



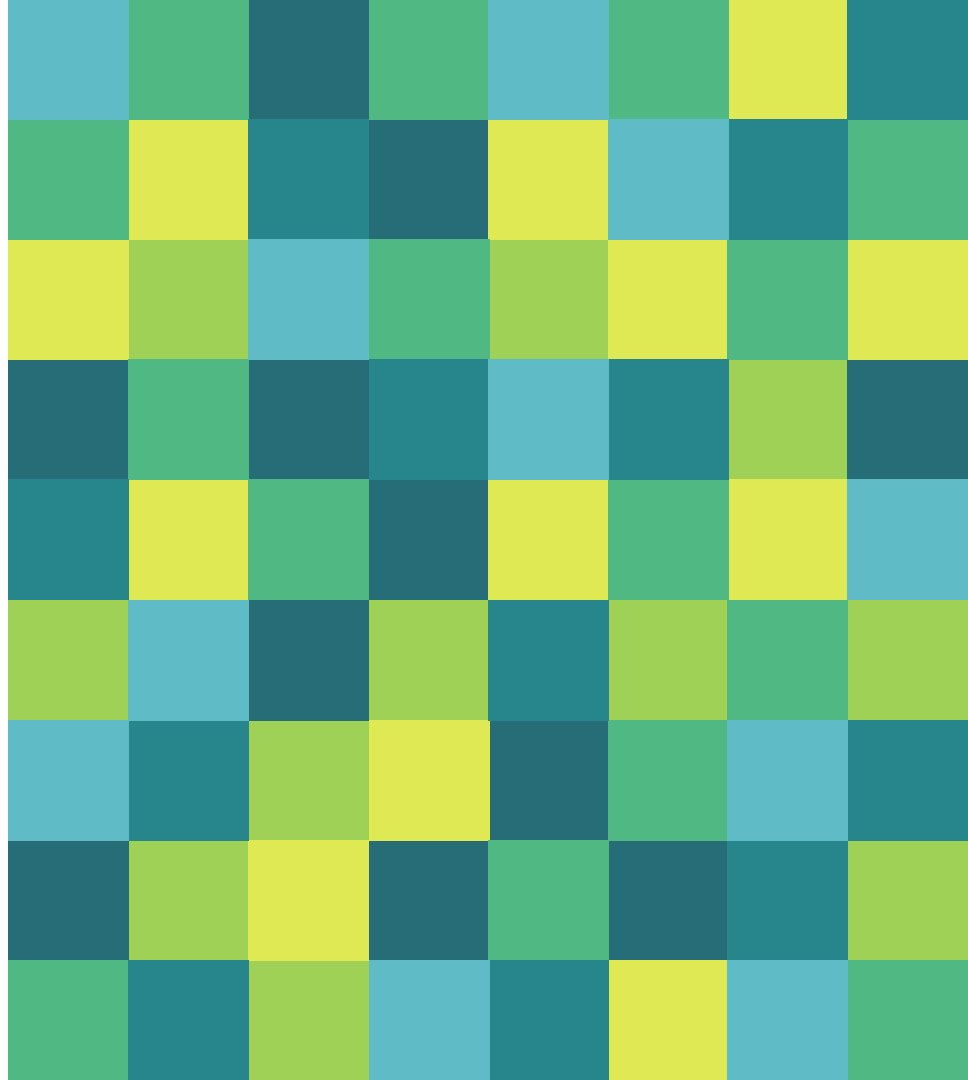
Benbradagh 2025

full of possibility

“

*your family friendly
gateway to the Sperrins*

overview



town & surrounds

dungiven

Dungiven is a linear town with a strong sense of community. Set in fertile scenery, there is a demand for a plan to help shape, and co-ordinate, the town's ambitions; and those of surrounding areas

by-pass

the Dungiven by-pass is due to be completed in 2022. This opens up opportunities to redefine the town as a destination in its own right; a stopping point for visitors; and 'new place' for locals

benbradagh

has magical natural and built heritage, from rivers, glens and castles to mountain high; something for everyone. But it needs to be more accessible, and more integrated; and packaged better for modern visitors

Dungiven sits in a natural green environment with mountains near by and the River Roe meandering through the bottom of the town. The new 26km (£220m) by-pass will reduce traffic in the town and open up opportunities for Dungiven, and surrounding areas, to reimagine – and sell – themselves.

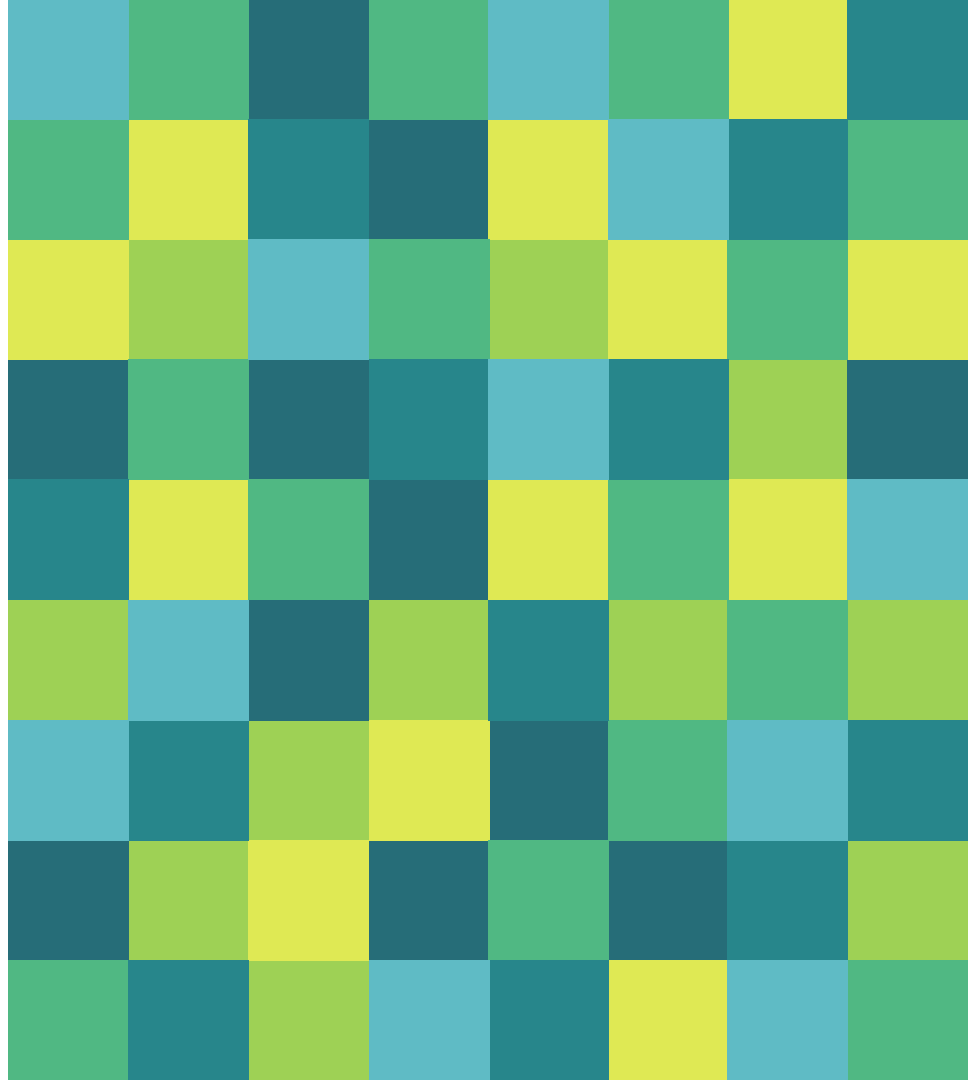
Feeny

Dungiven



area profile

and key issues



area profile

overview

The town is 1,000 years old (Augustine Priory dating from 11th Century) but young of age (median age 32*; v NI average 37)

health

80% stated their health was good or very good (census 2011); with the town having a variety of successful sporting clubs and facilities

population

Dungiven has a population of 3,288 (2011 Census), which is static, but which serves a wider rural, often county wide, hinterland

accessibility

1 in 4 (24%) do not have access to a car or a van; the town has a bus depot but there is a need to improve walkways, cycle lanes etc

deprivation

The town ranks within the most 16% deprived SOAs in NI; and among the 4.4% most deprived SOAs in terms of income (NIMDM 2017)

education

The town has two primary and two secondary schools, including a new IME school; 45% of the town has no or low level qualifications

key issues

1. traffic congestion impacts on traffic flows, cycling/pedestrian safety and air-quality (expected to reduce once by-pass open)
2. lower levels of economic activity and lower levels of qualifications than the NI average
3. retaining key public services such as health centres, library, community centres, post-office, dentists and fire station
4. linear nature of the town means that many people are not aware of the River Roe, the Castle, Priory or wider heritage/environment
5. need for consistent sell and (re)branding that resonates with, and appeals to, visitors
6. enticing more people/footfall into the town to support ground floor businesses; ensuring visitors to wider area use the town as a base
7. facilitating parking and park n ride demand
8. connecting with broader tourism & heritage assets, and having a focal point within town; also need for central market/events venue
9. public land developed/sold on individual basis, without collective town/area plan
10. new tourism & remote working/WFH trends





