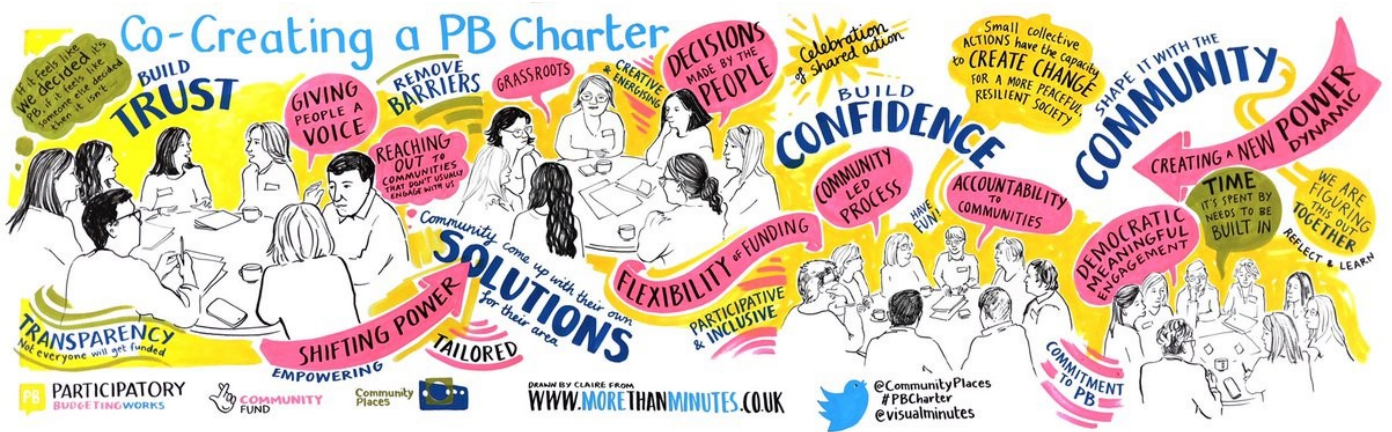
We also continued our work with the **Planning Engagement Partnership** during the year. The Partnership was established by the Minister for Infrastructure in 2020 to explore how community engagement in planning could be improved.

As co-chair of the Partnership we jointly planned, designed and facilitated community and stakeholder engagement sessions and helped shape and develop the Partnership's final report and recommendations.

The report was published in March 2022 and we look forward to continuing to work with the Partnership and its members as it seeks to implement and take forward the recommendations which will ensure that communities will be able to engage more meaningfully and effectively with planning processes.



Developing a Charter for Participatory Budgeting

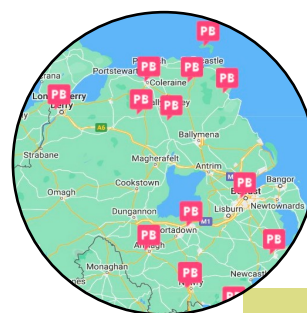
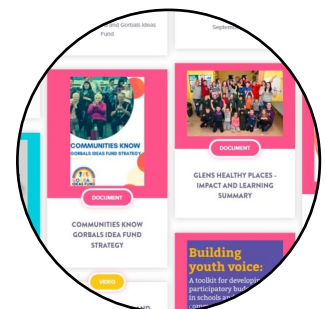
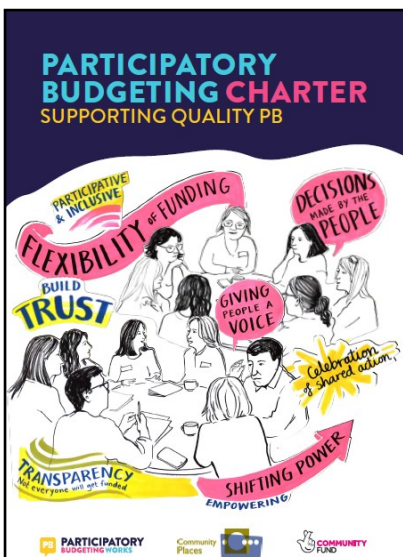


We began our work to put people in the lead through quality participatory budgeting in early 2020. With funding from the **National Lottery Community Fund's NI Great Ideas** programme the project's work this year included information and support sessions on PB to a wide range of community groups and organisations across the region, a series of learning workshops (focusing on Community-led PB; Digital and Online PB; and PB and Community Wealth-Building), and co-designing a **Charter for Participatory Budgeting** to promote and support the design and development of quality PB practice.

The Charter was launched in September 2022 and we will continue our lobbying work and continue to promote PB as an innovative way to engage people and make sure they are involved in decision-making processes and the allocation of resources.

www.participatorybudgetingworks.org has a plethora of resources (videos, case studies, links to PB in action) and we will continue to maintain and contribute to this over the coming year.

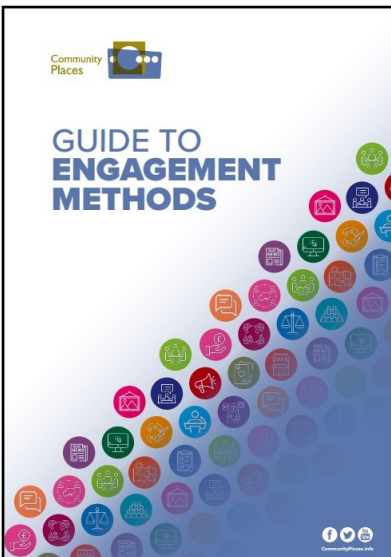
We also look forward to sharing the project's external evaluation and learning report.



