



**GLENCAIRN
PLACE SHAPING PLAN
2025-2035**

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	7
Place Shaping Process	8
Vision for Glencairn	10
Area Profile	11
Statistical Analysis	14
Policy Framework	16
Spatial Analysis Audit	20
Glencairn Key Services and Facilities	22
SWOT Analysis	23
Engagement	24
Place Standard Analysis	29
Key Messages from Engagement	37
Glencairn Place Shaping Priorities and Objectives	38
Implementation and Next Steps	49
Glossary	50
Appendix 1: Advisory Group Membership	51
Appendix 2: Place Shaping Objective Maps	52
Appendix 3: Funding and Support Opportunities	56

Executive Summary: Glencairn Place Shaping Plan

Introduction

The Housing Executive commissioned a place shaping process for Glencairn to explore the social, economic, community, and environmental regeneration potential of the area. Community Places facilitated this process using The Place Standard tool, developed by the Scottish government, which provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. This community-led process, with representation from the Glencairn Community Project, Build Shankill and the Greater Shankill Partnership took place between October 2024 and April 2025. It brought together key stakeholders to identify existing assets and opportunities within Glencairn and determine how these could be maximised to benefit the community over the next ten years. The development of the Glencairn Community Hub was identified as a key catalyst for the wider regeneration of the area. This Place Shaping Plan was developed alongside two other initiatives in the Greater Shankill Area: the Revitalise Project and the Greater Shankill Plan to Grow - Craft Kit.

Vision

Through extensive community engagement, a shared vision for Glencairn emerged:

“Glencairn will be a welcoming and involved place, with access to community facilities, quality services, homes and green open spaces, where people will have a continued strong sense of pride and hope for the future.”

This vision centres on themes of hope, regeneration, pride, and community involvement that were consistently emphasised during the engagement process.

Methodology

- The place shaping process followed a structured approach that included:
 - Establishing an Advisory Group with representatives from key stakeholders including the Housing Executive, government departments, Belfast City Council, Education Authority, National Trust and community representatives
 - Developing an area profile and spatial analysis with socio-economic data and mapping of physical infrastructure
 - Conducting comprehensive community engagement through:
 - Series of Advisory Group meetings
 - One-to-one meetings with key community groups and service providers
 - Stakeholder meetings
 - Engagement sessions with local schools and youth initiatives
- Open community engagement session, using key questions and the Our Place: Place Standard Tool
- Distributing information through leaflets to every home in the study area and via social media outlets
- Analysing engagement findings to identify priorities, objectives and develop a regeneration action plan

Over 100 people participated in the place shaping process, ensuring broad community representation.

Key Findings

Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile:

- Population of 3,151 with 1,345 households
- Higher female population (54%) than male (46%)
- The area ranks in the top 13% of most deprived areas in Northern Ireland
- Particularly high deprivation in terms of education, skills, and training
- 35.5% of residents have no qualifications (compared to 24% national average)
- Around 40% of households do not have access to a car or van

Housing and Infrastructure:

- 40% of residents live in socially rented accommodation
- Significant variation in home ownership between areas (58% in Court_A and 35% in Court_C)
- Limited connectivity with only one vehicular access point (Forthriver Road)
- Three distinct areas with limited interaction due to topography



Community Assets:

- Strong sense of community identity and belonging
- Access to green spaces including Glencairn Park, Michelle Baird Memorial Park and proximity to Belfast Hills
- Forth Meadow Community Greenway providing environmental benefits
- Active community volunteers and faith-based groups

Identified Challenges:

- Lack of health services (GP, dentist, pharmacy)
- Lack of shops and services
- Shortage of affordable housing
- No secondary school in the area
- Limited childcare facilities
- Concerns about antisocial behaviour in certain areas
- Perceived negative image of the area
- Absence of a central focal point or “heart” for Glencairn
- No paid community development worker

Recommendations

The Glencairn community has identified four key place-shaping priorities to transform the area into a thriving, sustainable neighbourhood.

Where I Go and What I Do:

Glencairn needs to maximise its natural setting within the Belfast Hills while improving recreational facilities. Objectives include: developing a MUGA, enhancing Glencairn Park with better signage, amenities (toilets, benches, picnic areas), multi-age play equipment including Special Educational Needs provision, festival space including a dedicated bonfire space and a dog exercise area. A football pitch should be developed near Michelle Baird Memorial Park, and waste management improved throughout the area. The Forth Meadow Community Greenway connection should be enhanced, and the existing Community Garden rejuvenated. The rivers should be cleaned up and become a greater amenity for the local community. Long-term focus should be on the redevelopment of Fernhill House.

How I Get From One Place to Another:

Connectivity improvements are crucial to overcome Glencairn’s isolation as “Belfast’s biggest cul-de-sac.” An important objective is to investigate the connection to the Crumlin Road and Ballysillan. Traffic management around Harmony Primary School requires a comprehensive strategy including a one-way system, zebra crossings, and speed measures. Public transport reliability must be addressed, particularly for the 11C bus route. Active travel should be encouraged through Belfast Bikes Scheme extension and benches along Forthriver Road. Community transport options should be explored to help vulnerable residents access essential services outside the area.

How I Feel and How I Care:

Environmental improvements include strategically placed waste bins, promoting bulky waste collection services, and considering a small civic amenity site. A youth-led mural project would enhance the area’s appearance while also engaging young people. Regular maintenance assessments and lighting improvements would address safety concerns, particularly at anti-social behaviour hotspots like Harmony Bridge and Forthriver Link. Community events should be expanded to strengthen neighbourhood bonds.

What I Need to Live Well:

A Community Hub should serve as the centrepiece for creating a true village centre with mixed-tenure housing, retail units, and recreational facilities. This development would address the critical shortage of services and bridge the disconnect between different areas of Glencairn. Youth services would be based in the Hub and improved employment opportunities through better communication about job vacancies and training programs. Strengthen collaboration with Build and key partner organisations to deliver a range of housing opportunities across identified sites in Glencairn.

The Place Shaping Plan provides a framework for collaborative action between the local community, the Housing Executive and other statutory bodies, to realise the shared vision for Glencairn by 2035.



Introduction

The Housing Executive commissioned a place shaping process for Glencairn to explore the social, economic, community and environmental regeneration potential of the area. The process took place between October 2024 and April 2025 and brought together key stakeholders to identify and explore existing assets and opportunities within the area and how these could be maximised to bring wider benefits up until 2035. A key driver of the place shaping process was the development of the Glencairn Community Hub which will act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of the Glencairn area. The place shaping process also considered key challenges, areas for improvement and strategic development opportunities. Early and meaningful engagement with the local community, groups, key stakeholders and service providers was central to the process. This was embedded from the outset to ensure the plan reflected local views, bolstered ownership of the place shaping process and maintained a focus on implementation.



An Advisory Group was established and informed and shaped the process throughout. It consisted of representatives from the Housing Executive (HE); Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads; Belfast City Council (BCC); Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP); Education Authority (EA); Department for Communities (DfC), National Trust; PNSI and community representatives from Glencairn Community Project, Build Shankill, the Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership and Harmony Primary School.

This Place Shaping Plan was developed while two other projects were ongoing in the wider Greater Shankill Area: the Revitalise Project and the Greater Shankill Plan to Grow: Craft Kit.

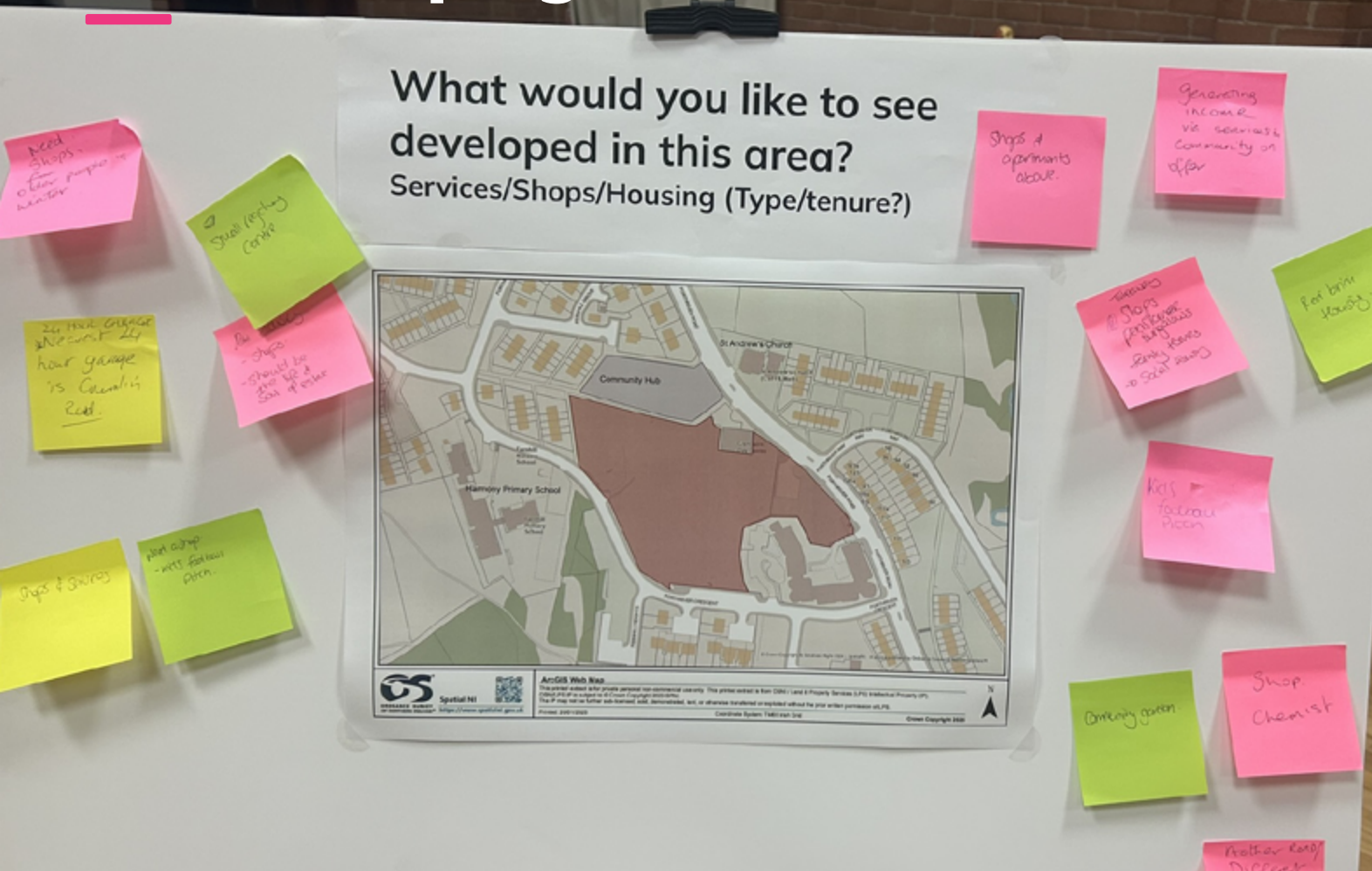
The Revitalise Project has four ambitious goals: collaborating with residents to identify potential housing sites; developing a comprehensive revitalisation plan for Glencairn; implementing improvements along the Shankill Road; and supporting the development of a Creative Arts Hub within the Shankill. The Project involved a comprehensive survey of Glencairn which reached 332 residents (approximately 10% of the area's population) and it has directly informed several successful community initiatives within the Glencairn area.

The Greater Shankill Plan to Grow: Craft Kit is a Department for Communities endorsed framework that will develop an action plan for physical regeneration across all areas of the Greater Shankill including: Lower Shankill/Lower Oldpark, Mid Shankill, Woodvale, Ballygomartin, Highfield/Springmartin and Glencairn.

The project team led by Community Places liaised closely with the Greater Shankill A Plan to Grow: Craft Kit – Local Action Group (LAG) and Jane Turnbull who was facilitating the Revitalise Project. The place shaping process took account of existing strategic plans and strategies including the Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Renewal Area Action Plan, Belfast Agenda Community Plan, Local Development Plans and the Housing Investment Plan.

1 See Appendix 1 for Membership

Place Shaping Process



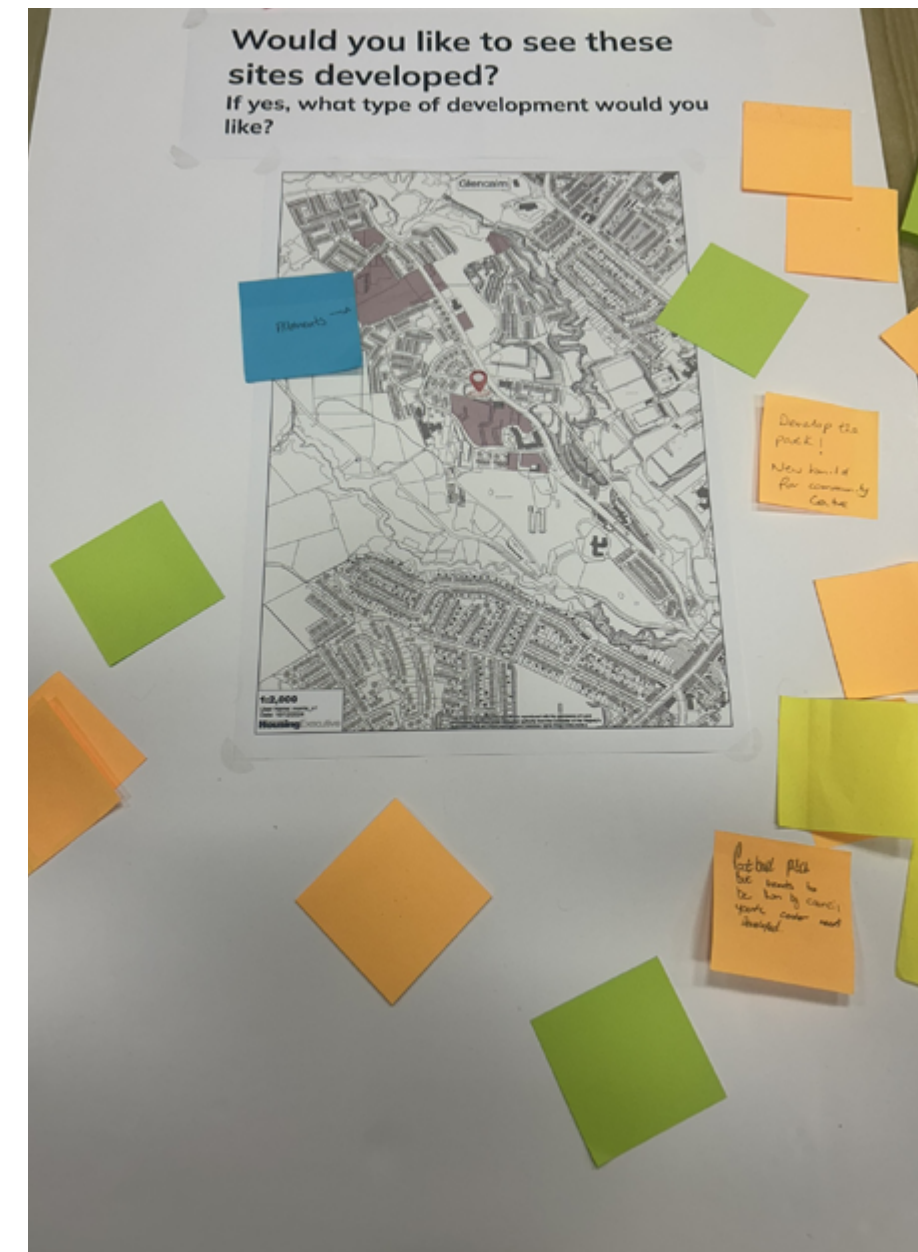
At the outset of the plan process an area profile and spatial analysis was undertaken. The spatial audit mapped the physical infrastructure, asset base and services and facilities currently available. A detailed socio-economic profile was also developed with engaging infographics. Stakeholder engagement was undertaken with landowners, service providers, elected representatives and council officers.