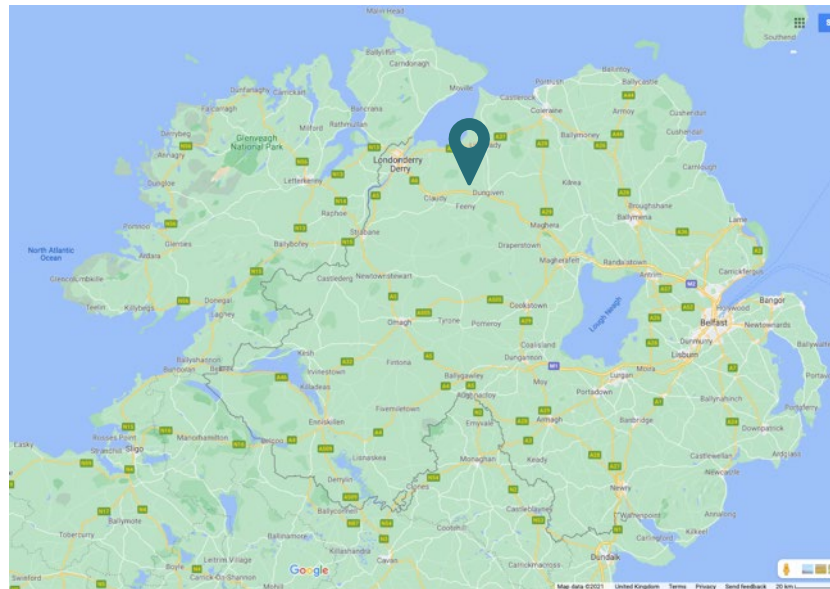
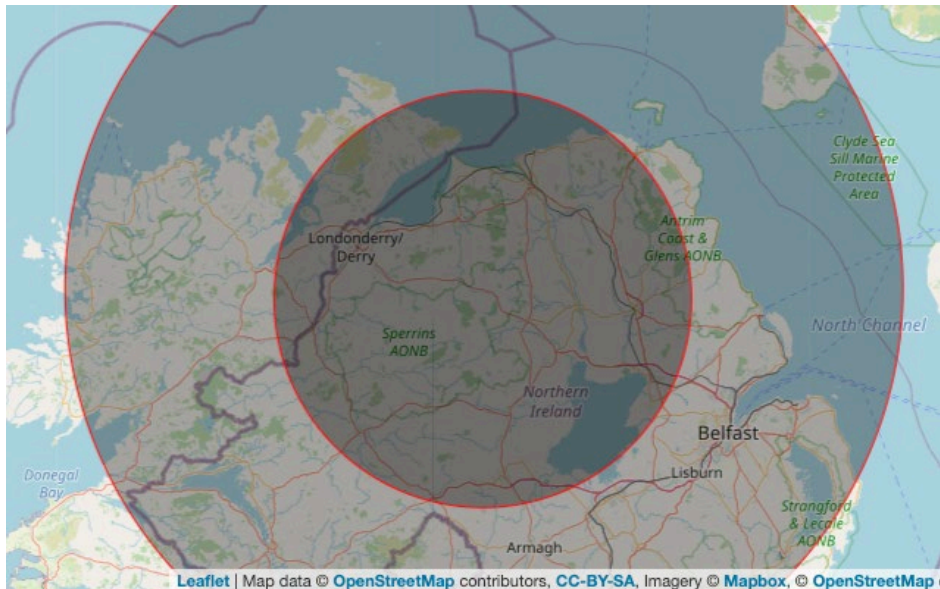
Over 500,000 people live within 50km, and almost 2 million within 100km



Limavady is within 9 miles, Derry City 20 miles, the North Coast (30 miles); and Belfast 46 miles approximately an hour away. Letterkenny, Donegal and the West Atlantic Way are within 40 miles. The town lies off a motorway with all-island links. There are public bus connections along the main routes; and the area will be a stop along the national/international greenways

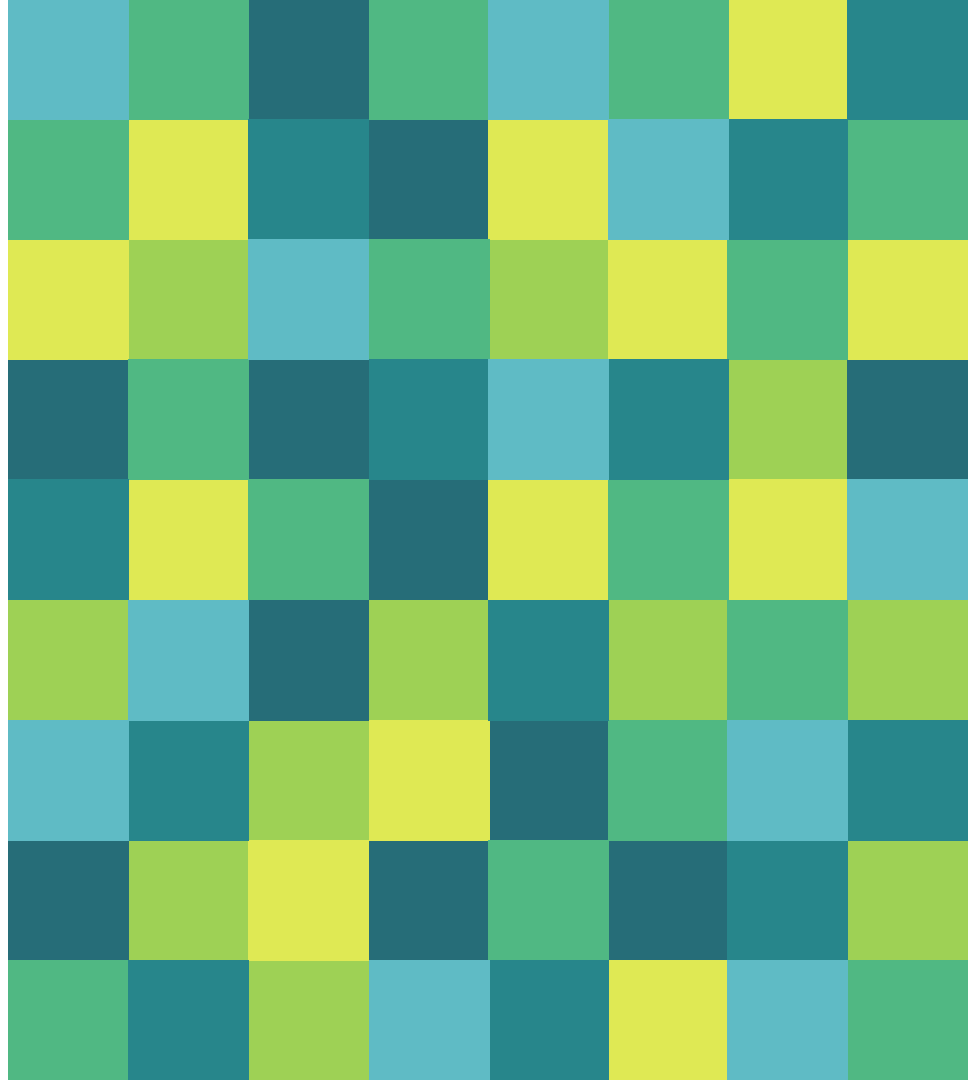


The nearest airport is 30 mins away, with Belfast 1hr and Dublin 3hrs away



already..

a visitor destination






visitor appeal


The most popular accommodation on AirBnB within the Benbradagh area is the “Spacious Luxury Loft at Flanders”, which describes the surrounding setting as:

“situated in the beautiful countryside of the historic town of Dungiven, 20 mins drive from the culture walled city (L/derry), 5 mins to the peaceful Roevalley country park, and also perfectly placed for fishing opportunities with the river roe only Minutes away, the area is surrounded with rural nature walks, cycling routes, mountain & more”

- Our top picks
- 


Holiday Home from Home Apartments 4.5

8.7 Fabulous
22 reviews

Add dates to see prices
 - 


Kintala Resort & Spa

9.8 Exceptional
50 reviews

Add dates to see prices
 - 


Ballyhargan Farm House 4.5

9.7 Exceptional
31 reviews


Add dates to see prices
 - 

The Gatelodge 4.5

9.7 Exceptional
41 reviews

Add dates to see prices
 - 

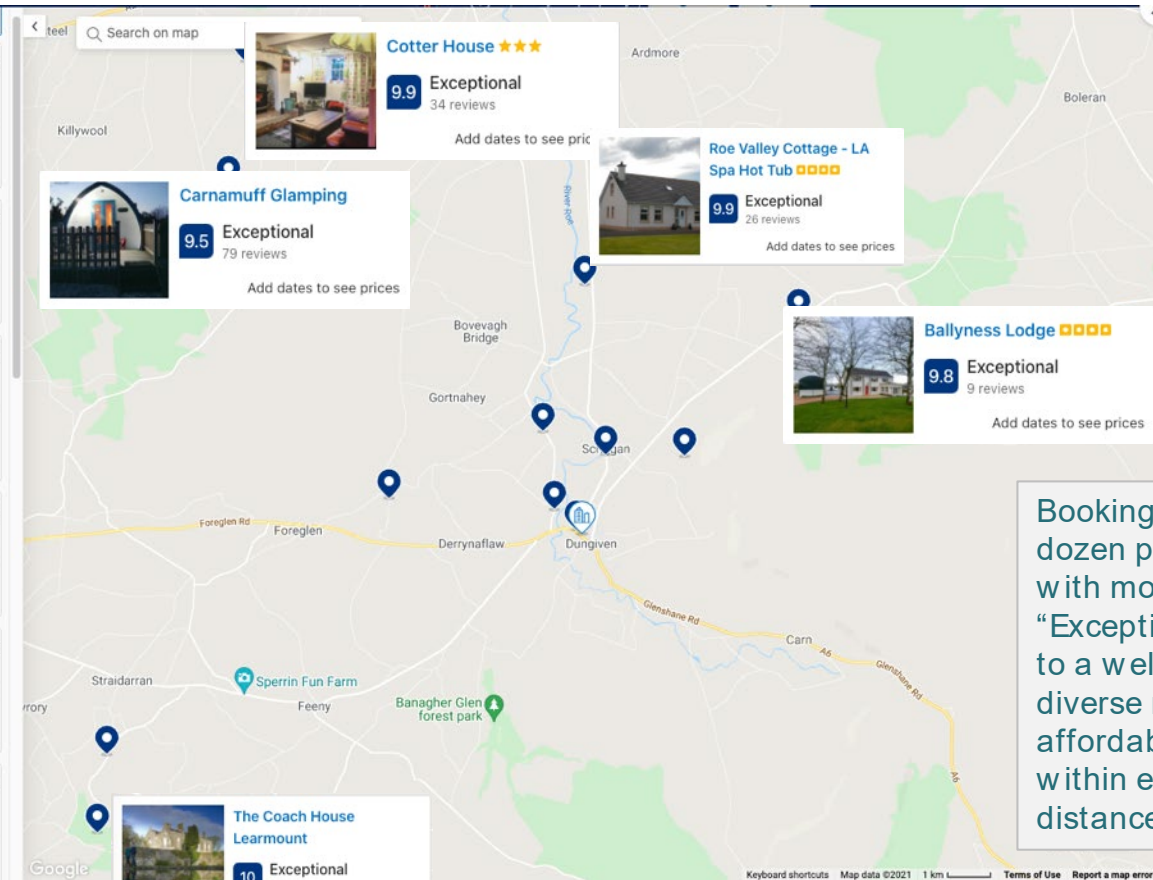
apple tree lodge


Add dates to see prices
 - 

Spacious Luxury loft at Flanders 4.5

9.9 Exceptional
13 reviews


Search on map



- 


Cotter House 4.5 3 stars

9.9 Exceptional
34 reviews

Add dates to see prices
- 


Carnamuff Glamping

9.5 Exceptional
79 reviews

Add dates to see prices
- 


Roe Valley Cottage - LA Spa Hot Tub 4.5

9.9 Exceptional
26 reviews

Add dates to see prices
- 

Ballyness Lodge 4.5

9.8 Exceptional
9 reviews

Add dates to see prices
- 

The Coach House Learmount

10 Exceptional
14 reviews

Add dates to see prices

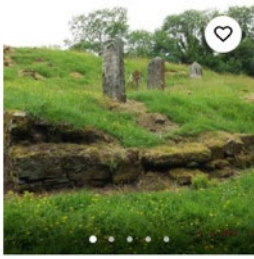
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Booking.com has over a dozen places to stay, with most rated “Exceptional”, pointing to a well respected and diverse range of affordable options within easy driving distance of Dungiven

Wonderful 9.8
42 reviews

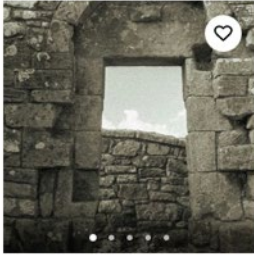
New Kintala Resort & Spa just outside
Dungiven, as reviewed by PlanetofHotels



1. Dungiven Priory and O'Cahan's Tomb

7

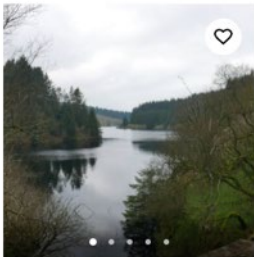
Ancient Ruins • Cemeteries



2. Banagher Old Church

7

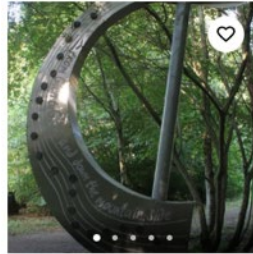
Historic Sites • Churches & Cathedrals



3. Banagher Glen

8

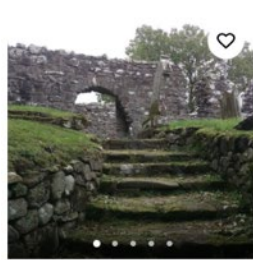
Nature & Wildlife Areas • Hiking Trails



4. Dungiven Castle Park

1

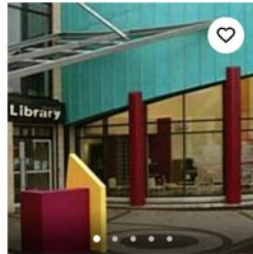
Historic Sites



5. Bovevagh Old Church and Mortuary House

1

Historic Sites • Cemeteries



6. Dungiven Library

3

Libraries



Under 'things to do' for Dungiven, there are few reviews – 24 in total for the 'Top 5' (opposite) under TripAdvisor. Whilst the reviews rate the attractions highly, many note the poor wayfinding (per below); and the challenges this presents

 **Pam H**
1 contribution

Poor Information.
Sep 2021 • Solo

I arrived at Banagher Glen and parked in the lower car park not knowing that there was another car park further along. I continued walking to find a very loose / sketchy map. I had no idea from this map how to get to the reservoir (the intention of my visit). I had read the description on WalkNI saying that the route was short and felt that this would be easy to follow. I kept walking and walking not realising that the route to the reservoir is signposted on a gate 'Dam 1.2m'. This was on a number plate and didn't look related. I now know from reading other reviews that this is the path I should have taken.

At least I now know the way should I return. However, very disappointing. A few more signs or maps would be very useful. I note only a few reviews. I am suspecting not many visit due to lack of information. Would be easy for someone especially a lone hiker to get lost.

[Read less](#) ^

Written 13 September 2021



The Stendhal Festival, is Ireland's favourite family festival attracting 10,000 people every summer. It shows that you can attract people to the area, who will stay for a 1-4 days





A new era

Covid and climate change have greatly impacted the way people have and will lead their lives. It's reinforced the desire for people to improve their physical and mental health; with the research increasingly showing the benefits of getting outdoors. Benbradagh's natural assets & appeals are well primed to take advantage of these trends, but it needs to be easier for people to access & navigate them. New private sector led developments such as Mountain Sky Luxury Glamping and Kintala Resort & Spa are already serving this market and being well received.