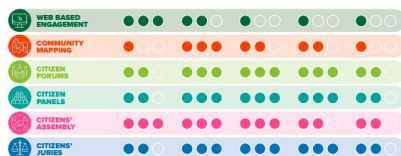
Sharing our Knowledge on Community Engagement

We drew together our knowledge and experience of many varied and innovative engagement methods and techniques and formally published our **Guide to Engagement Methods** early in 2022.

Designed as an interactive resource, the Guide looks at 19 different engagement methods, their strengths and weaknesses and assesses their suitability for and effectiveness in achieving different levels of engagement. We also provide practical tips on how to apply each technique.



If your group is interested in further information on specific engagement methods or techniques we can provide this (either in person or via video conferencing).



We used a development grant awarded by CFNI's **Civic Innovation Programme** to develop an innovative engagement technique - a **Snakes and Ladders** type board game - to demonstrate to groups how to navigate the ups and downs of our often complex planning system.

We first tried out this technique with Sailortown Regeneration whose historic

community near Belfast's docks is under threat from developers. The game was played on the floor of St Joseph's Church in Pilot Street and it was very well received.



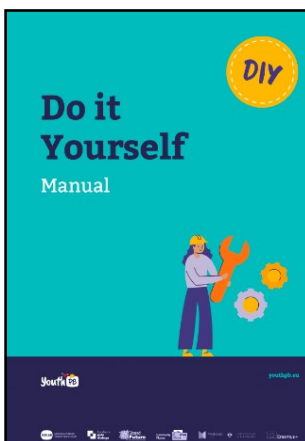
We look forward to more opportunities to use the game again and to show groups what's involved in progressing and realising their planning proposals.



Partnership Working and PB for Young People

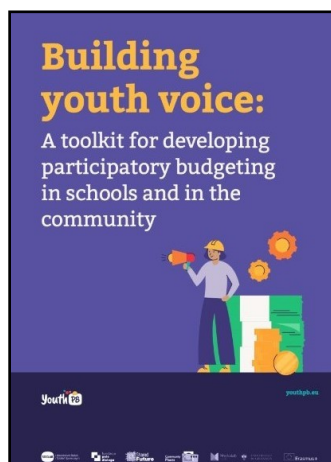
Supported by the EU's Erasmus+ Programme and working with partners in Poland, Spain, and England, we completed our input to the [Youth PB Accelerator](#) project in March 2022.

The aim of this two-year project was to increase the social commitment and empowerment of young people, identify and share good practice of Participatory Budgeting in both schools and the community, and develop a DIY manual and Toolkit to support youth PB practice.



The [DIY Manual](#) is a set of ready-made and easy-to-use tools which can be used in the preparation and implementation of school and youth participatory budgeting processes.

The [Toolkit](#) brings together learning on what builds a successful and impactful youth engagement process. It is intended to give readers an appreciation of the architecture, design, tools, and materials that are the constant features of a participatory budget process, involving (and ideally) also led by young people.



Build Your Project Participatory Budgeting — Key Stages

- Stage 1: Co-design and prepare
- Stage 2: Share, Inform and Support
- Stage 3: Generate Ideas and Refine Projects
- Stage 4: Deliberate and Decide
- Stage 5: Do and Deliver
- Stage 6: Reflect, Refine, and Repeat

Our input to the project also included developing a jargon-free [animation](#) to demonstrate the key elements of PB which can be easily used and understood by young people.



More information on the project is available at www.youthpb.eu as are further resources on PB and links to download the DIY Manual and the Toolkit.



Our People

Board 2022

- Raymond Jackson (Chairperson) - Confederation of Community Groups Newry and District
- Murray Watt (Treasurer) - Supporting Communities
- Breige Conway - Northern Area Community Network
- Michael Graham - Forward South Partnership
- Stevie Johnston - EastSide Partnership
- Brendan Murtagh - Individual Member
- Ann McNickle - Causeway Rural and Urban Network
- Cathy Polley - Ards Development Bureau and Community Network

Staff 2022

- Louise O’Kane - Chief Executive
- Colm Bradley - Director
- Fiona Conroy - Planner and Engagement Officer
- Celine McCart - Administrator
- Sinéad McConnell - Planner and Engagement Officer
- Doreen O’Neill - Projects Secretary
- Claire Rea - Planner and Engagement Officer

Some Changes - We wished Colm well as he retired from his post in March 2022, he directed the organisation and managed our projects, services and staff for 27 years. Louise was appointed to the new post of Chief Executive from April 2022 stepping up from her role as Planner and Head of Engagement. Fiona left us in April 2022 to take up a position in the private sector and Sinéad joined our Planning Team in June 2022.

Our Finances

Yearend March 2022

Income 2021-2022

	£
• Department for Infrastructure	116,000
• National Lottery Community Fund NI Great Ideas	32,302
• Erasmus+ Programme	10,883
• CFNI Civic Innovation Programme	5,000
• Project and Other Income	<u>38,586</u>
	<u>202,771</u>

Expenditure 2021-2022

	£
• Employing Staff	177,744
• Delivering Projects and Services	11,978
• Organisation Costs	<u>32,409</u>
	<u>222,131</u>

Figures extracted from Audited Accounts Yearend March 2022 prepared by Finegan Gibson, Chartered Accountants and Auditors.

Our Planning Advice Service is part-funded by the Department for Infrastructure. A grant from the National Lottery Community Fund's NI Great Ideas programme funded our work to develop the Charter for PB.



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Community
Places