A range of approaches was used to encourage participation in the Place Shaping Plan and to explore assets, aspirations, challenges and priorities of key stakeholders, groups and the local community. This included: workshops with the Advisory Group; one-to-one meetings with key community groups, organisations and statutory service providers; one-to-one engagement sessions with children attending Harmony Primary School, Boys' Model Secondary School and Glencairn Youth Initiatives. Two further open community engagement sessions were also held in St Andrew's Church Hall. The engagement process was complemented by a short online survey developed by the Revitalise Project and additional email responses were received capturing input from those who were unable to attend in person.

Leaflets were distributed to every home in the study area and information shared on social media to raise awareness of the process and the opportunities to get involved in helping to shape the future of Glencairn. Members of the Advisory Group and the community representatives who sat on the Advisory Group played a key role in sharing information and encouraging participation in the community engagement sessions.

Engagement events were scheduled throughout the day to maximise participation from the surrounding community. Over 100 people participated in the place shaping process. Special thanks are given to the St Andrew's Church for hosting the engagement sessions.

Engagement findings were discussed with the Advisory Group to identify plan priorities and develop a regeneration action plan for the area which set out priorities and short-, medium- and long-term actions to be undertaken over the next ten years, until 2035. A draft Place Shaping Plan was presented to the Advisory Group in March 2025 and a final plan completed in April 2025.



NOVEMBER

Meeting with key stakeholders and the community

NOVEMBER- DECEMBER

Area Profile and Spatial Analysis

DECEMBER- FEBRUARY

Community Engagement

**DECEMBER-
MARCH**

Stakeholder Engagement

NOVEMBER

Refine Spatial Analysis

NOVEMBER- DECEMBER

Develop Plan Priorities

DECEMBER- FEBRUARY

Draft Place Shaping Plan

DECEMBER- MARCH

Final Place Shaping Plan

Vision for Glencairn



A number of key messages were highlighted by participants during the engagement process in relation to the future vision for Glencairn. These centred on hope, regeneration and pride - other common threads were the community coming together and being involved. This vision was then presented to the Glencairn Community Project and the Advisory Group for their comments and consideration. The agreed vision is presented below:

“Glencairn will be a welcoming and involved place, with access to community facilities, quality services, homes and green open spaces, where people will have a continued strong sense of pride and hope for the future.”

Area Profile

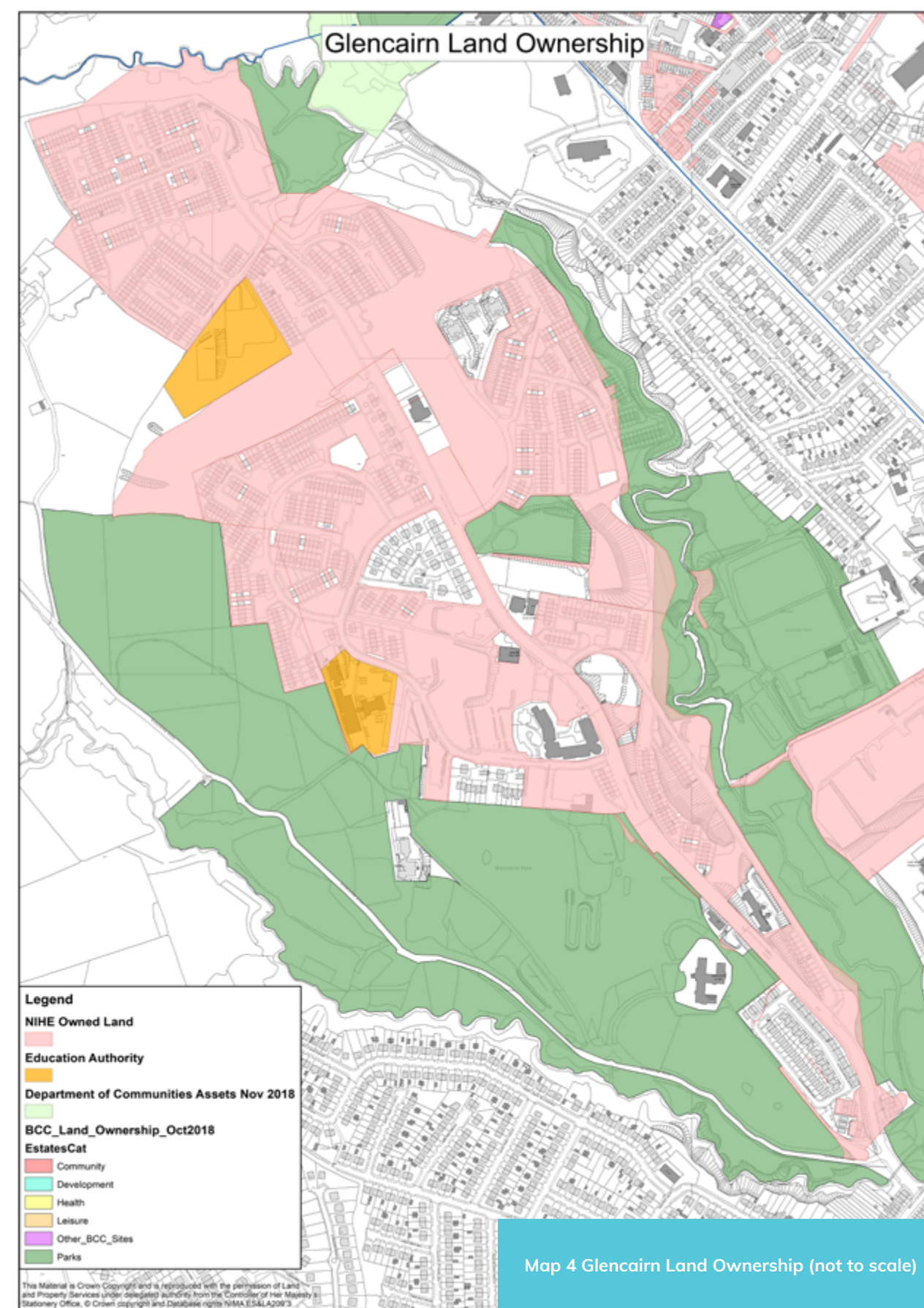
The study area of Glencairn is situated at the foot of Belfast’s Black Mountain, located in the Court District Electoral Area of Belfast City Council. Glencairn is distinct from the wider Greater Shankill in that it lies within the UK Parliamentary Constituency of Belfast North and the Northern Ireland Assembly Constituency of Belfast North. Glencairn was developed by the Housing Trust in the 1960s on the estate grounds belonging to Fernhill House to the west and Forth River House to the East. Both estates were originally homes to wealthy Belfast merchants and were taken over by Belfast Corporation in the 1960s and 1970s. Historic mapping from the Public Records Office Northern Ireland demonstrates the growth of Belfast out into the Hills with the development of Glencairn first noted in the mapping dated between 1959-1966 (see historic mapping 1 and 2 below).



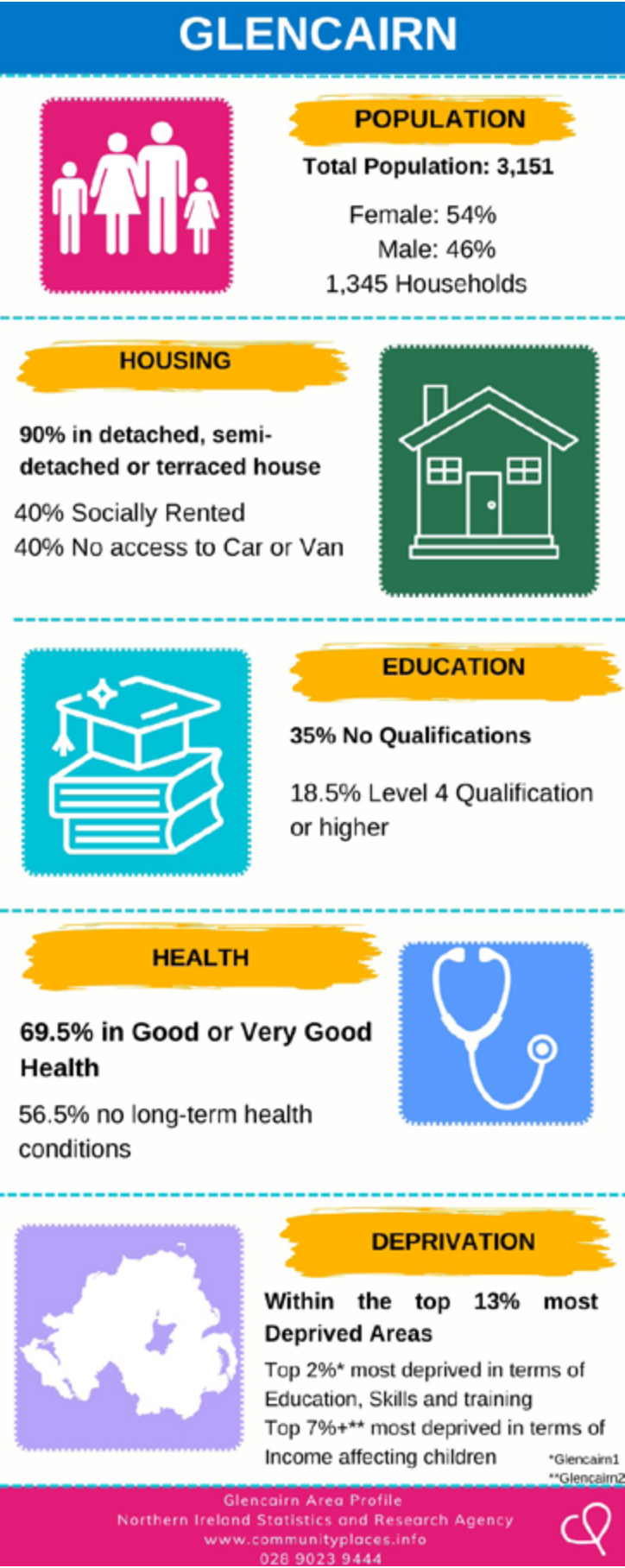
The study area (see Map 3) is bounded to the east by the Forth River, historically a number of Mills^[1] - including Bettlings and their associated Bleach Works which are now home to Clarendon Park - were located in this area.

The study area was agreed at the first meeting of the Advisory Group. The area is defined to the west by Ballygomartin River and Glencairn Road, the original road to access both Glencairn House (Parkview Nursing Home now sits on this site) and Fernhill House. North of Glencairn lies Ligoniel across the Forth River and to the south is Ballygomartin Road. The newly created Forth Meadow Community Greenway is located at the mouth of the Forthriver Road and runs northwards along both the Ballygomartin and Forth Rivers (see Map 4). The sole route into Glencairn is via the Forthriver Road at its intersection with Ballygomartin Road, there is no other vehicular access into Glencairn, resulting in references to the “largest cul-de-sac in Belfast.”

2 <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/historic-environment-map-viewer>



Statistical Analysis



Glencairn is currently made up of two Super Data Zones (SDZs): Court_A and Court_C. Where a single figure is provided, this is a combination of both SDZs.

Population

On Census Day 21 March 2021 Glencairn had a total population of 3,151 people with 1,345 households. Both SDZs have a larger female population with an average of 54% of the population being female and 46% being male.

Both SDZs have similar age demographics, with the smallest demographic being those ages 65+ (Court_A: 18% and Court_C 15%) it is notable that Court_C has a larger younger population of 25% in comparison to Court_A's youth population of 19%. Both areas have similar split of approximately 30% for both 15-39 and 40-64 years.

In terms of nationality both SDZs have similar profiles in terms of country of birth with over 90% of those residing in the area on Census Day born in Northern Ireland. Less than 5% were born in a country outside of Northern Ireland, England, Scotland Wales and the Republic of Ireland. With respect to national identity more than 50% of the population (57%) considered themselves to be British Only, 13.5% of the population identified as Northern Irish Only and 12% as British and Northern Irish Only. Within the SDZ of Court_A 19% of the population identified as Irish Only, this is likely due to the eastern spread of this SDZ outside the study area towards the Crumlin Road. A small average percentage of 4.5% identified as another national identity.

MDM (2017)

The Multiple Deprivation Measures (MDM) provided by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency provide data on seven different deprivation measures and an overall deprivation measure for what were termed Super Output Areas (SOAs), these SOAs are geographically similar to the SDZs outlined above. Each area is then ranked in order of most deprived (1) to least deprived (890), the study area sits over two SOAs: Glencairn1 and Glencairn2.

The overall MDM for Glencairn1 is 87, this in the top 10% of most deprived areas within the region. The area is within the top 2% of the most deprived areas in terms of Education, Skills and Training with a rank of 15. By contrast it in the top 5% of income affecting older people with a rank of 858.

The overall MDM forGlencairn2 is 136 this in the top 15% of most deprived areas within the region. The area is within the top 7% of the most deprived areas in terms of income affecting children with a rank of 61. By contrast it in the top 10% of access to services with a rank of 800.

The average ranking is 111 meaning that the combined Glencairn1 and Glencairn2 areas are in the top 13% of the most deprived areas within the region.