**COVID-19
RESPONSE**



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



Providers are investing in high quality, diverse and interesting places to stay



The attractions need the same level of thought, branding and investment as the accommodation to entice more visitors



Providers are highlighting the 'getting away from it all', the 'outdoors' and relaxation; with accommodation/stays being well regarded by visitors



There should be a greater sense of 'Benbradagh' and/or 'Sperrins' under which the overall package could be collectively promoted



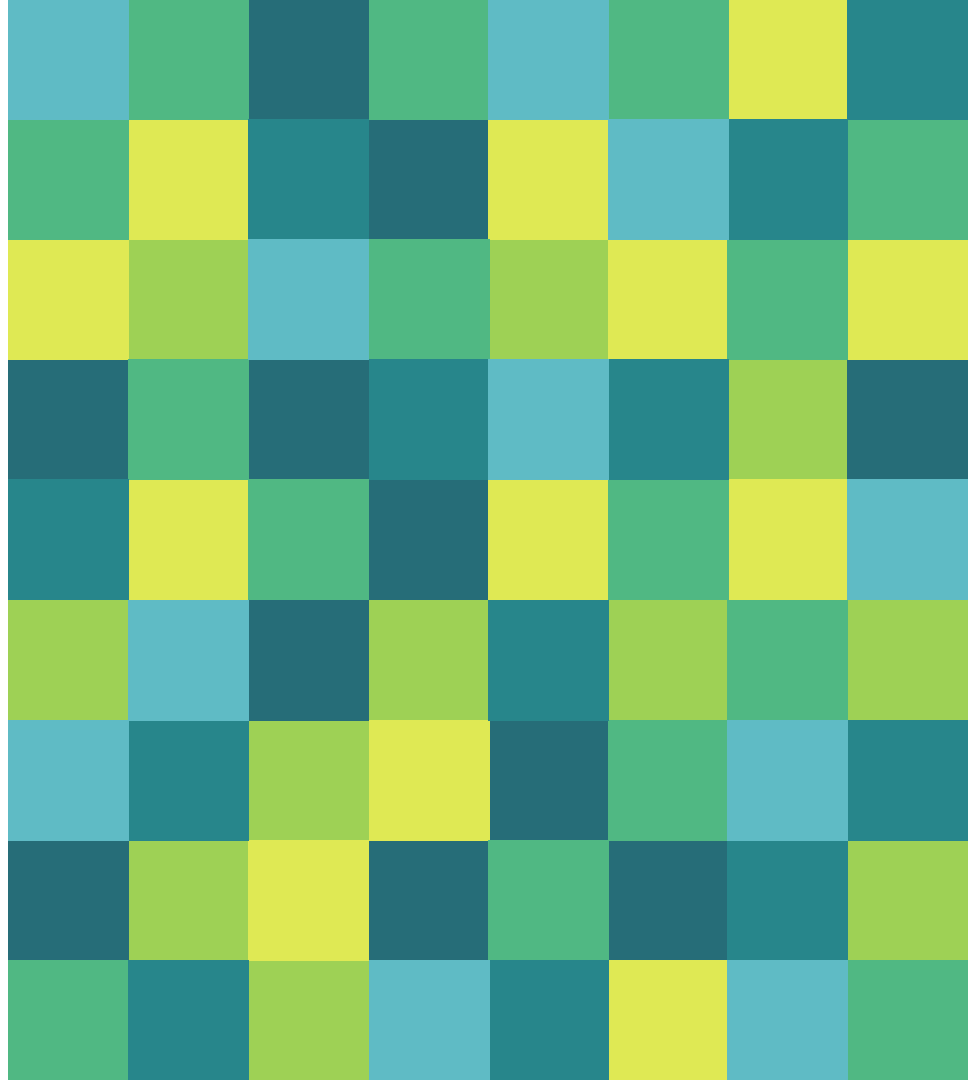
Locals know the local attractions and how to get there, but visitors can get easily lost



Need a clear focal/stopping point for families (e.g. toilets, parking, play park etc) on short-stay trips and/or exploring local area

challenges

..and opportunities

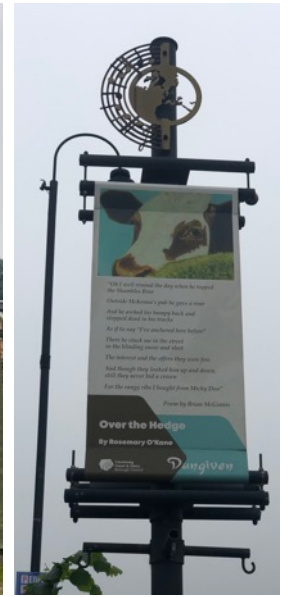




Dungiven Castle, Gardens and associated parkland provide a sizeable and well placed asset just off the main street, but it is hidden from view behind cars with an unwelcome vibe and little notice of what it is or does. From other views it looks highly impressive, and a possible cornerstone for town renewal.



The former recreational centre and recycling centre represented a large plot of centrally located public land. The former police station could also have been part of a coordinated plan. There are pockets of land that appear underused just behind the main street, along with industrial sites fronting on to the main street. Chances have been missed but there is land, not all in public ownership, that could offer development opportunity as part of wider masterplan. Land ownership and zoning are key challenges and potential opportunities for the town



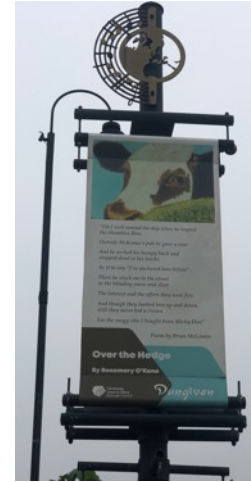
Navigating is a major issue for people new to the area. Signs are often dated, unclear and there is often a clutter of bins, notices and signs. A clear designated sign, e.g. like that used on the West Atlantic Way would be easily recognisable for visitors. There is a need for better and more consistent wayfinding to, and at, attractions; and the removal of clutter



The pathway at Burnfoot is well used and offers people short and medium walk options (remainder of loop on public road). The concrete stands out but ensures it is accessible during flooding or wet periods, and aids walkers/prams etc. Benches and viewing frames add to the visitor experience. There is potential to extend it further along the way to Dungeness to create further flat safe & pleasant off-road walking options



Banagher Glen is a picturesque glen and reservoir. It has the potential to appeal to a large number of visitors and will be close to the new M2 junction. It has a large car-park but is accessed via a narrow road, and has little visitor facilities by way of toilets. An increase in volume of visitors will need to be planned for and managed properly, to ensure land owners respected and safe accessibility



Benbradagh has much shared culture, often mythical and/or linked to the land. Strong natural heritage is supported by a robust sense of community, cultural, sporting and built heritage (e.g. Christian priory, tombs & churches). These can be represented in poem, painting, stories and sculpture; and could appeal to a much broader audience

