

**Feeny Village Plan**

June 2018

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**1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

**Why Have a Village Action Plan?**

Village Action Plans are being developed as part of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme Village Renewal measure operated by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. This measure aims to ensure an integrated approach to assist villages and their surrounding areas to realise the potential of their economic, social, cultural and environmental resources.

This plan for the village community in Feeny has been commissioned by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council with funding from the Council and DAERA.

**About the Plan**

This plan has evolved by consulting with local groups and residents to ensure that everyone could have a say and that actions put forward were those considered important to the majority and have the ability to implement. The plan highlights actions that can be taken forward by people within the community; it can be used to influence statutory bodies and service providers and can be used as evidence of the need for various projects when applying for funding. The plan is designed to act as a framework for action in Feeny; it provides groups with a vision and direction for moving forward and shows collective will in developing the village for the benefits of locals and visitors alike.

**The Process**

The plan was developed over a number of months and involved local groups and residents from across the Feeny community putting forward their views about how they would like to see their area develop over the next five years. Key to this process was reviewing existing plans and information in addition to consultation findings to identify those issues and actions which are relevant, achievable and can contribute to the Village Renewal process.

**Village Planning Framework**

***Phase 1- Review and Analysis***

* To carry out a detailed socio-economic analysis of the area to include population, age structure, health, education and economic activity.
* To consider the wider context, plans and policies that impact on the village, including Community Planning.
* To review any existing village plan and identify progress updates.

***Phase 2- Research and key ideas***

* To consult with key members of the community to make connections and understand how the village works.
* To carry out consultation meetings with local groups and organisations to enhance the new Village Plan and to ensure ideas are gathered.
* To analysis these ideas and separate them into groups and priorities.

***Phase 3- Village Design and Development***

* To highlight key ideas and look at ways to implement these putting in place a robust and realistic integrated village action plan identifying what needs to be done, why it is an issue, how it will be tackled, who will be involved and when it should happen
* Validate Plan with those involved.

**2. THE BIG PICTURE**



*Credit: Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan*

**Community Plan**

“*The purpose of community planning is to develop a long term vision and plan for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and all its citizens based on thorough analysis of needs, priorities and opportunities in order to address them*[[1]](#footnote-1)”. The Community Planning model establishes a clear focus on partnership and collaboration, working with local communities being a primary goal.

Acting as an integrated framework for development and delivery the Community Plan is a key strategic document for communities and villages across the Borough; as such each Village Plan will seek to contribute to the long term strategic outcomes set out in the Community Plan, namely:-

* A thriving economy
* A healthy safe community
* A sustainable accessible environment

**A Thriving Economy**

The Community Plan acknowledges the need for improved local employment opportunities, accessible skills training and learning, regeneration, modern infrastructure and the potential for innovation, including the use of the Borough’s unique natural assets. The village plan seeks to contribute to economic development in rural areas by identifying opportunities for growth and sustainability, including the social economy.

**A Healthy Safe Community**

This outcome area recognises that the Borough is predominantly rural and that this, along with projected ageing population growth, presents particular challenges in relation to both access to services and the threat of rural isolation, particularly amongst for older rural dwellers. In addition to being concerned with the physical fabric and infrastructure of each village, the plans will also seek to address these challenges, recognising that overcoming them is integral to building cohesive and sustainable rural communities.

**A Sustainable Accessible Environment**

The Community Plan recognises the need to strive for balance in protecting and sustaining the Borough’s unique environment whilst also meeting community, tourism and commercial needs. This includes the need to provide fit for purpose infrastructure and access to services, including ease of access to outdoor spaces and the coastline for the benefit resident communities and visitors. Village plans reflect this at the local level, identifying actions which protect and respect the character of our rural communities while also supporting their growth and sustainability.

**Northern Area Plan 2016**

The Northern Area Plan 2016 is the development plan for the four legacy Council Areas of Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle and operates as the local development plan for the Council area until the Council adopts its own Local Development Plan. Feeny is designated as a Village for the Plan purposes and considered to have a range of social, educational and recreational facilities but limited retail services.