Health

On Census Day 2021 more than half the population of Glencairn (Court_A 70%,Court_C 69%) described their health as good or very good. Similarly, over half the population (Court_A 57%,Court_C 56%) stated they did not have any long-term health conditions.

Educational Attainment

In relation to educational attainment, on average 35.5% of the population of Glencairn do not hold any qualifications, this is over 10% higher than the national average of 24%. In respect of differing levels of qualifications, Court_A, while still below the national average, has a higher percentage of the population with a qualification at Level 4 and above (22%), Court_C has a figure of 15% in respect of the same level of qualification.

Housing and Accommodation

On average over 90% of the population of Glencairn resides in a detached, semi-detached or terraced house (Court_A 93%,Court_C 87%). Court_C has the higher percentage (13%) of residents living in a flat, maisonette or apartment - almost double that of Court_A (7%).

On average 40% of residents live in socially rented accommodation (Court_A 32% Court_C 48%). There is a significant variation in the levels of home ownership within the two data zones, with Court_A having the highest proportion of homeowners (58%) although this falls below the region's average of 65%. The percentage of homeownership within Court_C is 35%.

In terms of access to a car or van, on average almost 40% (38.5%) of the population of Glencairn do not have access to a car or van. Again, there is a contrast between the two data zones, with 32% of the population of Court_A not having access to a car or van and 45% of Court_C, both data zones sit much higher than the region's average of 20% of the population.

Policy Framework

The Belfast Agenda

The Belfast Agenda is Belfast's Community Plan, it was first published in November 2017 and was updated in 2024. The plan sets out the vision and the long-term ambitions for Belfast's future, it also outlines key priorities for the life of the plan to 2028.

The Plan's vision for Belfast is "Belfast will be a city re-imagined and resurgent. A great place to live and work for everyone."

The inclusive growth plan for the city includes 5 strategic themes:

- Our people and communities,
- Our economy,
- Our place,
- Our planet, and
- Compassionate city.

The Plan notes the long-term ambitions for the city such as the economy supporting 46,000 additional jobs, the city being home to an additional 66,000 people, a 33% reduction in the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods, every young person leaving school has a destination that fulfils their potential and a reduction in carbon emissions by 80%.

The Belfast Agenda is linked to and reflects other key strategies and plans. This includes the new Belfast Plan Strategy 2035 (see below) which will provide the spatial framework for the city and will consider any land use planning aspects which emerge through the Belfast Agenda such as housing, employment, open spaces and connectivity.

Planning Framework

Glencairn lies within the Belfast City Council area, the planning framework for Belfast City Council is complex and comprises a number of Local Development Plans including Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, the Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (dBMAP 2015), the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP 2015) and the Belfast Plan Strategy 2035. For the purposes of the Place Shaping Plan, the most relevant planning documents are:

Belfast Plan Strategy 2035

The Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy 2035 was adopted in May 2023 and shapes the future development of the city. The Local Development Plan is vital to the delivery of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda as it provides the planning framework and acts as the spatial expression to support the delivery of economic and social outcomes for the city, while delivering sustainable development. The Belfast Plan Strategy is the relevant Local Development Plan for the study area. However, as Belfast City Council is in the process of drafting its Local Plan Policies with associated land use zonings and maps, the mapping set out in the plans below is most current.



Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

The study area lies within the settlement limit of Belfast City as defined by dBMAP 2015 which was first published in 2004. Within the study area dBMAP includes land zoned as areas of existing open space and land zoned for housing.

The Forth River/Glencairn/Ligoniel Community Greenway (BT 162/02) bounds the study area to the east and west, it seeks to link the area to the Belfast Hills. There are two Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) in close proximity to the study area BT102/02 (Ballygomartin River: Glencairn) and BT102/05 (Belfast Hills, Ligoniel, Divis).

The study area lies between two Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs), to the east of the site lies the Forth river/Wolf Hill/ Ligoniel LLPA (designation BT 125). The site has been designated due to features which include archaeological monuments (including a rath and souterrain) and local nature conservation interest, including a major landscape corridor and green wedge linking to the Belfast Hills and several river corridors. To west of the study area lies the Glencairn LLPA, designation BT126. The LLPA has been designated due to the presence of a rath, for its local nature conservation interest, including two demesnes (Glencairn House and Fernhill House) and the deciduous woodland, Ballygomartin river valley and mature trees and the locally important amenity facilities including highquality parkland and BMX facilities.

Landzoned for housing WB04/02 has been developed out since the publication of dBMAP. See figure 1 below:

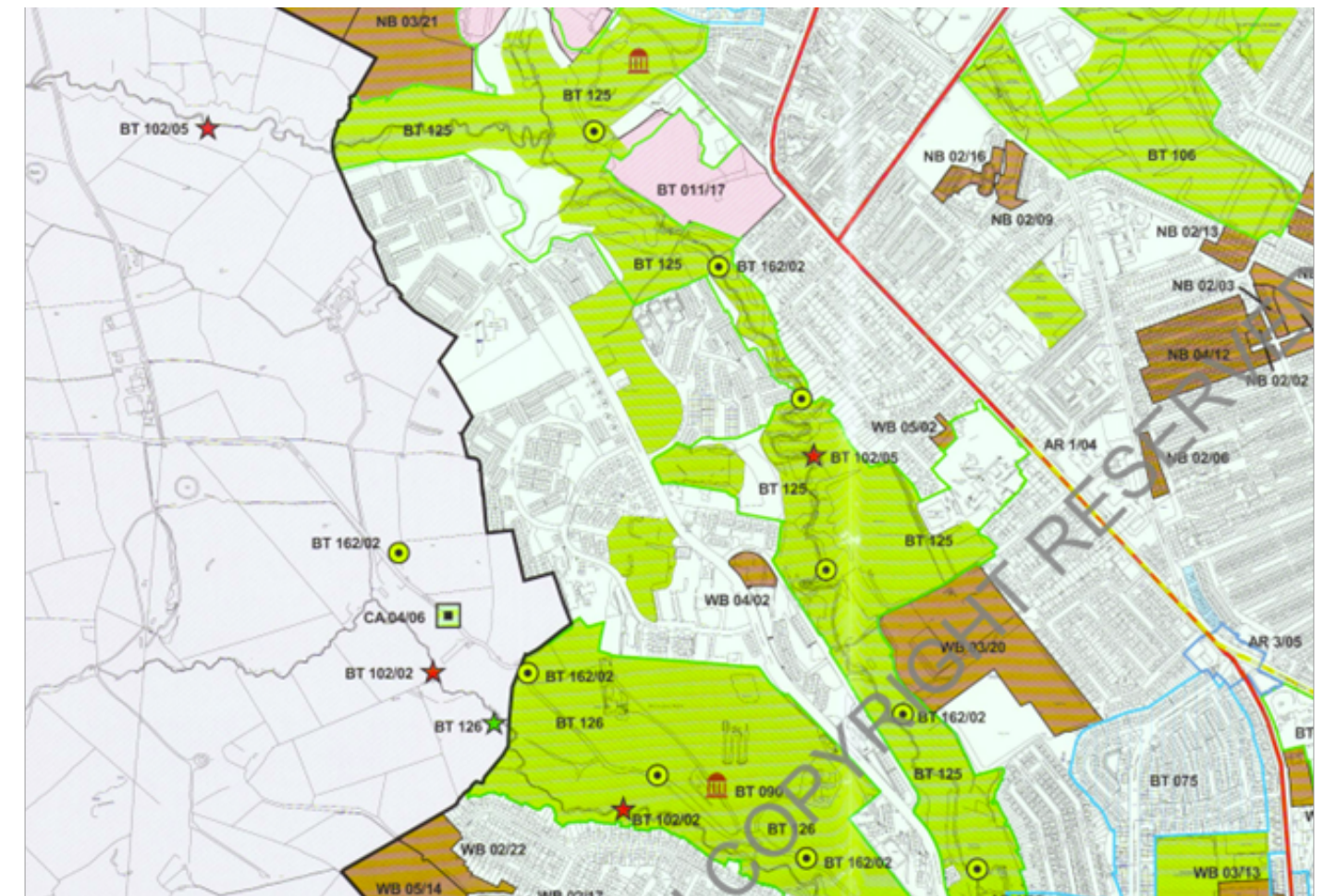


Figure 1 showing Map No 4/001 Belfast City from Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP 2015)

The study area lies within the settlement limit of Belfast City as defined by BMAP 2015, similarly there are numerous land zonings which include areas of existing open space and housing. Again, the Forth River/Glencairn/ Ligoniel Community Greenway (BT147/02) seeks to connect this area of the city with the Belfast Hills. See figure 2 below.

Glencairn and Fernhill Demesne are designated as Historic Park, Garden and Demesne, an area of existing open space. Both former garden sites are now incorporated into public parks administered by Belfast City Council's Parks Department.

The Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) of Forth River/ Wolfhill/Ligoniel and Glencairn bound the site to the east and west (BT107 and BT108), again designated for the large expanses of green open space, archaeological interest and connections to the Belfast Hills.

Land zoned for housing WB04/02 has been developed out since the publication of BMAP 2015.

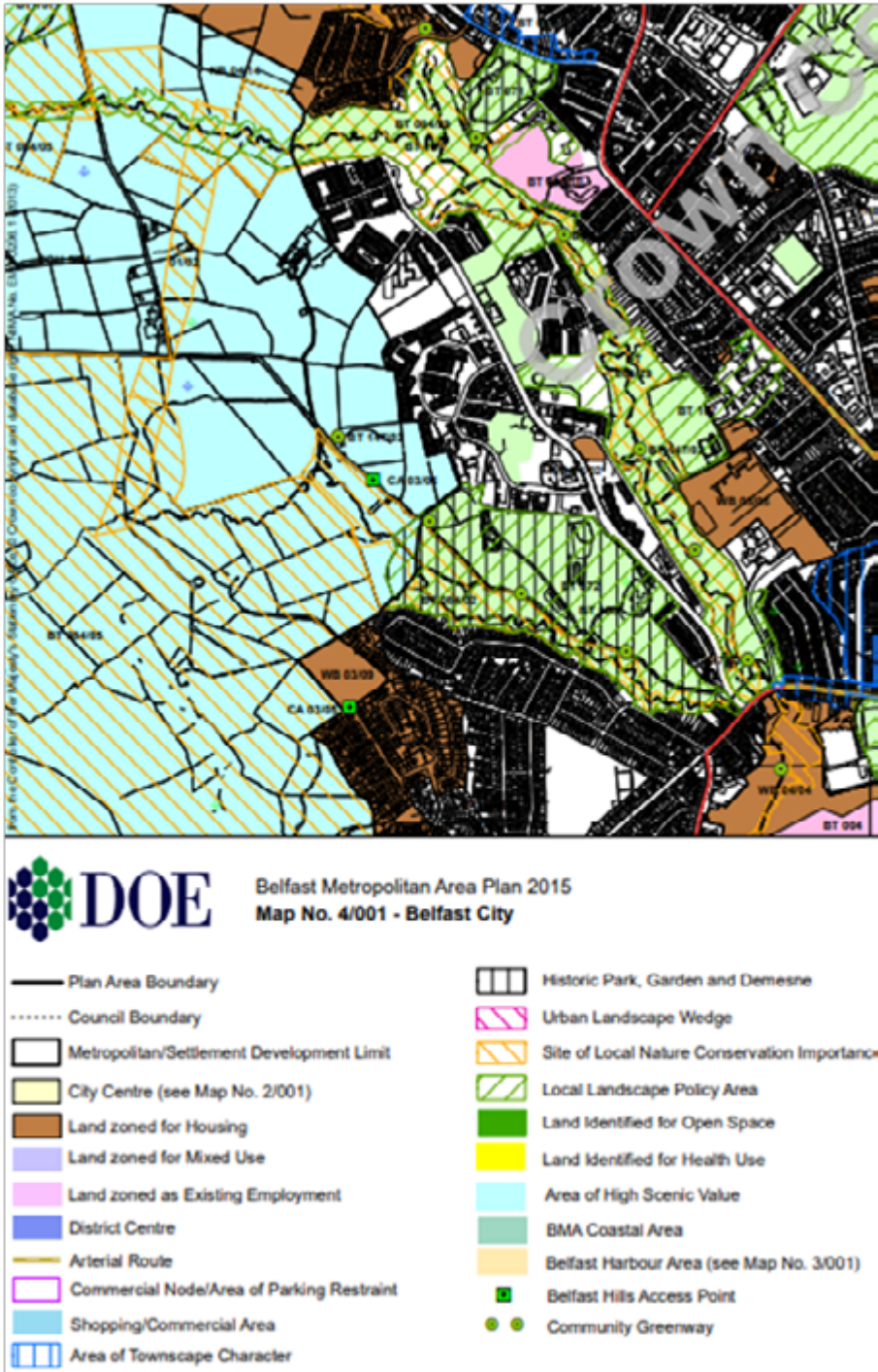


Figure 2 showing Map No. 4/001 Belfast City from Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

Belfast Housing Investment Plan 2024 Update

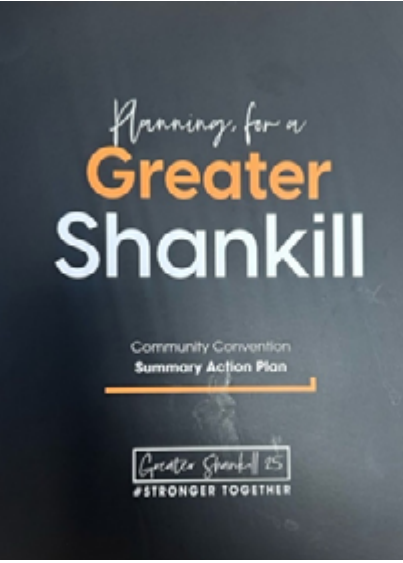
One of key aspects of the Place Shaping Plan is the provision of social and affordable housing. The Housing Executive is both a statutory Community Planning and Local Development Plan partner. The Belfast Housing Investment Plan (BHIP) 2024 Update reports on progress made over the past twelve months and sets out the Housing Executive's ambitions for the coming year. The plan recognises the role housing can contribute to achieving community planning objectives. It is important to note that the actions within the BHIP are aligned against outcomes within the Belfast Agenda 2024-2028 published in March 2024. The HIP advises that the new build social housing need 2023-2028 for the Greater Shankill/ West Belfast is 3,109, there is a total social new build requirement for Belfast City of 8,551 homes.



Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Renewal Area Action Plan 2017-2018

The study area lies within the Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Renewal Area. Neighbourhood Renewal is a government initiative, supported by the Department for Communities, to tackle social deprivation and disadvantage in the 10% most economically and socially deprived neighbourhoods. In 2005 the Greater Shankill Community Convention set priority themes and established sub-groups around them to engage in developing a Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan for Greater Shankill and appointed the Greater Shankill Partnership to act as the NR Partnership for the area. The action plan involves four key strands which were updated and adopted at the 2025 Greater Shankill Community Convention;

- Children, young people and families;
- Employment and enterprise;
- Physical development; and
- Quality of life – a safe, healthy and creative community.



Build Shankill

Build Shankill (BUILD) is a community-led partnership which has been developed to address issues around vacant and derelict land within Greater Shankill. BUILD has identified 82 undeveloped, vacant or derelict sites within Greater Shankill that are either in public or private ownership, six of these sites lie within Glencairn (see map 7).



Belfast Open Spaces Strategy

Open space enhances the quality of the local environment and contributes to each area's identity. The Belfast Open Spaces Strategy (BOSS) sets out an ambitious vision that by 2035:

'Belfast will have a well-connected, accessible network of high quality, sustainable open spaces recognised for the value and benefits they provide to everyone who lives in, works in and visits our city'.

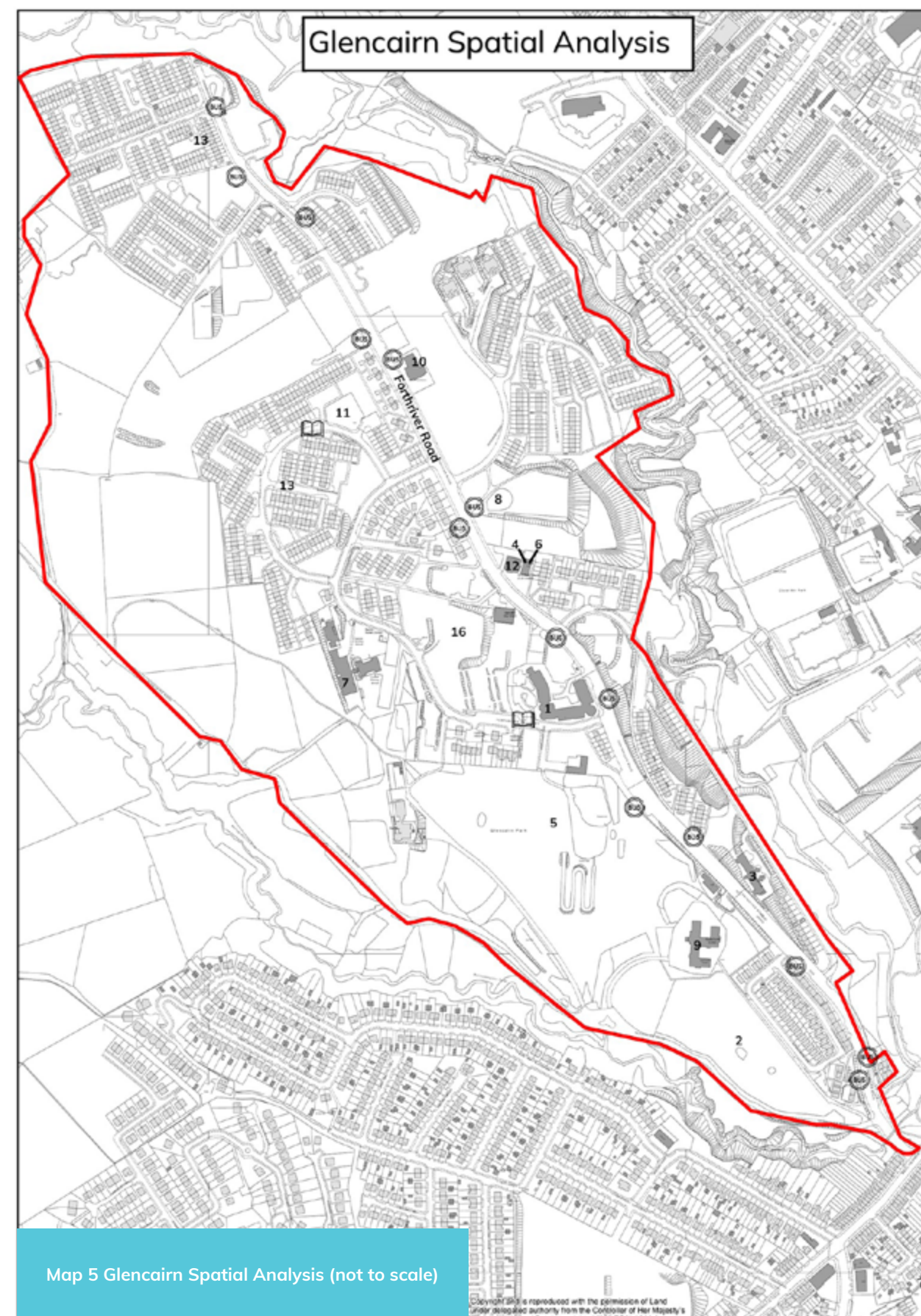
The Strategy is supported by seven guiding principles, that Belfast's open spaces will:

- SP1: Provide welcoming shared spaces
- SP2: Improve connectivity
- SP3: Improve health and well-being
- SP4: Support place-making and enhance the built environment
- SP5: Increase resilience to climate change
- SP6: Protect and enhance the natural environment
- SP7: Be celebrated and support learning

These guiding principles support the ambitions and the visions of both the community plan, the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan, Belfast Plan Strategy.



Spatial Analysis Audit



Glencairn Key Services and Facilities

Key Services and Facilities	Baseline Map Number
Corkey House (Choice Housing)	1
Forth Meadow Community Greenway	2
Forthriver Fold (Radius Housing)	3
Glencairn Community Project	4
Glencairn Park	5
Glencairn Youth Initiatives	6
Harmony Primary School	7
Metro Bus Stops	
Michelle Baird Memorial Park	8
Mobile Library Stops	
Parkview Care Home	9
Places of Worship	
Belfast City Mission	10
Glencairn Way Assembly	11
St Andrew's	12
Businesses	
Container Shops	13
Opportunity Sites	
Former school site (Education Authority)	14
Lands between former school site and the Glencairn Youth Initiatives (Housing Executive)	15
Land adjacent to proposed Community Hub (Housing Executive)	16
Sites identified by BUILD Shankill	17

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Strong sense of identity and belonging - The location surrounded by nature - The people, especially the Young of Glencairn - Forth Meadow Community Greenway and access to the Belfast Hills - Glencairn Park - Michelle Baird Memorial Park - Feeling of safety - Mobile Library - Sense of community and good neighbourliness - Sense of pride - Faith based groups and activities - Motivated community volunteers	- Lack of health services (GP, Dentist, Pharmacy) - Lack of shops - Lack of affordable housing - No Secondary School - Upkeep and appearance of public spaces - Lack of childminding facilities - Perceived negative image of the area - Perceptions of public transport - Antisocial behaviour at Harmony Bridge and the Link - One way in and out – no connectivity - Lack of a heart (focal point) for Glencairn - Topography of the land, creating a ribbon of development with limited interaction between the three distinct areas - No paid community development worker in Glencairn - Lack of a strong lobby for services and development in Glencairn
Opportunities	Threats
- Development of the Community Hub - Development potential of the land around the Community Hub – The creation of a village centre - Development potential of the land at the Old School site and the land adjacent. - Establishment of a new Glencairn Neighbourhood Association.	- Potential loss of Hub funding - Parking and traffic congestion at Harmony Primary School - Lack of available housing for younger people and bungalows for those with complex needs - No revenue funding in place for the Community Hub - Weak community infrastructure for an area of this size

Engagement



In consultation with the Advisory Group and the Housing Executive an engagement plan and core engagement questions were agreed. The Place Standard Tool was used to provide a structured framework to discuss Glencairn and inform the Place Shaping Plan.

Six consistent questions were asked of each group during the community engagement process. Participants were asked to give one word that best described their vision for Glencairn (see section x), what they liked about Glencairn and how Glencairn could be made even better over the next ten years. The Housing Executive had highlighted several sites within Glencairn including the former school site, participants were asked if they would like to see these lands developed out and if so with what development. Participants were also asked what they would like to see developed on the lands adjacent to the proposed Community Hub and if there was any other development they would like to see in a particular area.

What do you like about Glencairn?

Participants were asked what they liked about Glencairn, there were four key themes outlined: People and Neighbours, Open Space and Views, Community and Safety.

Glencairn was seen by participants an estate where everyone knows everyone and everyone gets on well. Several respondents made specific mention of Glencairn's young people: "the young people are great". The proximity to the mountain and Belfast Hills, along with the parks, open space and green area were also mentioned, as was the strong community focus; "everyone helps everyone" and the resilience of the community "after so long without anything".

One participant summed up the majority of the feeling: "there's no real place like it".

The youth-focused engagement sessions saw a similar response with family, friends and the parks being the core themes outlined. The younger children also mentioned the shops and the snow - however, this is likely skewed due to the heavy snow that had fallen that day.

How could Glencairn be made even better over the next ten years?

Participants were asked how Glencairn could be made even better over the next ten years. This question drew more responses than any other question put to participants, with a clear message from both the open engagement sessions and the youth engagement, that shops and services, a community facility and youth provision were the key to making Glencairn even better.

The majority of residents outlined their desire for a local shop in the area that could provide basic necessities. There was also a demand for a social enterprise that could give back to the local community. Residents also felt the area lacked key services such a post office and pharmacy. Both adult and youth participants emphasised the lack of shops and services within the area, with the children keen to see not just shops but also more food outlets within the area.

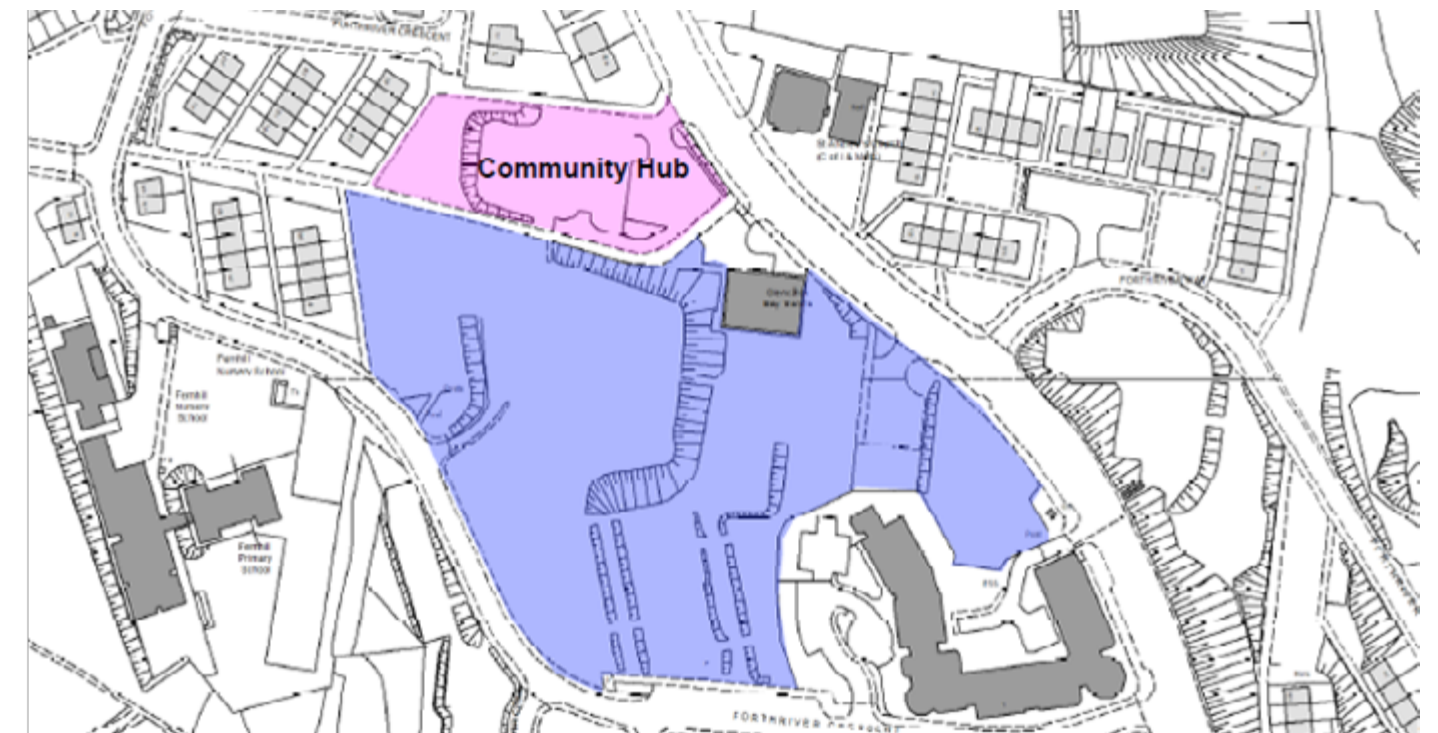
The provision of a community facility was also widely requested, participants felt this should be a neutral space and open to use for all members of the community. There was also a strong desire for elements of physical activity to be developed, particularly among the younger participants, with a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area), football pitch, social gym and leisure centre outlined.

The provision of youth facilities and services was a strong message from participants, this included specific areas for SEN (Special Educational Needs) and neurodiverse children.

Other key areas for the growth of Glencairn included the provision of additional housing, participants specifically outlined their desire for more apartments, bungalows and social housing. Participants also felt there was a general lack of upkeep and maintenance of Glencairn with requests for street cleaning and maintenance particularly around stepped areas.

Land around the Community Hub

Participants were presented with a map of the area around the proposed community hub site (see Map 6 below) and asked what they would like to see developed in this area.