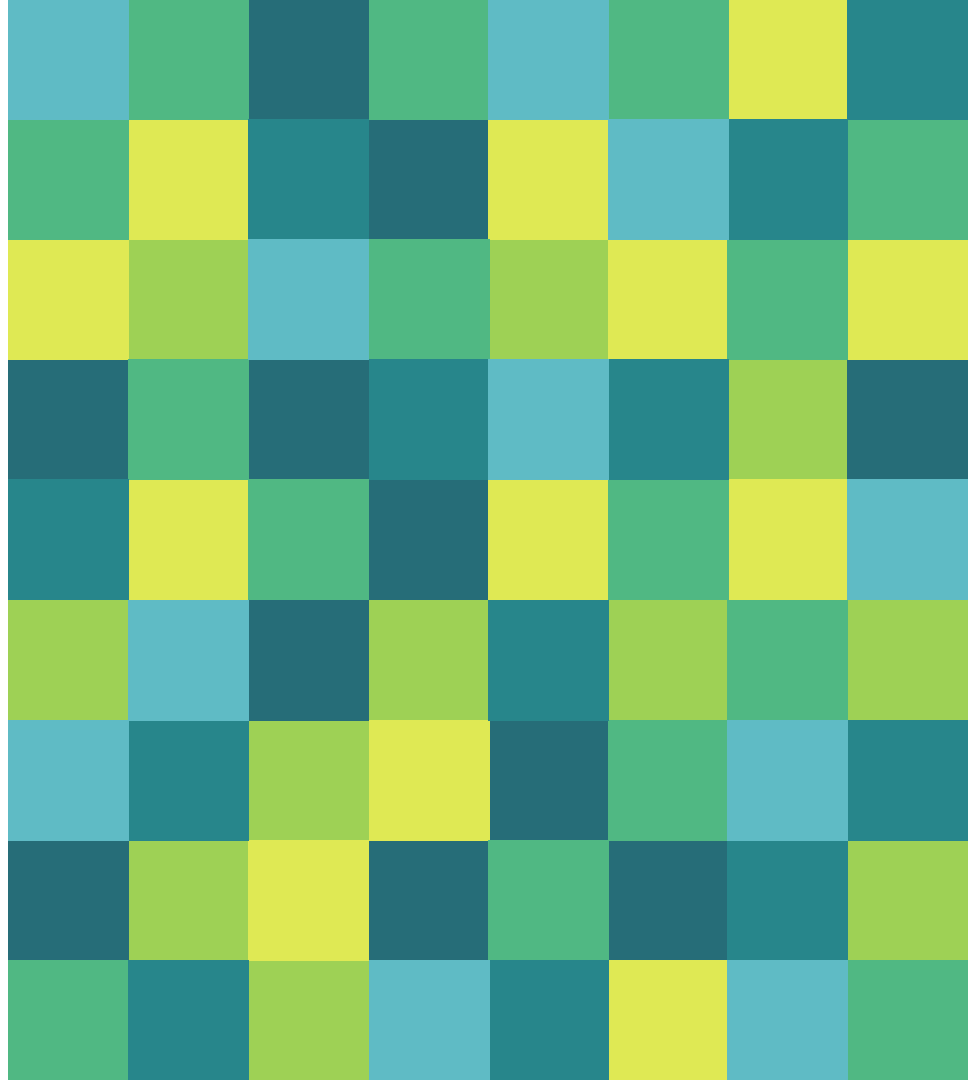


The main street in Dungiven appears tired looking but there are many vibrant efforts at tree planting – at ground & eye level. Unique plant pots attached to bike frames are distinctive and stand out. Reduced traffic should allow for greater pedestrian, cyclist and scooter flows, which will need to be catered for.

A key issue remains where is the stopping or focal point for visitors; is there one or several competing places? Is there an area for events? Public toilets are on the main street but can this be expanded and what about EV-chargers?

projects

initial long list





vision

the masterplan needs a vision that ties the projects, ideas and ideals together. Something that conveys the aspiration and sell succinctly. As a starter:

“the gateway to the Sperrins, and a whole new adventure”

is a working title; with an alternative “a family friendly outdoor experience, something for everyone”. Various themes could be highlighted. The vision needs defined and distilled further as part of the masterplanning process

shortlisting & prioritising projects

possible

the plan encourages and welcomes new ideas. Potential projects should be plausible, i.e. they will be clearly defined, with a clear need, clear and measurable benefits; enjoy public support and be in line with wider public policy/strategy

deliverable

well defined projects must be deliverable. To do this barriers such as land ownership, access, planning, management and funding pathway must be in place; with a proportional business case to demonstrate that it represents value for money

sustainable

projects must be viable and sustainable; this is primarily financially sustainable (considered what their ongoing costs will be & how they will be met, including under 'what if' scenarios); but also increasingly socially and environmentally sustainable

longlist of possible projects

public realm

the main street, car-parking and pavements could all be reimagined, and integrated more with potential off-road routes, greenways, blueways, trails (e.g. hiking), paths and key nodes (e.g. park, event space) within Dungiven and beyond.

sport & recreation

this has two strands: club & community; and outdoor recreation. The first includes pitch & off-pitch developments (e.g. theatre, restaurant). A portfolio approach is planned to provide trails & paths for all abilities and aspirations; and of various distances.

commerce & other

the primary project is the creation of a digital hub to facilitate new business, remote workers and start-ups. The concept has proven successful in other rural towns with strong community bonds (e.g. Skibbereen). Also rezoning land, regenerating derelict sites; and a new museum.

Ref	Potential Projects	Est. Cost	Status
A	Hass road 2 full-size GAA pitches, one floodlit, club changing and meeting facilities	£2,800,000	Site identified
B	St Canices GAC club top hall to be restaurant and bar extension to ground floor, first floor theatre for the arts seating 180	£1,200,000	Site owned by promoter
C	Playpark to service Abbeyfields/ Traceys Way/ Glenroe within green areas	£220,000	-
D	3km Well -being footpath/ cycle around Owenbeg Stadium, within existing grounds	£750,000	Site owned by promoter
E	Lackagh Park/ Station Road play park	£180,000	-
F	St Patricks and St Canices new 4G pitch on their lands in conjunction with St Canices GAC	£850,000	Application made
G	Museum of history of Dungiven in local hall (tourism)	£220,000	-
H	Walking fishing trail linking Dungiven to Burnfoot	£320,000	-
I	Lands zoned for housing and commerce	-	-
J	Digital hub of 10,000 sq ft at Groogans on Main Street, owned by Glenshane Community Development	£1,200,000	Site owned by promoter
K	Redevelopment of former hotel site	-	-

Ref	Potential Projects	Est. Cost	Status
L	Street parking, carparking when bypass concludes	-	-
M	Community Bus/ taxi link from towns/ villages to new park and ride at Feeny road	£50,000	-
	Sub-Total	£7,790,000	
N	Other Projects (e.g. Public Realm, Multi-Purpose Events Area, Greenway, Castle Gardens & Visitor Hub)	£2,000,000	
	Total	£9,790,000	

Community feedback has suggested several projects that encapsulate improvements for both locals and visitors; often both.

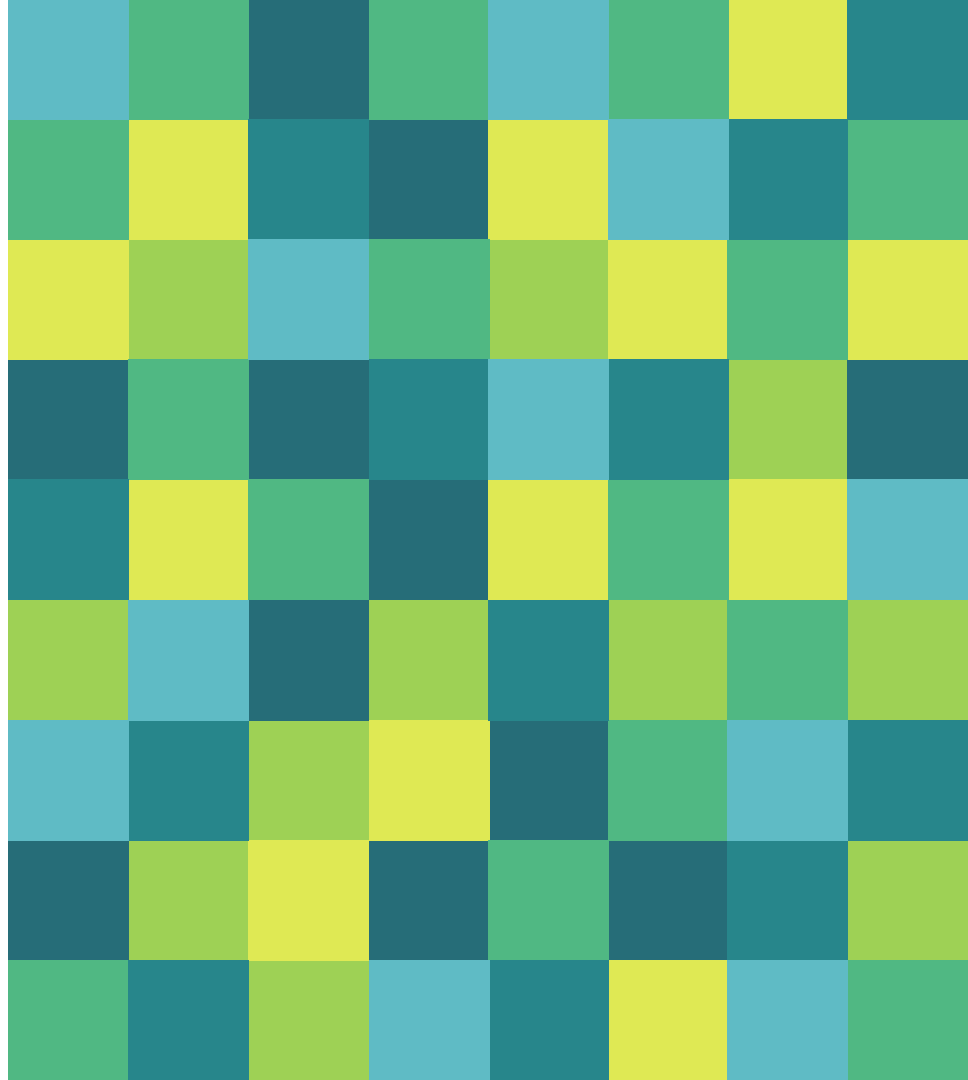
Identified projects are at various stages from conception through to funding applications having been submitted. Costings are indicative only; and may not reflect land values, value in kind or exclusions (e.g. all fees, site inspections, inflation etc). At this stage, costs for a comprehensive masterplan could be in the region of £10m, and could rise above that.