**Local Development Plan**

Local Development Plans form the basis of land use planning and decisions on planning applications within the Borough. They set out what the Council area will look like and how land should be used and developed. At the time of producing Village Plans (2017), Council’s Development Plan Team were in the initial stages of producing the Borough’s Local Development Plan 2030. A series of topic-based Discussion Papers had been drawn up to inform the process. The following points were identified as being of relevance for Feeny:-

Transportation

The Plan identifies that Feeney has opportunities for recreational walking.

Environment

Feeny represents one of twenty settlements identified as an Area of Archaeological Potential in the Borough; meanwhile Altcattan is identified as a Local Landscape Policy Area.

Community Facilities

In terms of community facilites, the Plan notes these as:-

* Mobile library service
* Pre-school and Primary school provision
* Council owned and supported community centre

**4. THE LOCAL PICTURE**

Location, Context and History

The village of Feeny lies just over 4 miles from Dungiven and is located just inside the boundary of the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Its natural landscape is complemented by good road links to Limavady (12 miles) and Londonderry (14 miles) and is within close distance of the key transport corridor linking Belfast and Londonderry. Despite these good road links, there are, however, limited public transport connections.

The village is host to a health centre, community centre, local primary school and Gaelic club with village services being in the form of a shop and post office. There are a number of historical sites in the area, reflective of the local archaeology and including:-

* Banagher Old Church
* Tandragee Fort
* Aughlish Stone Circles

The local catchment also includes Banagher Glen, one of the oldest ancient oak woodlands and a Special Area of Conservation, complete with a circular walk, lake and forest.

The village has been enhanced by a community regeneration project delivered by Feeny Community Association under the International Fund for Ireland’s Community Regeneration and Improvement Special Programme (CRISP). The scheme saw the redevelopment of a prominent derelict site in the centre of the village, providing commercial floor-space, craft workshops, three apartments and a community office. An environmental improvement scheme in Main Street was carried out as part of the regeneration scheme, to improve the physical appearance of the village and help promote economic regeneration.

Local organisations in the form of Feeny Community Association and Feeny Economic Development work closely together in the development and delivery of community activities. These have included family activities, Christmas events (over 160 children in attendance) and arts and craft programmes.

The village is host to a play park with additional plans having been conceived to develop the adjacent green space for community use. Future use proposals include community allotments and a MUGA with walking trail (Magic Mile) with outdoor gym stations positioned along the route. Development of a computer hub has also been identified and efforts have been made to secure funding to pursue this goal.

Potential also exists to promote tourism, in light of the area’s location in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and given its heritage. Groups are keen to explore this aspect of the village, including establishing a tourist information point at the Community Centre.

|  |
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| **Feeny Assets*** Community centre
* Heritage Trail
* Play park
* Attractive natural landscape …AONB location
* Banagher Glen
 |

**Socio - Economic Analysis**

The previous Feeney Village Plan (2012), used statistics from the 2001 Census and the NI Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010. Figures from the 2011 Census became available from June 2013, and this report uses them along with mid-2016 NISRA Mid-term Population Estimates. The NIMDM 2010 has not been updated as yet, so figures from it remain unchanged. (Please note: Figures in italics are those from the previous Village Plan, to allow for comparison).

* The resident population of Feeney Settlement recorded at the 2011 Census was 690 people
* The population of the Feeney ward increased by 8.48% between the 2001 and 2011 Census
* 26.67% (2011) of the resident population are under 16 years of age in comparison to the NI average of 20.8% (2016)
* 8.55% (2011) of the resident population are over 65 years of age in comparison to the NI average of 16% (2016)
* 94.35% of the usual resident population belong to or were brought up in the Catholic religion with 5.36% (2011) belong to or were brought up in the Protestant and other Christian Community background
* The percentage of local people with low or no qualifications was 52.27% in 2011, which is higher than the NI average of 23.65%
* 65.02% (2011) of adults between 16 – 74 years are economically active. This is lower than the NI average of 66.22% (2011)
* 17.97% (2011) of the population have a limiting long-term illness, health problems or disability
* Feeney falls within the top 35% of most deprived areas in NI *(No change – NIMDM 2010 Index)*
* Proximity to services ranks within the top 14% most deprived *(No change – NIMDM 2010 Index)*

**Building on Foundations**

The CRISP scheme delivered in the village has provided a sound base for further regeneration initiatives. The previous plan (2012) focused on development of community facilities through Feeny Community Association, including provision of village civic space and facilities (village clock, seating, village planting and painting scheme) and sporting /recreational facilities at the GAC grounds.