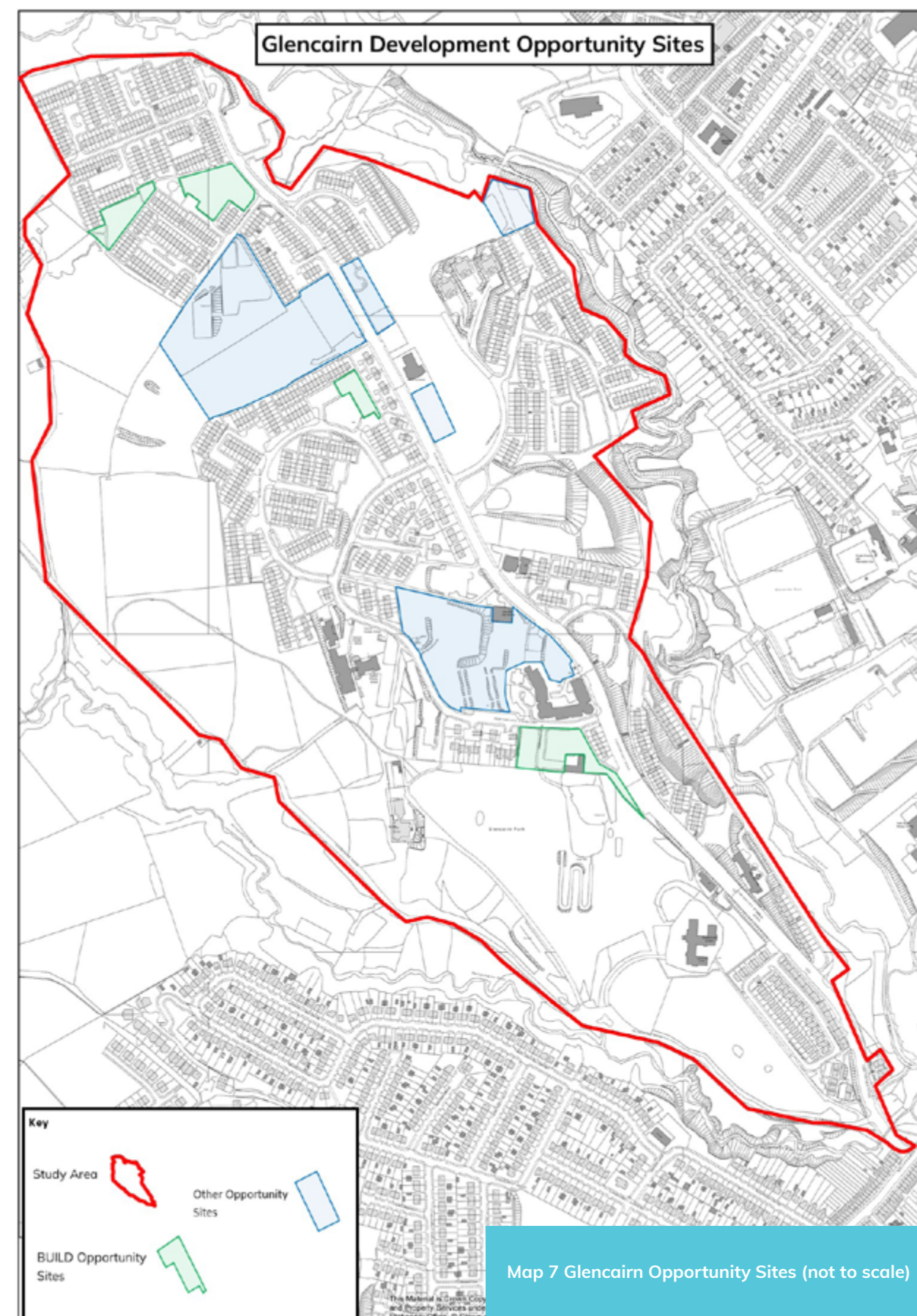
Map 6 showing the Proposed area for the Community Hub (Pink) and the Land in public ownership (Blue)

There was a strong desire for shops and services, with over half of the participants saying that they would like shops, services or a chemist to be sited in this area, two participants suggested the provision of a 24 hour garage (similar to that on the Crumlin Road). There were also calls for a range of different housing types including; family homes, bungalows, apartments over the shops, with one participant specifically requesting that any housing should be red brick.

Participants also requested that a football pitch or MUGA associated with the community hub be developed on the site. Additional comments were also received suggesting the development of a community garden, child-minding provision, better lighting and a takeaway food outlet. There were also suggestions of a small civic amenity or recycling centre and changes to the road layout, specifically providing a new road in and out.

Opportunity Sites

Participants were provided with a map showing the land in public ownership that the Housing Executive has highlighted as potential opportunity sites (see map 7). The majority of this land lies within the ownership of the Housing Executive, however, the old school site is owned by the Department of Education. Participants were given free rein to provide whatever suggestions they saw fit. A football pitch (operated by the Council), housing, a community centre and shops were the most frequently received responses. Other comments were expressed regarding different sites, not those highlighted on the map, they are included in the consideration of the wider development opportunities in Glencairn.



Development Opportunities within Glencairn

Participants were provided with a map of the entire study area and asked, "Would you like to see any other development in a specific area of Glencairn?"

Housing and Shops and Services Connections (to city, Crumlin Road, hills) - there was a wide range of developments suggested from smaller scale interventions such as the provision of benches and bins along the Forthriver Road, an art/wall mural gallery on the walls throughout Glencairn, and specifically at Glencairn way. One respondent also noted the need for some form of safety barrier at the ends of the back entries to try to slow young people on e-scooters from entering the road at speed.

Medium scale interventions such as the provision of zebra crossing at several key pinch points on the Forthriver Road (at the Fold, Michelle Baird Memorial Park and the Youth Club) and at the school. The provision of community allotments, both adjacent to the existing youth club building beside the existing community garden was also suggested. One participant mentioned the provision of outdoor gym equipment; however, others were concerned this would be vandalised very quickly. There was also a desire to have a small coffee pod both at the Michelle Barid Memorial Park and within Glencairn Park.



Larger scale developments including the provision of the Community Hub, an indoor gym and 3G football pitch, along with an Education and Job Centre at the old school site, a 24-hour convenience store (at lands directly beside the Youth Initiatives) and a civic amenity site including glass recycling and a skip, at the only community centre were also requested by participants. The redevelopment of Fernhill House was also a topic of discussion, with some feeling it should be renovated to provide a community facility, others felt that an urban farm could be developed in the old stables or the House could be developed to provide a shop and coffee area.

Again, there was a strong desire for shops and services to be developed in the area. Other key messages were consideration to be given to lighting and safety at Harmony Bridge and lighting in general around Glencairn, a need for housing (although no specific areas were pinpointed) and grit boxes to be filled to allow the community to use them.



Place Standard Analysis

The Place Standard Tool was drawn upon to frame conversations at each of the community engagement sessions. It provided a structured approach to explore the key issues and priorities impacting on Glencairn. The Tool encouraged participants to consider the physical, spatial and social aspects of the area. It also helped to pinpoint the strengths and assets of Glencairn, as well as identifying areas for improvement. Participants were invited to comment on each of the 14 aspects. The process is a visual representation of the areas where a place is performing well and where there is room for improvement but also provides a diagram which shows at a glance how the community feels the area is performing. A score of (1) means there is a lot of room for improvement and a score of (7) means there is very little room for improvement.



Moving Around	3	Play and Recreation	2	Identity and Belonging	5
Public Transport	3	Facilities and Services	1	Feeling Safe	4
Traffic and Parking	4	Work and Local Economy	1	Care and Maintenance	1
Streets and Spaces	3	Housing and Community	5	Influence and Sense of Control	2
Natural Space	5	Social Interaction	3		

Moving Around - Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

The main issues raised regarding moving around related to pavements and pathways being slippery, covered in moss and damaged. It was noted that in many areas of Glencairn there were many areas of steps (including those at Forthriver Crescent) which are steep and in need of repair, it was also noted there were limited ramps posing difficulties for prams and people with limited mobility to get around the area.

Participants noted that the natural topography of Glencairn having been developed on a hill poses some difficulties, but felt the introduction of benches along the Forthriver Road may alleviate some of these concerns. It was noted that at times Glencairn felt like three estates in one, it was suggested that better road signage was required to help create a cohesive neighbourhood. It was noted that the Belfast Bike Dock at the foot of Glencairn was not widely used and appeared to draw antisocial behaviour.

Public Transport – Buses, Trains, Trams and Boats

Participants noted that the 11C Bus Service is good when it is operating but is usually the first bus to be cancelled. It was also noted that during winter months or times of frosty weather, buses would stop at the close to the bottom of the Forthriver Road, meaning those living at the top of Glencairn had to walk the one mile uphill in hazardous conditions. A more reliable and frequent bus service was requested. Participants welcomed the grit boxes throughout Glencairn, however noted they were not routinely filled.

Younger people who rely on the school buses mentioned that they were last to be picked up in the mornings and their bus was the first to be cancelled or left school grounds latest, meaning they were away from their homes for longer than they would like.

It was noted that there was only one road in and out of Glencairn, it was suggested that a new road or pedestrian walk way linking Glencairn to the Crumlin Road should be developed.

Traffic and Parking

The greatest cause for concern among residents in respect of traffic and parking was the traffic outside Harmony Primary School. It was suggested by numerous participants that Forthriver Crescent should be made a one-way system during school hours and speed ramps introduced within this area of Glencairn. Consideration should be given to the widening of the section of Forthriver Crescent and the provision of spaces for the school drop-off.

It was suggested that zebra crossings should be introduced in several areas along the Forthriver Road, such as at the entrances to both parks and close to the Fold. It was also noted that the signage for the current traffic calming measures was either hidden by trees in foliage or had been knocked down and not reinstated.

Streets and Spaces - Streets, Squares and Buildings

The key cause for concern outlined by participants was Fernhill House. Participants felt Fernhill was an asset to Glencairn, but that it was being left to fall into disrepair. Suggestions for the re-use of Fernhill House included a hotel with glamping pods, community centre, cafe and shops. It was also suggested that Fernhill should be transferred into the community's ownership. There was a feeling that Glencairn needed some modernisation, with community buildings such as the youth club and scout hall not being fit for purpose.

Participants felt the buildings in the area (such as St Andrew's Church Hall) could be used more by the community.

There was a general feeling that there could be more care and attention given to the streetscape, with paving and steps fixed, grass verges maintained, drains cleaned out and the provision of more bins and seating within the area. One participant suggested that the existing Community Garden on Forthriver Road should be repaired. It was noted that there had been an increase in the use of e-scooters along the entries at Forthriver Crescent, it was suggested that some form of safety barrier be introduced to stop young people using these e-scooters from entering the public road at speed.



Natural Space, Nature – Parks, Woods, Hills, Beaches

There was a general consensus that Glencairn was surrounded by brilliant outdoor spaces, with the Belfast Hills, the Glencairn Park, the Michelle Baird Memorial Park and the greenways all mentioned as key assets for the area. However, it was noted that these assets need more attention and are underutilised. It was noted that there should be better links to the Belfast Hills and the Glen from Glencairn, with facilities such as toilets and a café/coffee dock to encourage use. It was also felt that there should be information boards and signage to encourage the public to use the existing trails, with bug hotels and a wildlife school to encourage younger children into the outdoors.

It was noted that the outdoor space was mainly used by dog walkers and there was a need for both dog waste bins and normal bins. Several participants mentioned the need for benches, picnic benches and a sheltered area, especially within the Glencairn Park and along the Forthriver Road. Participants also said that the grass was not routinely cut in the Glencairn Park and at times the park could be better maintained and fencing added to help prevent the use of scramblers in the park. One participant felt a sensory garden would be of benefit within the park, as would a specific area for dogs. One participant said it would be beneficial to have a water element in the park, somewhere to feed the ducks, similar to the Ligoneil Dams or the Waterworks.



Play and Recreation - Play, Hang Out, Games and Hobbies

Participants felt there were limited facilities for children, especially older children. Many felt that there was a lack of safe places for their children to hang out within Glencairn. There was a strong desire for the Community Hub to go ahead and provide youth services and facilities as the current offering was not fit for purpose and the area should benefit from a dedicated youth worker. Participants felt that young people should be involved in activities such as mural painting to instil a sense of pride and ownership. One participant suggested the opening of a snooker hall.

Many participants expressed a wish for a football pitch or MUGA to be developed within the middle of Glencairn so that it would be easily accessible to the entire community. Three possible sites were put forward - the EA site of the old school, the land to the rear of the Michelle Baird Memorial Park and the land adjacent to the Community Hub site.

Participants also felt that a small park or toddler area could be provided at the top of the Forthriver Road. It was acknowledged that there are activities within the area, but there could be a lot more. It was also noted that play and recreation should also include provision for those with additional needs and sensory needs.



Facilities and Services - Schools, Libraries, Shops and Other Services

The provision of facilities within Glencairn attracted the largest volume of comments from participants. People made specific reference to the lack of services available to the community, with only the primary school, monthly library bus and three container shops available to the community. Participants expressed a desire for a local shop or 24-hour garage, cash machine, post office, pharmacy and doctor's surgery, similar to what was previously available within the estate.

Several respondents mentioned the need for a multi-use leisure centre, with shop, leisure facilities, gym and counselling services similar to the Grove Wellbeing Centre. Other expressed a preference for facilities such a bowling alley, cinema, bingo hall, soft play area and cinema and a hub for young people. The younger participants enjoyed the youth centre, but felt it was geared for younger children and the space was too small.

Harmony Primary School and its principal were seen as a key asset for Glencairn, however, people felt that the school building was not fit for purpose and should be updated or modernised. Participants also raised concerns regarding the lack of childcare provision in the area, with no facilities. The lack of a doctor's surgery was highlighted, as it impacts on those most vulnerable in the community, with pregnant women having to take taxis to attend hospital visits or community midwife appointments in the Grove Wellbeing Centre.

The provision of a community hub was a key goal for people, however residents felt that the hub should be run by a statutory organisation with a community committee set up to advise.

Work and Local Economy - Jobs and Places to Work

The school, Corkey House and Parkview Care Home were all highlighted by participants as possible opportunities for employment. Many people felt there was limited scope for employment within Glencairn and any jobs that did become available were not open to all residents and usually filled in house. There was a feeling that due to mental health issues, feelings of low self-worth and a lack of support that there was a reliance on benefits. Training, careers and job advice services were suggested to help encourage people into work.



Housing and Community - Homes, Friends and Neighbours

The majority of participants expressed a very strong sense of community within Glencairn and noted their neighbours were great, however a small number of participants felt that people do not know their neighbours like they used to and there was some hostility towards new cultures and new people being housed in the area.

People highlighted and supported the need for additional housing to be built in the area. Several specific needs were identified including bungalows for elderly people or people with additional needs; family homes with three or more bedrooms; and homes for couples with two or more bedrooms. Participants indicated that a mix of social, private and affordable housing would help build a strong community.

It was noted that several properties within the area were being used as “dole drops”- preventing this and providing bungalows for elderly people would provide additional family homes. The possibility of a housing swap scheme for older people to downsize and families move into larger homes was suggested.



Social Interaction - Meeting and Talking with People

Participants welcomed and supported the new principal and family support officer at Harmony Primary School and the activities and support they have provided within the community. It was felt that these activities brought people out of their homes, however some respondents felt that only targeted people with children.