£9.79_m

making it real

key issues and next steps



what next

1 define & refine

Firstly, we need to create a small working group to develop the vision and provide more detail on the projects.

Wider consultation is then required to test and verify assumptions; ensure practicality, deliverability and public support.

We'd also like to agree a process for prioritising projects

2 business cases

Define projects and take those most viable/advanced through to proportional business case(s) or strategic outline cases (SOCs), as required to include detailed designs, costs and timelines; funding and sustainability

3 funding opportunities

Identify funding opportunities, and timelines and relate to projects

delivery

learning

Learn from extensive urban and rural regeneration projects in Ireland & the UK.

For example linear towns like Charleville (Co. Cork) and Edenderry, both of whom share characteristics with Dungiven.

See how modern places are getting people into green areas (e.g. trails, parkrun) & using wayfinding creatively

funding

Funding should be sought in all guises e.g. from <£5,000 for pilot community projects (outdoor cinema, arts, etc) to large regeneration works (public realm, greenways etc). Public land, community assets and volunteer time could all be used as match funding. Growth deal, Dept funding, National Lottery and large trusts should all be considered as sources

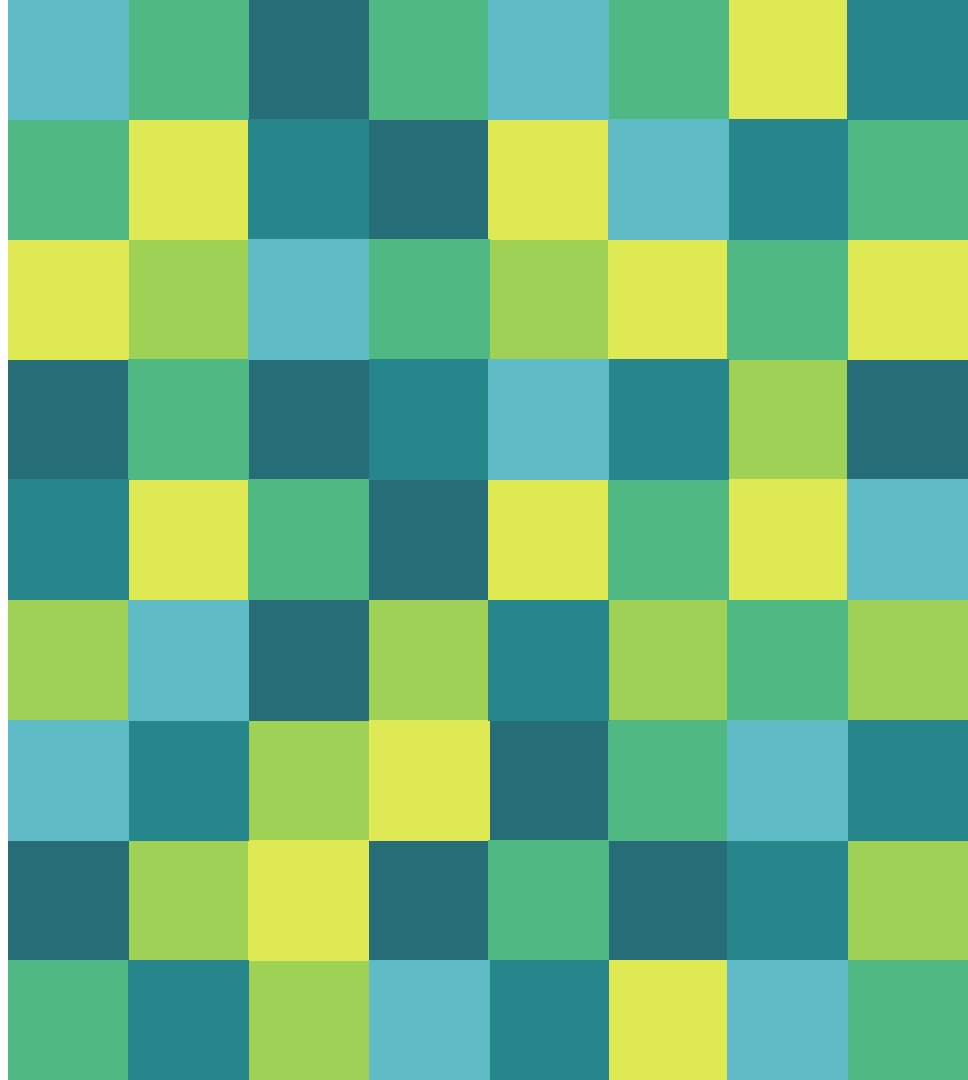
partnership

Transforming Dungiven will take time. It requires many parties to support this plan & work together to deliver it.

A certain amount of risk and imagination is also required to revitalise the town. This applies to design, delivery, management (e.g. Community Asset Transfer) & marketing. All parties – public, private, community & clubs need to get involved

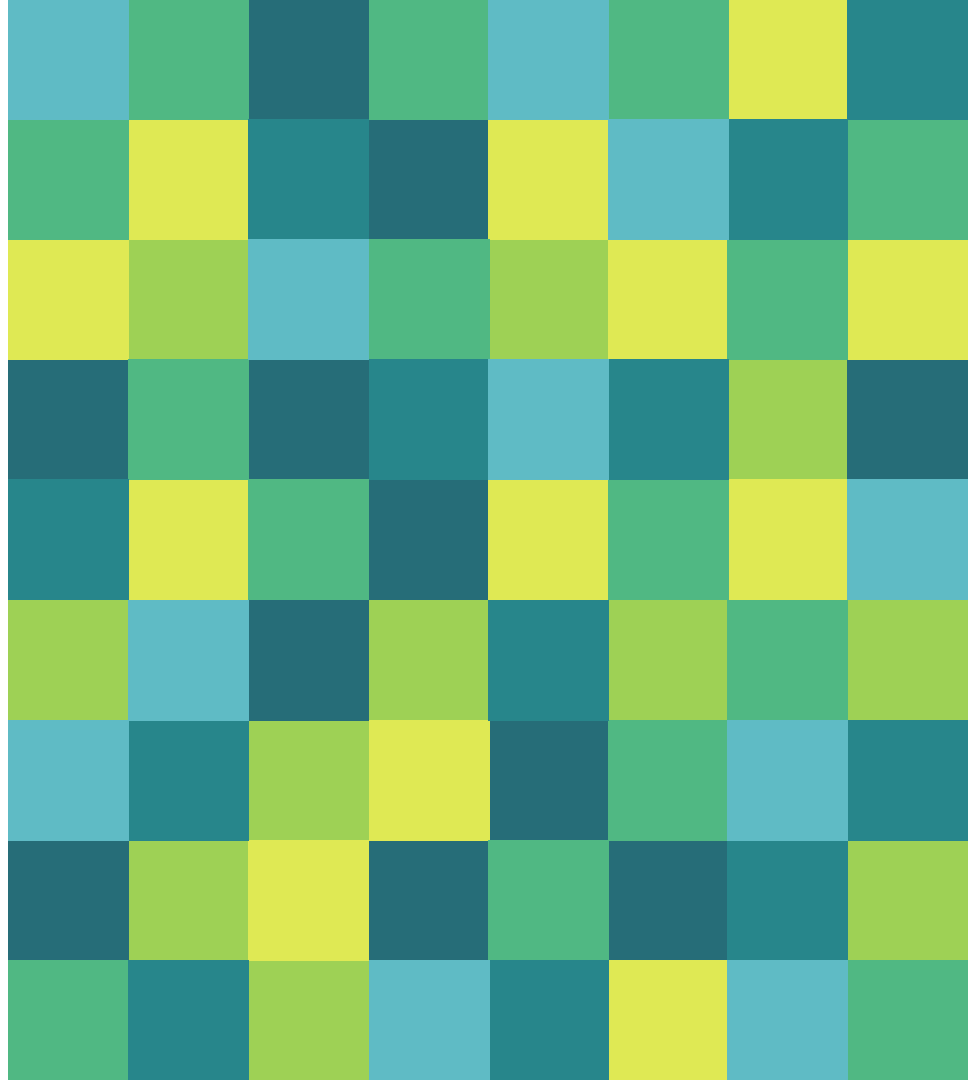
appendix

project information



public realm

public realm project
information





There are two distinct population areas in Dungiven (yellow circles)