Respondents emphasised that the lack of a community hub/centre was a barrier to organising community events and activities. Many felt that existing groups were closed off and not open to new members. People expressed their desire to have more opportunities to meet people and make friends.

The groups operating out of St Andrew's Church, including the Guides and Men's Group and the 50th Scout Group were also highlighted as a benefit to the community.



Identity and Belonging - Feeling Proud and Part of a Place

Residents were evenly split regarding their sense of pride, some felt there was great sense community and pride within Glencairn, highlighting that neighbours looked out for each other and noted their families had lived in the estate for generations. This was echoed by the youth, with young people feeling a great sense of pride to be from Glencairn. Others commented that people wanted to stay in the area but had been forced to leave due to the lack of housing for private ownership.

However, some felt that the area had been left to run to ruin and with that they had lost a sense of pride in the area. Some said people are moving out because there is nothing for them and there has been an increase in antisocial behaviour as young people have nothing to do.

Both the younger and older children commented that they really enjoyed the Light Up Glencairn Lantern Parade and would love to see more of these activities with the community coming together in the future.

Feeling Safe

There were mixed feelings regarding safety both during the open engagement sessions and the youth-focused sessions. During the open sessions, feeling safe scored highly (with an average of 5.25), it was noted that it was very important to feel safe and while some felt that Glencairn is a safe and settled community and they knew everyone. Positive comments were made about pro-active policing having an impact on safety in some of the lower courts. One participant commented that they felt safe within their own area of the estate but would not go into other areas of Glencairn.

Conversely a similar number of participants expressed their concerns for safety within Glencairn noting that their children do not feel safe and avoid certain areas. There are pockets of antisocial behaviour, areas specifically mentioned were the Link and Harmony Bridge. Lack of lighting was also a key message when discussing the aspect of safety, participants felt that more lighting should be introduced in a number of locations such as Forthriver Crescent, the back entries, the Link and Harmony Bridge, as residents resorted to using torches on their phones to navigate the area safely. Parents noted that Hallowe'en was a specifically concerning time, with a lot of youth from outside Glencairn gathering in the park. It was also noted that there were some issues with burglaries, joy riding and drug dealing within the area.

Participants at the younger youth sessions commented that they generally did not feel safe during the day or night, giving a score of 4 during the day and a 1 at night, they mentioned “scary” buildings and concurred with the open sessions regarding the Link and Bridge.

Conversely the older youth sessions gave a score of 7, advising they felt safe and that it was a good community and everyone knows everyone.

Care and Maintenance - Fixed, Clean and Managed

Fly-tipping and the lack of both rubbish and dog waste bins were the chief concerns from residents. One participant suggested using the old community centre site (to the rear of the Belfast City Mission) as a small civic amenity site, with provision for medium-sized waste and glass recycling. It was felt that this would help prevent fly-tipping in the area.

Residents also commented that the pathways and steps are not maintained, with paths becoming slippery due to moss and steps broken and not repaired. Residents also noted that grass verges and the grass in the park are not maintained with high grass and weeds.

One resident said they would like to see a good quality public art project.



Influence and Sense of Control - Having our Say and Being Listened To

There was a strong feeling among participants that they were not listened to. Comments were made that residents get asked their opinions but nothing materialises. Participants also noted they had limited political support, as no politicians lived within the area. However, there was a sense of change with residents advising “*this is the first time we have been listened to*”.

Key Messages from Engagement



- Noticeable lack of service provision - only container shops and no facilities. High demand for the Community Hub to act as a catalyst for regeneration.
- Strong community identity - great sense of pride to be from Glencairn.
- Appreciation of the nature and green spaces around Glencairn, although they are not used to their full potential.
- Mixed feelings regarding safety - key hotspots for a sense of unease particularly at the Link, with changes through nighttime and day time hours.
- There could be better care and maintenance of both public spaces and those in private ownership - issues with grass cutting, potholes, fly-tipping.
- Limited opportunities to be listened to and have their say, but this appeared to be changing.
- Parking congestion around the school and issues with public transport.

Glencairn Place Shaping Priorities and Objectives

The places that we call home, we work in and where we relax have a direct link to our wellbeing, mental health, and economic opportunity. Our open, structured engagement process used the Place Standard model which allows communities to actively discuss their space - both the positive attributes and those which can be improved upon.

In using this model, four PlaceShaping priorities have been developed under the sub categories;

- Where I go and what I do?
- How do I get from one place to another?
- How I feel and how I care?
- What I need to live well?

Each Place Shaping priority has been agreed by both community representatives and the Advisory Group and is accompanied by a set of strategic outcomes and objectives which provide a roadmap to not only deliver the Place Shaping Plan’s agreed priorities but ensure that future investments reflect community priorities and contribute to creating thriving, sustainable places for all residents of Glencairn.



An illustrative map of the Place Shaping Priorities can be found on page 48.

Where I go and what I do?

The Where I go and what I do? sub-category includes the place shaping themes Streets and Spaces (Streets, Squares and Buildings), Natural Space (Nature: Parks, Woods, Hills, Beaches) and Play and Recreation (Play, Hangout, Games and Hobbies). Participants noted the key location of Glencairn within the Belfast Hills, the valuable open spaces, such as Glencairn Park and the Forth Meadow Community Greenway, but felt it was not used to its full potential. It was noted that there was a considerable volume of green space within Glencairn, which residents were keen to retain. Of particular concern for participants was Fernhill House, it was felt that this was a valuable resource that should be utilised.

Many participants felt there were limited opportunities for play and recreation. Children especially commented that there were limited resources for them to play and hang out, with many feeling that play equipment in both parks were for younger children and did not cater for their needs. Participants raised issues of limited seating arrangements within Glencairn Park, which discouraged the older residents from using the park. It was also noted there were limited waste bins and no recycling bins within the parks.

Participants felt those with Special Educational Needs were not considered in the play equipment provided and that a dedicated area should be provided. There was also a strong desire for a football pitch, it was noted that Glencairn previously had a football club, but this was now gone, and the children had no dedicated football pitch, instead they were erecting ad hoc nets and drawing nets on the side of existing buildings.



The agreed priority is that Glencairn is:

“An attractive place to live, that makes the most of its natural setting in the Belfast Hills and has quality play and recreation facilities for the whole community.”

Strategic Outcomes

- In order to meet this priority, three strategic outcomes in relation to Where I go and what I do? have been identified for Glencairn;
- Enhanced linkages and improved access to the river, parks, community greenway and Belfast Hills.
- New and improved sport and play facilities.
- Redevelopment of Fernhill House and its environs.

Place Shaping Objectives

Objective	S/M/L	Partners
Meet with BCC Parks Outreach Team to discuss welcome signage, wildflower planting project, volunteer days and animation in Glencairn Park. Opportunity to participate in the 'Belfast in Bloom' competition.	S	BCC – Parks Outreach Team, GCP, BHP and National Trust
Meet with BCC to discuss the provision of toilet facilities, benches, picnic area, shelter and coffee dock (pop up/mobile) in Glencairn Park.	S	GCP, BCC
Meet with BCC to discuss the potential of providing multi age play equipment (age zones, particularly 8+ years) and Special Educational Needs play provision in Glencairn Park.	S	GCP, BCC and EA
Meet with BCC to discuss provision of dog exercise area and dog waste bins within Glencairn Park.	M	GCP, BCC
Meet with BCC to discuss the potential of a grassed football pitch to the rear of the Michelle Baird Memorial Park.	S	GCP, BCC Sport NI, and HE
Meet with BCC to discuss the provision of general waste bins and recycling bins within Glencairn Park, The Michelle Baird Memorial Park and along Forthriver Road.	S	GCP, BCC and HE
Meet with BCC and PSNI to discuss potential of a strategy to address issues with scramblers entering Glencairn Park.	S	GCP, BCC, PSNI, PCSP, BHP and NT
Meet with BCC, Belfast Hills Partnership and National Trust to discuss welcome signage and information boards for the Forth Meadow Community Greenway through Glencairn Park and out to the Belfast Hills.	S	GCP, BCC, BHP and NT
Develop a long-term vision for a cleaner and more biodiverse Glencairn River and Forth River, with community access.	S/M	GCP, BCC, DFI, RA, LWWP, BHP and NT
Meet with Housing Executive to discuss the restoration of the existing Glencairn Community Garden on the Forthriver Road and the development of a sensory element to the garden.	S	GCP, HE and DfI
Meet with the Housing Executive and BCC to explore opportunities for introduction of a Community Allotment along the Forthriver Road.	S	GCP, BCC, HE and SAC
Meet with Sport NI, EA and BCC to develop a MUGA for young people in Glencairn.	M/L	GCP, Sport NI, EA, BCC and DfC
Lobby Group to be established with the community and local elected representatives to engage with BCC representatives to discuss the future re-development and regeneration of Fernhill House.	L	GCP, Elected Representatives and BCC
Meet with Housing Executive and BCC to discuss the provision of a dedicated flexible community festival and animation space to include a concrete base for a community bonfire.	S	GCP, HE, BCC, Elected Representatives

How do I get from one place to another?

How do I get from one place to another? This sub-category encompasses the place shaping themes Moving Around (Walking, Wheeling and Cycling), Public Transport (Buses, Trains etc), and Traffic and Parking.

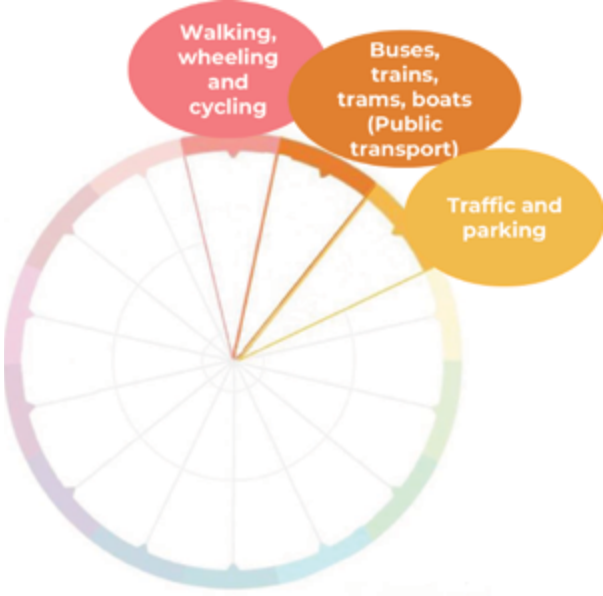
The key message in respect of getting from one place to another was the single route in and out of Glencairn - it was described as “Belfast’s biggest cul-de-sac”. There was a strong desire to develop a connection through to the Crumlin Road via Harmony Bridge. Residents felt this was a key connection to Ballysillan and its associated facilities. Concerns were raised regarding the safety of this existing crossing and antisocial behaviour, and it was felt that works to upgrade and develop this connection would be of significant benefit to Glencairn.

Participants noted that due to Glencairn’s linear nature up the side of Black Mountain, it was often difficult for those with additional needs to navigate and there was a high dependence on public transport. Participants felt that the 11C bus from Belfast City Centre to Glencairn was often the first bus to be cancelled with limited notice, and during icy winter months those using the bus were left at the mouth of Glencairn. Children attending Boys’ Model Secondary School also expressed concerns that they were often the last to be collected from school and away from their homes for longer periods of the day.

It was also noted that due to limited services in Glencairn residents had to leave the area to attend GPs, dental surgeries and chemists on the Shankill Road and Woodvale Road. A community transport scheme could connect those without access to a car or with mobility issues to these key services.

Participants noted that generally traffic and parking around Glencairn was quite good, however there was a severe pinch-point at Harmony Primary School during school drop-off and collection times. Residents supported the idea of traffic calming measures at the school including zebra crossings and a one-way system to help control the movement of vehicles through the area.

Zebra crossings were also considered necessary on the Forthriver Road at the entrances to Glencairn Park and Michelle Baird Memorial Park. Participants also raised concerns regarding signage throughout Glencairn, with many unsure of the location of various courts and streets and the traffic priority signage hidden by foliage on the Forthriver Road.



The agreed priority is:

“A connected Glencairn that is easily accessible with active travel options.”

Strategic Outcomes

The following three strategic outcomes will be built upon to meet How do I get from one place to another? priority for Glencairn;

- Improved traffic management and pedestrian accessibly.
- Enhanced connections to the neighbouring communities.
- Improved public transport to and from Glencairn.

Place Shaping Objectives

Objective	S/M/L	Partners
Explore the potential to upgrade and enhance the connection to the Crumlin Road and Ballysillan.	M	HE, Dfl, BCC and GCP
Meet with Dfl to discuss the provision of zebra crossings at Glencairn Park/Fold and the Michelle Baird Memorial Park.	M	Dfl, HE, EA and GCP
Meet with Dfl, EA representatives and PSNI to discuss ongoing traffic management issues at Harmony Primary School and the creation of a joined-up strategy to address these concerns. This should include potential provision of the following; • One way system during term time; • Zebra crossing; • Speed ramps; • Consideration of road widening and provision of school drop off area.	S	Dfl, Harmony PS, Harmony PS-PTA and GCP
Meet with Dfl to discuss the movement of the traffic management and priority signage on the Forthriver Road blocked by tree.	S	Dfl and GCP
Meet with Dfl, PSNI and HE to discuss the potential provision of safety interventions to prevent e-scooters, bikers, children entering roads at speed.	S	Dfl, HE, GCP and BCC
Meet with BCC to discuss the potential for the provision of improved road signage, to include detail on the primary road name and those secondary roads branching from it.	S	BCC and GCP
PromoteDfl's online portal to allow residents to log concerns such as empty grit boxes, potholes and street light issues.	S	Dfl and GCP
Liaise with Translink regarding bus routes to the estate and school services, to better meet local travel needs and the provision of bus shelters with seating.	M	Dfl (Translink) and GCP
Meet with HE and BCC to discuss the potential provision of benches along Forthriver Road.	S	Dfl, HE, GCP and BCC
Liaise with BCC regarding extending the Belfast Bikes Scheme with a docking station for e-bikes at the top of the Forthriver Road.	M	BCC, Dfl and HE
Explore community transport options including volunteer car drivers and minibus schemes to connect those without access to a car or with mobility issues to key services such as GPs and employment.	M	GCP

How I feel and how I care?

The How I feel and how I care subcategory takes in the following place themes; *Feeling Proud (Feeling Proud and Part of a Place), Feeling Safe, Care and Maintenance (Fixed Clean and Managed, and Influence and Sense of Control (Having your say and being listened to).*

There is strong sense of pride in Glencairn and coming from Glencairn. Participants felt this pride was due to the people of the area, their family history in the area and the community’s resilience to persevere with so little. Conversely it was noted that some older participants felt that Glencairn had lost its sense of pride, and the area had been left to run to ruin, with many families forced to leave due to a lack of community infrastructure. Recent activities such as the ‘Light up Glencairn Parade’ had brought the community together and contributed to a sense of belonging.

Most participants noted that they felt safe living in Glencairn, however there were some areas where people felt less safe and a sense of unease - areas such as Harmony Bridge and Forthriver Link were pinpointed as spaces of concern. Younger participants - especially young girls - commented that they did not feel safe in the area, this sense of fear was heightened at night and at different times of the year when young people from outside Glencairn would visit the estate.

Participants noted that Glencairn was not well maintained, with verges left to overgrow, potholes and moss-covered and cracked pavements. Fly-tipping at Harmony Bridge was also highlighted as a key concern. Within Glencairn Park participants said grass was not routinely mown and the Park was often filled with scrambler bikes. There was limited provision of bins and dog waste bins, leading to issues with dog fouling.



The agreed priority is that Glencairn is:

“ A safe place that is well maintained with an active community and a strong voice.”

Strategic Outcomes

The following four strategic outcomes have been developed to achieve the How I feel and how I care? priority for Glencairn;

- A quality residential environment.
- A safe and involved community.
- Positive internal and external perception of Glencairn.
- Strong relationships with statutory bodies.

Place Shaping Objectives

Objective	S/M/L	Partners
Provision of bins and dog waste bins both along the Forthriver Road and along the Greenways.	S	Dfl, BCC and HE
Meet with Dfl to explore support for a youth-led community mural project to transform the appearance of the terrace wall on Forthriver Way.	S	Dfl, HE, GCP, GYI, EA and BCC
Meet with BCC and HE to discuss the potential of a small civic amenity site, including glass recycling and small skip on the Forthriver Road.	M	BCC, DFI and HE
Promote BCC's free Bulky Waste Collection Service for householders.	S	BCC, GCP
Meet with BCC, HE and Dfl to discuss the provision of Lighting improvement within Glencairn.	S	Dfl, BCC and HE
Meet with the Housing and Communities Network to discuss an estate survey to highlight maintenance issues within Glencairn.	S	HE, Dfl, BCC, DfC and EA
Undertake a walk-around with NIHE to identify areas to improve the general appearance and upkeep of the area.	S	HE and GCP
Annual Estate Inspection – using NIHE Estate Inspection Toolkit to maintain the appearance of the area.	M	HE and GCP
Develop a strategy to identify and address common issues at Harmony Bridge in conjunction with BCC, Dfl, HE and the PSNI.	M	Dfl, HE, BCC, PCSP and PSNI
Develop a strategy to identify and address anti-social behaviour at key hotspots within Glencairn (Harmony Bridge and Forthriver Link).	S	PSNI, PCSP, BCC, GCP and HE

What I need to live well?

The sub-category What I need to live well encompasses the place shaping themes Facilities and Services (Schools, Libraries, Shops and other services), Work and Local Economy (Jobs and Places to work), Housing and Community (Homes, Friends and Neighbours) and Social Interaction (Meeting and Talking to People).

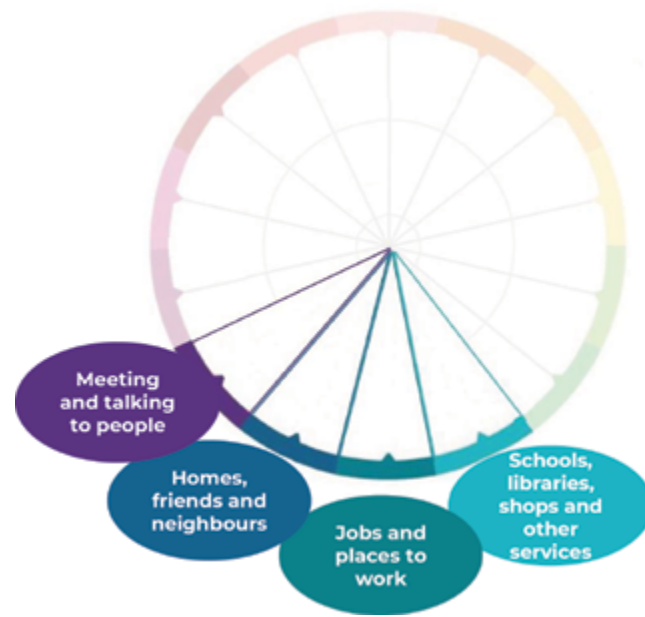
The key concern of participants was the lack of shops and services within Glencairn, it was noted that the only services available in Glencairn are those provided by the churches, the Primary School, the mobile library, the Youth Club and the container shops. Participants raised concerns that whilst housing of all types was needed in the area, the community infrastructure should be in place first, as people will not want to live in an area with no shops or services. Residents noted that they needed to leave the area for basic necessities, to visit any healthcare professionals, for recreation and for employment.

With limitedservice provision there is also a lack of employment in the area with only the school and care facilities offering employment opportunities. It was noted that any wider employment opportunities are not well advertised, and residents would like to see wider advertisement of such openings.

Youth participants were concerned about career opportunities and basic advice services. It was suggested that there should be a linkup between the Youth Services and organisations such as Impact Training for careers and LifeSkills training opportunities.

It was noted that there was a disconnect between what are perceived by residents as three distinct areas of Glencairn - the top, middle and bottom. This is exacerbated further given the area's natural topography and ribbon development north along the Forthriver Road. Residents living at the mouth of Glencairn have no reason to go into the middle or top of Glencairn and a similar pattern of movement is experienced in the middle and top of Glencairn. The areas become isolated and have very limited interaction. There was a strong support from residents throughout the area for the development of a Community Hub in the centre of Glencairn which would allow all residents to come and mix together within this focal building. This would effectively create a heart for the estate, which would then encourage further development at this central site and bridge the disconnect within the estate.

Participants all agreed that there was a need for additional housing within Glencairn and this should be provided in a range of tenures, including social, affordable and private ownership. Participants were concerned that any new builds would be taken over by private landlords and felt this should be discouraged. There was a desire for a range of types of accommodation including family homes, bungalows for elderly people and for people with additional needs, and two bedroom homes for those starting out. It was agreed that all should have their own gardens and there was a desire for red brick buildings. A caveat to this was that new housing would need to be provided in line with additional local service provision.



The agreed priority is:

“The development of the Community Hub to act as a catalyst for the creation of a village centre to provide homes, shops and services in the heart of Glencairn.”

Strategic Outcomes

The following five strategic outcomes will be built upon to meet *What I need to live well?* priority for Glencairn;

- A Community Hub built and operating in Glencairn with adequate staffing and resources.
- Development of a Village Centre with housing, retail units and recreational facilities.
- Development of new mixed tenure housing in Glencairn across a range of sites.
- Improved access to employment and training opportunities.
- Improved access to services in Glencairn.

Place Shaping Objectives

Objective	S/M/L	Partners
To secure full funding package for the Community Hub.	S	BCC, GCP, DfC (NR), HE and Private Developers
Undertake a Feasibility Study and Concept Plan for a Village Centre Development around the Community Hub (to be submitted alongside Hub to Planning). This should include a mixture of housing tenures and types, retail units, a MUGA and small community/sensory garden.	S	HE, BUILD/SHE, DfC (Housing), DTNI, BCC, QCAP, UU, GCP, MAG, Private Developers and BCC: HLRG
Undertake Feasibility Studies and Concept Plans for housing developments at identified additional sites within Glencairn, appropriate for longer term housing provision including existing open space/ BUILD sites. This should include a mixture of housing tenures and types.	M	HE, EA, BUILD/ SHE, DfC (Housing), DTNI, BCC, QCAP GCP, BCC HLRG and Private Developers
Meet with BCC, DfC and Elected Representatives to discuss the provision of a full-time Community Development Officer for Glencairn and the Community Hub.	S	HE, EA, BCC and DfC, GCP, GSP, ER and Alternatives
Maintain communication and engagement with community as the Community Hub plans progress: including development of design proposals, and submission of planning application and drawings.	S	BCC, GCP, GSP and Alternatives
A working group should be established to lobby BCC Planning to zone land at Hub and around Hub as a village centre.	M	GCP, BCC and BUILD
Housing Transfer System to identify interest from those who may want to downsize to free up larger family homes.	S	GCP, HE (Housing Solutions Team and Patch Manager)
Programme of community activities and events such as the Lantern Parade to support community connections between the three areas of Glencairn.	S	HE, DFI, EA, GYI, GCP, BHP, NT, BCC, GSP and Alternatives
Establish link between the Youth Club and Impact Training to provide careers service, careers skills training and information and signposting to training, trades and apprenticeships.	S	GYI, EA, GCP, Impact and Alternatives
Advertise job vacancies and training opportunities within Glencairn and Greater Shankill on the GCP social media outlets and the community newsletter.	S	GCP, GSP, Impact and Alternatives
Link to BCC employability team to access employment academies and training opportunities	S	BCC, GCP and Impact
Lobby Group to be established with the community and local Elected Representatives to engage with EA Representatives to maintain and enhance EA Youth Service provision in Glencairn.	S	GCP, EA and Elected Reps
Establish a GlencairnImprovement Association to meet quarterly to discuss and promote activities and services all organisations are providing within Glencairn.	S	GCP, HE, DfC, EA, BCM, SAC, Glencairn Way Assembly, Harmony PS, Libraries NI, Alternatives, GSP, BUILD, BHSCT and BCC and SP

Implementation and Next Steps

Many of the place shaping priorities, outcomes and objectives are connected and complement each other and it is important to note that the regeneration of Glencairn will require progress on each aspect.

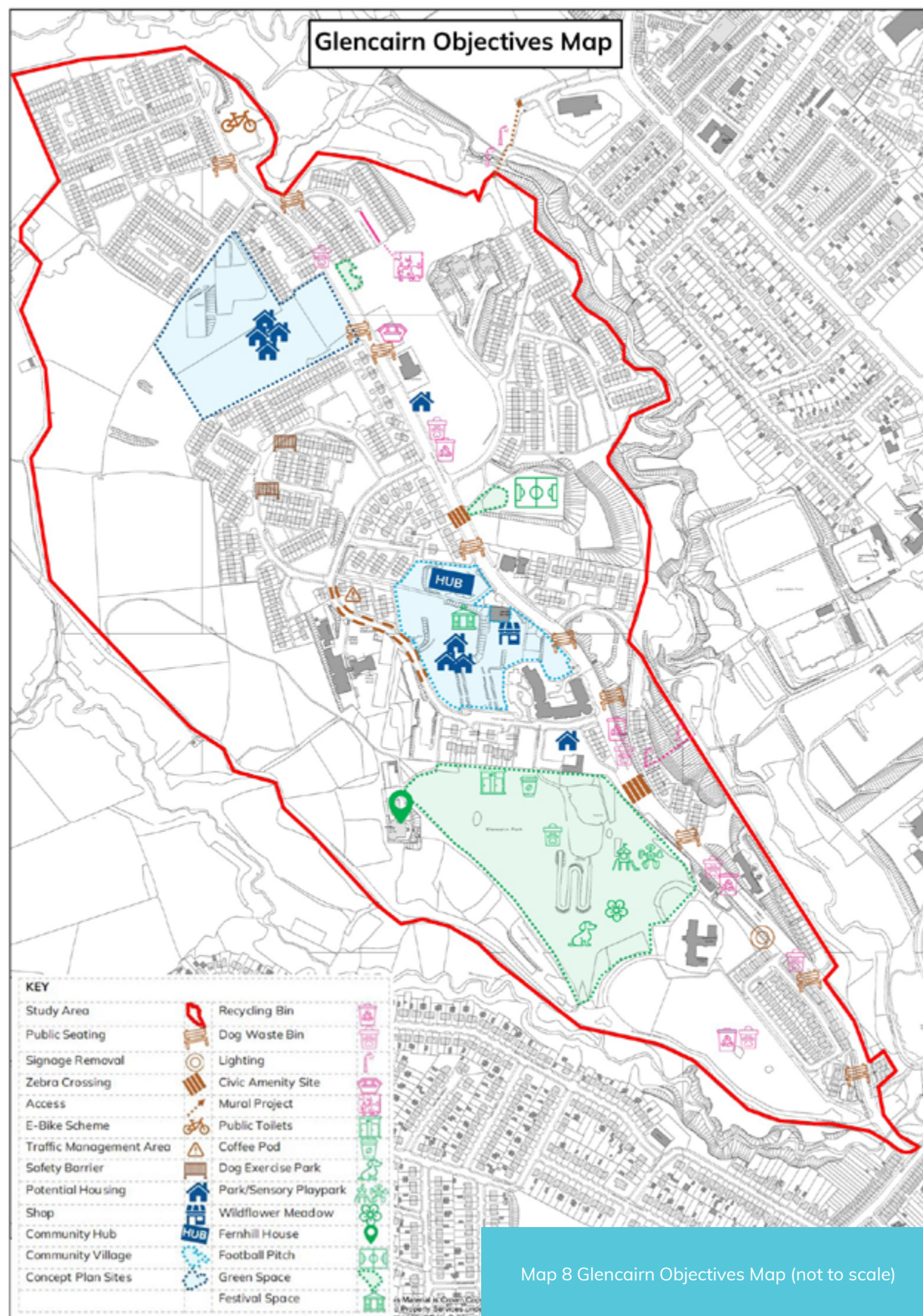
Advancing the priority objectives identified in the Plan will require a partnership approach with combined efforts and investment from statutory partners, the local council and community and social infrastructure to deliver the strategic outcomes and place shaping priorities.

Members of the Advisory Group have agreed to continue to support and steer the implementation of the Place Shaping Plan through a Steering Group which will also include a wider complement of community members.

The Plan provides an agreed set of priorities, strategic outcomes and place shaping objectives which the Steering Group and wider community can use as a lobbying tool and as a vehicle to draw down funding to support implementation.

The Steering Group will play the central role in driving the Plan forward over the next ten years and working collaboratively with key service providers and the community to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan. They will:

- Provide MPs, MLAs and Elected Representatives with copies of the Plan and seek their support;
- Develop an Implementation Plan to monitor and review progress;
- Support and encourage joined-up partnership working to progress the plan;
- Provide a welcoming environment which encourages all stakeholders to get involved;
- Review progress in taking forward the Place Shaping Objectives;
- Communicate the progress of the Plan with the wider community; and
- Organise an annual review of the Strategic Outcomes and Place Shaping Objectives with key stakeholders.