Dungiven Castle & gardens are at the cross-over point (red circle)

There are natural grass & tree lined areas that run parallel to the main road that could better connect the town, its housing, heritage, history and outdoor areas (green arcs)

This helps to identify possible projects, and look at the town as a whole

turning potential into projects

three initial capital projects

1. revitalising the main street, improve shopfronts, public realm and people flows
2. increase awareness and accessibility of outdoor heritage (natural & built) – make Castle more of an attraction and covert underused areas into greenway trails
3. create a multi-purpose events area in the centre of the town that can host markets, concerts, events etc & parking in peak time



DUNGIVEN 2025

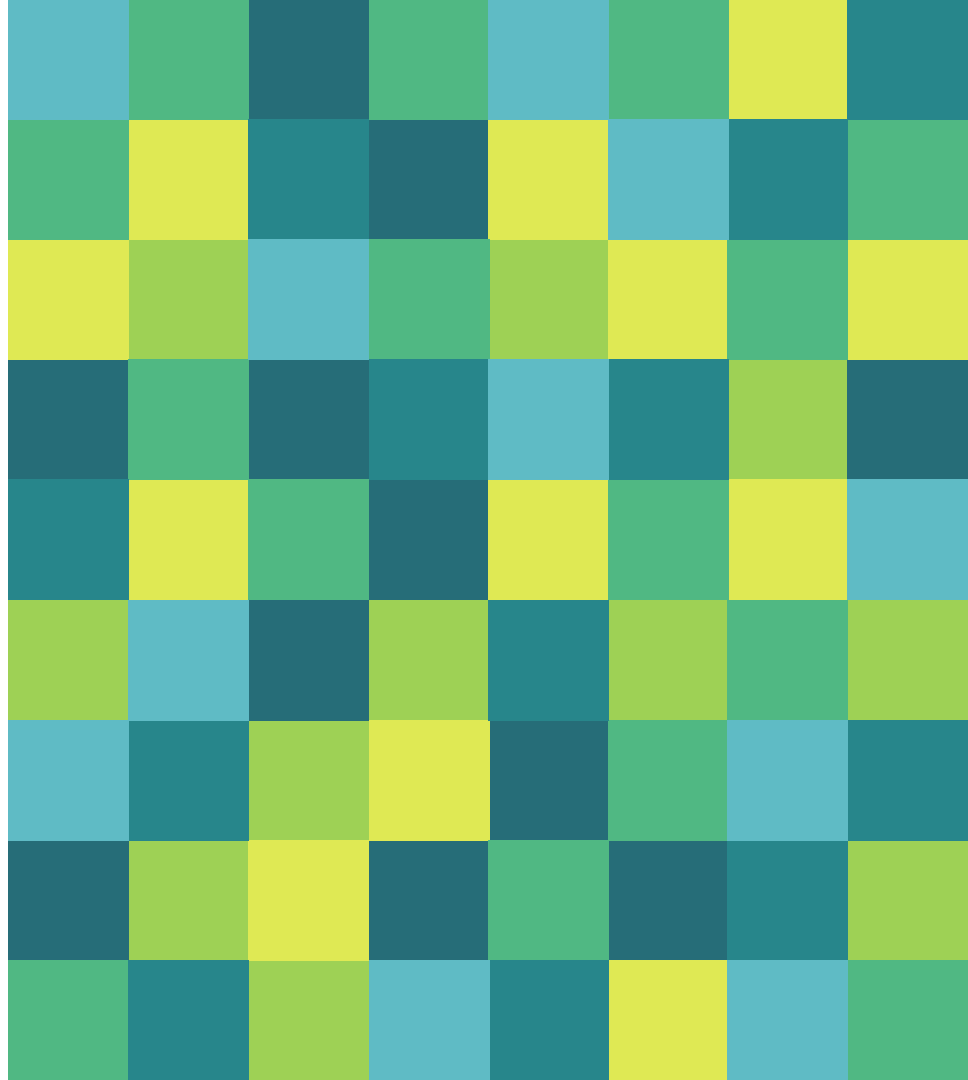


A high quality and accessible town centre, offering a full range of services, facilities and experiences, will underpin Dungiven as a great place to live, work and visit.

This document outlines the potential vision for the town, through the identification of three projects.

main street

bringing back the street





Bring people back to the
main street; a busy street
- not just a through road
for cars and lorries

revitalise the main st

Through:

A DfC revitalisation scheme that can support traders to improve their individual shopfronts

Improving linkages between the main street and wider town (e.g. visitor attractions, greenways etc)

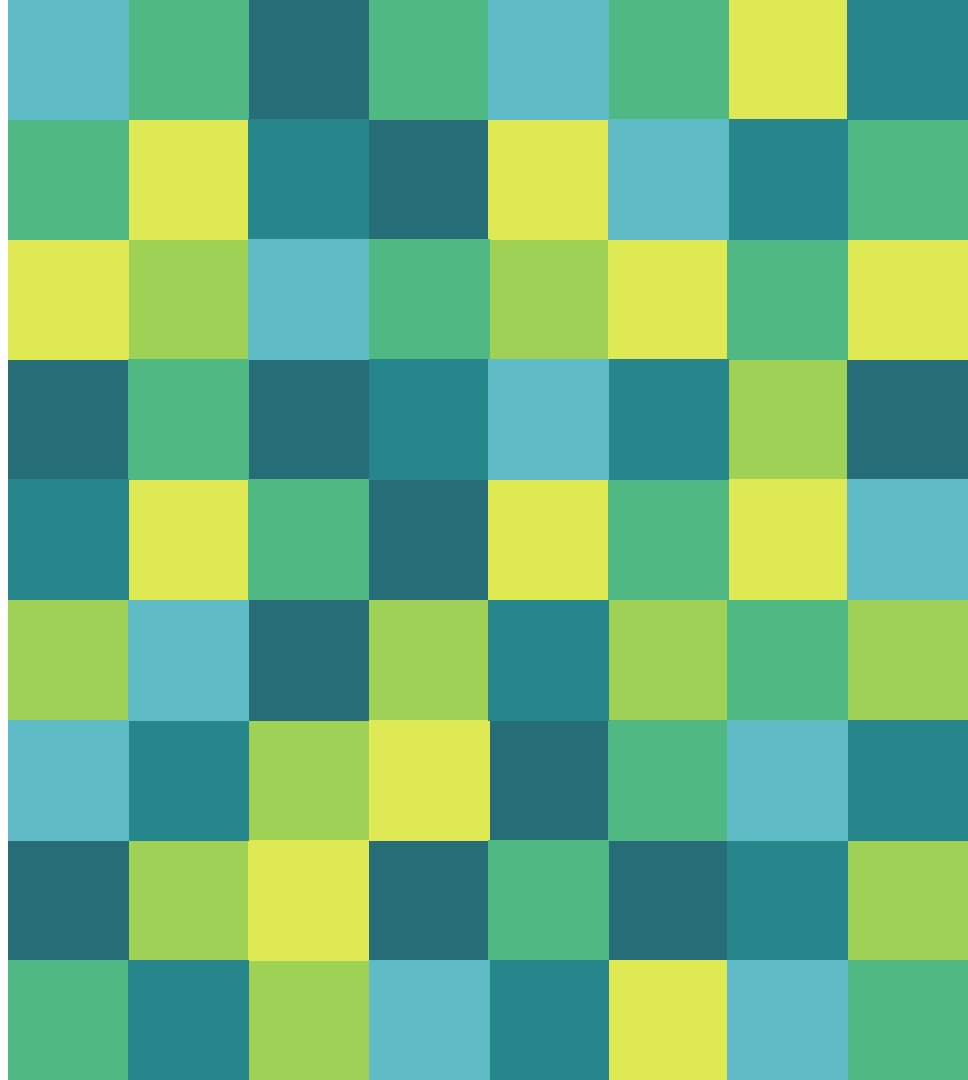
Investing in new imaginative public realm/art that encourages people to stay and makes the town more unique; eco-friendly and fun