²Flat icons in Objectives Map (2025) <https://www.flaticon.com/free-icons/>

Glossary

BCC:	Belfast City Council
BCC	HLRG: Belfast City Council Housing Led Regeneration Group
BCM:	Belfast City Mission (Glencairn)
BMAP:	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
BOSS:	Belfast Open Space Strategy
BPS:	Belfast Plan Strategy
BUAP:	Belfast Urban Area Plan
DZ:	Data Zone
DBMAP:	draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
DEA:	District Electoral Area
DfC:	Department for Communities
DfI:	Department for Infrastructure
DTNI:	Development Trusts Northern Ireland
EA:	Education Authority
GCP:	Glencairn Community Project
GSP:	Greater Shankill Partnership
GWA:	Glencairn Way Assembly
GYI:	Glencairn Youth Initiatives
HE:	Housing Executive
LDP:	Local Development Plan
LLPA:	Local Landscape Policy Area
LNI:	Libraries NI
LWWP:	Living With Water Project
MAG:	Ministerial Advice Group
NIMDM:	Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures
NRA:	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
NRP:	Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
PCSP:	Police and Community Safety Partnership
PSNI:	Police Service of Northern Ireland
QCAP:	Queens Community and Place
RA:	Rivers Agency
SAC:	St Andrew’s Church
SDZ:	Super Data Zone
SHE:	Shankill Housing and Enterprise Limited
SOA:	Super Output Area
SP:	Supporting People
UU:	Ulster University

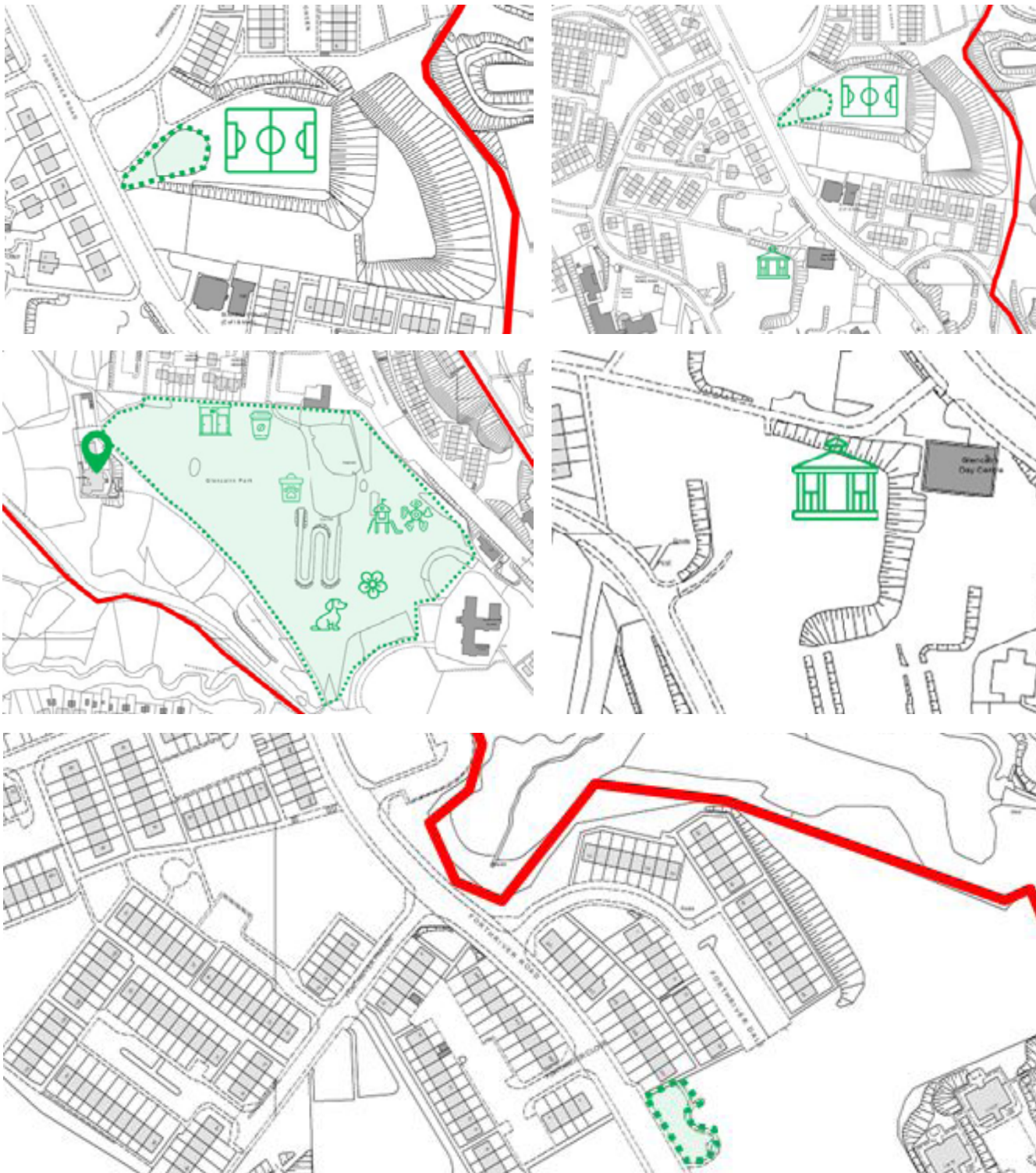
Appendix 1: Advisory Group Membership

The Glencairn Place Shaping Plan Advisory Group was made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- Belfast City Council
- Belfast Hills Partnership
- Build Shankill
- Department for Communities
- Department for Infrastructure (Roads)
- Education Authority
- Glencairn Community Project
- Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
- Housing Executive
- Harmony Primary School
- National Trust
- Police Service of Northern Ireland

Appendix 2: Place Shaping Objective Maps

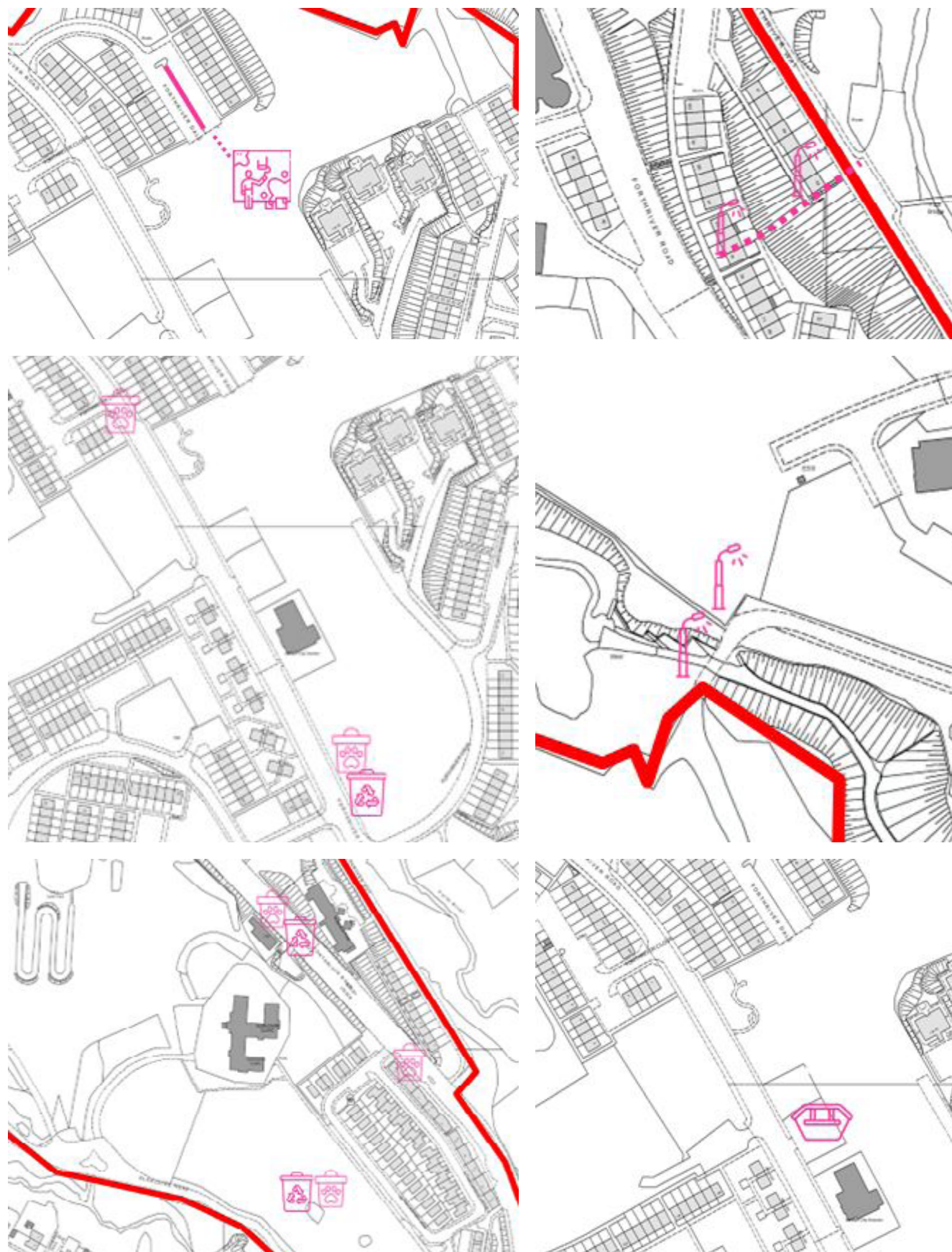
Where I go and what I do?



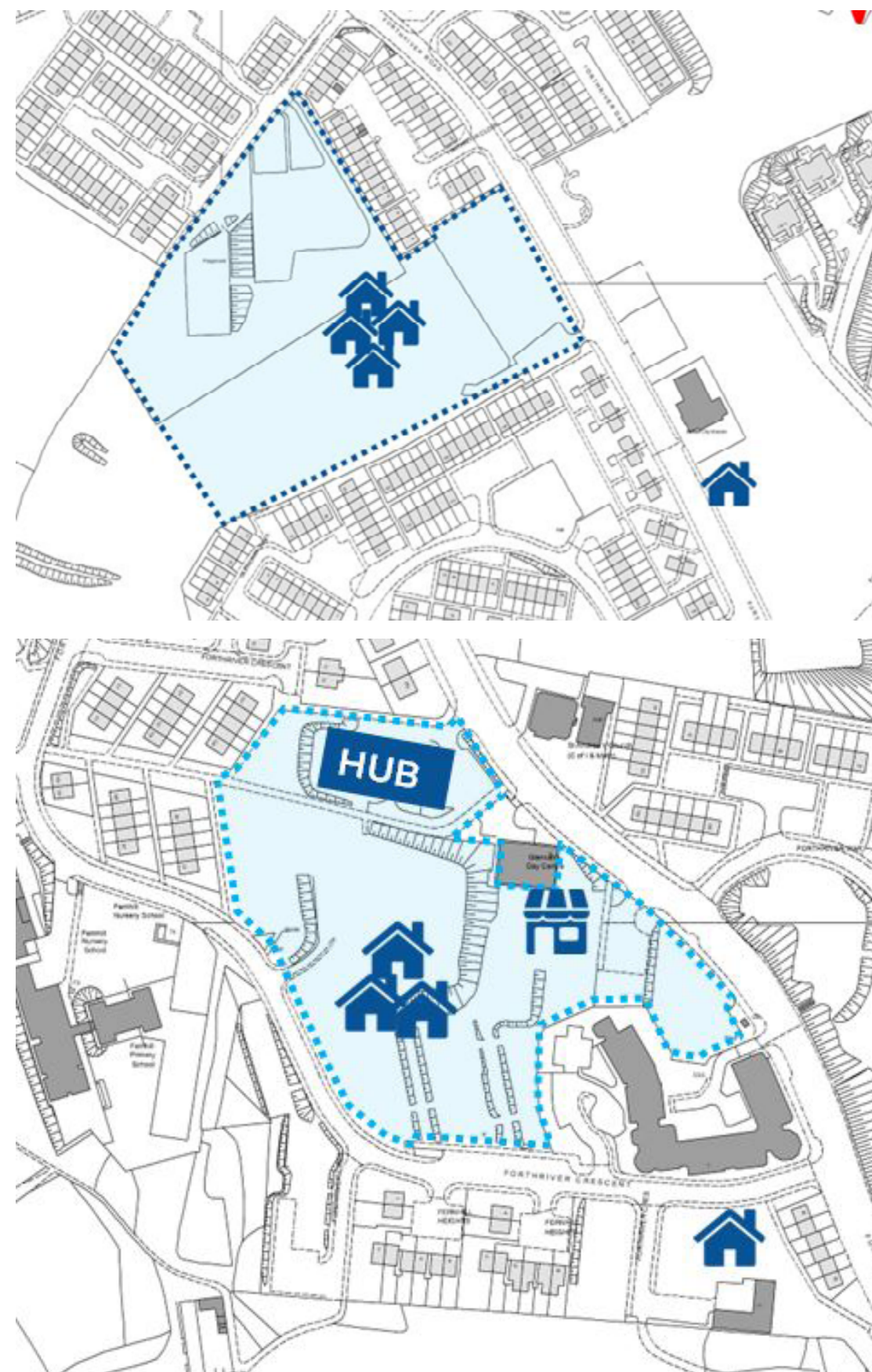
How do I get from one place to another?



How I feel and how I care?



What I need to live well?



Appendix 3: Funding and Support Opportunities

Where I go and what I do?

TNLCF Awards for all
BCC Parks
Sport NI
Asda Foundation Spaces and Places Grant
Peace Plus Programme
NICVA

How do I get from one place to another?

Sustrans NI
TNLCF Awards for all
Belfast Bikes Scheme
Community Transport
U-Turn Project Community Transport, Belfast

How I feel and how I care?

Housing Executive Community Involvement Grants
BCC Parks and Open Spaces
TNLCF Awards for All
Peace Plus Programme
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful
Incredible Edible Network
Social Farms and Gardens
Groundwork
BCC Bulky Waste Collections
PEACE+ Investment Area 1.2

What I need to live well?

BCC - Capacity Building & Revenue Grants
Department for Communities – People and Place
National Lottery Community Fund – Strengthening Communities
Housing Executive
Confederation of Housing Associations
Housing Executive Community Involvement Grants
TNLCF Awards for All
Peace Plus Programme
BCC Employment Academies
Job Start 50+Scheme
Libraries NI