Creating a theme for the town – then using consistent branding & signage to promote theme across the town



outdoor heritage

Going off the main street





Dungiven Castle & Gardens, Priory
and River Roe



outdoor heritage

Through:

Promoting the millennial history of the town – priory, castle and the association with music, sport, folk-tales through to the troubles

Making a feature of the Castle Gardens, as a starting point for exploring the town; by creating trails & family areas for visitors

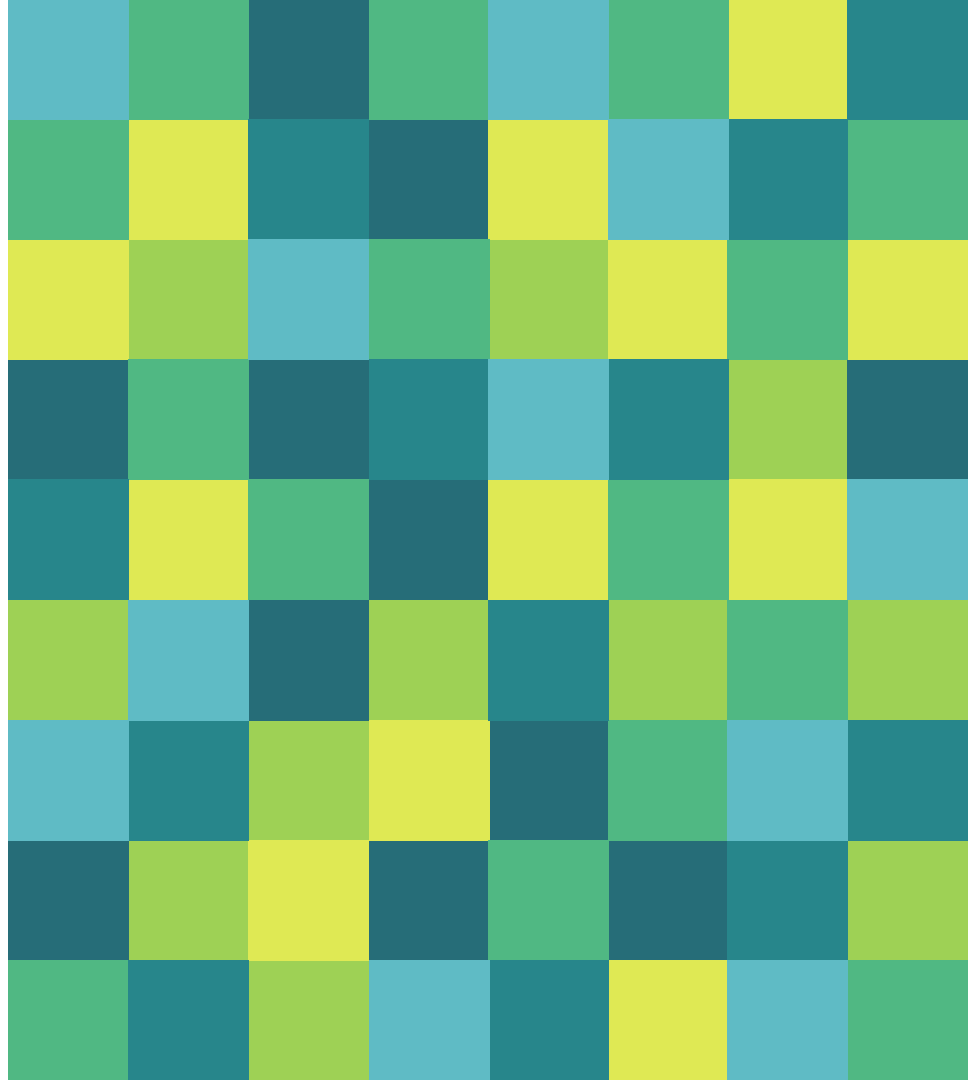
Positioning the town as a base for outdoor activities in wider area and as key stop on those on greenways, blueways, walkways and out cycling

Creating unique outdoor events – film, drama, music, races etc and regular events (e.g. parkrun) that ensure familiarity & usage



events area

bringing people together





events area

Dungarvan (Co. Waterford) invested €7.2m in creating a smarter travel area. The main square facilitates parking, road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians but can easily facilitate large events

Edenderry (Co. Offaly) is a linear town with a canal and 'hidden' green space. It is creating a masterplan & started to host large events for up to 20,000 people



DUNGIVEN 2025



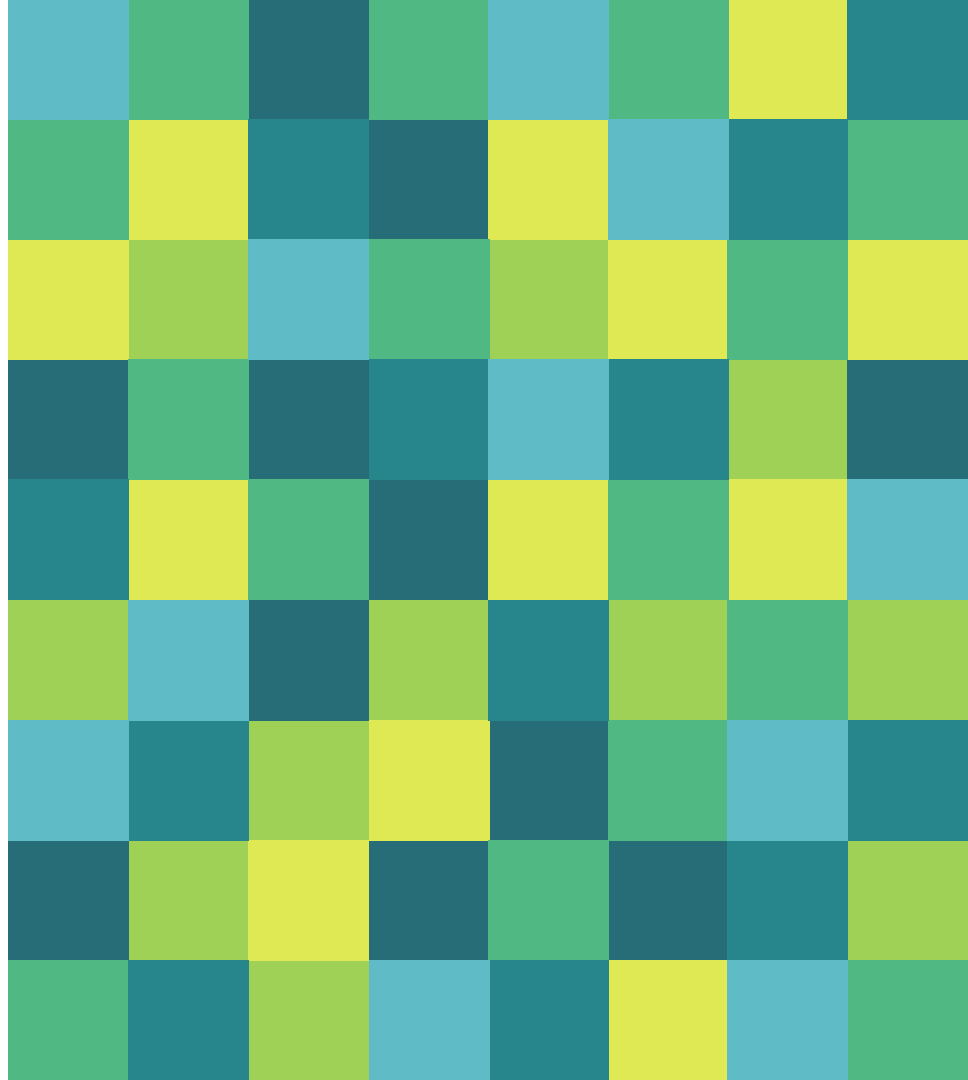
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