In addition, the village has strong heritage potential which can built upon and further promoted, serving as both a source of local history and a tourism/visitor attraction.

**4. WHAT PEOPLE SAID**

Consultation informing the Village Plan was undertaken through consultation with local groups undertaken as follows:-

* Feeny Community Association
* Feeny Community Economic Development Ltd
* Walking Group

**Summary Findings**

In terms of the issues and priorities which Feeny’s village community brought to attention through the consultation process outlined above, these are summarised as follows:-

**Community Facilities**

Feeny Economic Development Limited is keen to develop its community facilities to provide a computer hub, having identified suitable space and has been submitting funding applications in this respect. In terms of upgrading its facilities, a series of needs were identified by the group including signage, IT equipment, access friendly doors, additional energy efficient measures in the building and public toilet facilities.

Poor mobile phone and broadband coverage is of serious concern to the Feeny community. This has hampered efforts to promote economic development in the village as well as increasing the risk of isolation by Feeny residents. The issue was highlighted during consultation as a priority.

**Recreation**

Feeny Playpark provides valuable facilities in the village; with regards to this facility it was felt that consideration should be given to the installation of lighting at the playpark. Recreational and green spaces were identified as a need; interest was expressed in provision of a MUGA facility which would cater for older children while consultation also highlighted a wish to see commencement on community allotments in the near future. Development of a walking trail in the form of a “magic mile” was also raised – it was felt that this could be installed within the green park boundaries with outdoor gym stations at intervals in order to encourage all ages to walk and exercise.

Potential to develop walkways at sites such as Tandragee Fort was also raised; it was felt such proposals could highlight the site’s presence and history – currently people are apprehensive to use the facility as they do not wish to trespass, highlighting the need for consultation with landowners.

**Environment**

In terms of the village environment, a number of maintenance issues were raised including removal of grass from footpaths, provision of public seating in the centre of the village and signage to identify the Community Association premises as a tourist information point.

It was felt that there was a need to enhance information and facilities on the heritage trail, including ensuring access is up to date and footbridge is maintained. Signage to highlight heritage trail was also identified as a need.

**Next Steps**

On completion of consultations, a draft Action Plan was drawn up and circulated for discussion. This afforded Feeny residents the opportunity to review the proposed actions and confirm priority needs and issues. A final Village Plan and Action Plan was then produced.

**5.0 A VISION AND PLAN FOR FEENY**

This Section puts forward the action plan proposals for Feeny. An over-arching vision for the area is set out followed by proposals for action under each of the themes informed by the consultation process.

**Vision**

The vision established for Feeny in the 2012 Strategic Vision and Action Plan and reinforced here was:-

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| **Vision** |
| “To sustain Feeny as an attractive and effective engine for social, business and tourism life, supporting physical improvements with social, economic and environmental benefits”. |

**SWOT Analysis**

Following analysis of community consultation feedback, a SWOT analysis for Feeny was developed as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| * Local heritage and sites of historical interest
* Good working relations between groups
* AONB
* North Sperrins Heritage Trail
 | * Poor mobile phone and broadband reception
 |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| * Use of the natural environment for outdoor recreation and leisure
* Development of existing green space
* Geo-tourism
* Tourist accommodation provision
 | * Need to provide accessible and energy efficient measures at Community Centre
 |

As the planning process developed, the consultation feedback was drawn together into strategic themes or priority areas for sustaining and developing the village and Feeny community. As much as possible, the selected themes sought to build on the work identified and actioned under the previous Action Plan while also being responsive to the new policy and strategic environment, including the Community Plan for Causeway Coast and Glens. The following themes were proposed:-

* Maximising Our Assets
* Recreation and Leisure
* Building Our Capacity

Action Plans for each theme are presented overleaf:-

**Theme: Maximising Our Assets**

**Rationale:** To develop and maintain the villageto benefit community, social and tourism interests, using the village’s location and natural and physical assets to promote renewal.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project****Action** | **Why is it an Issue?** | **How Will it be Tackled?** | **Priority and** **Timeframe** | **Indicative Cost £** | **Potential Funding Sources** | **Potential partners (inc. lead)** | **Linkage to Community Planning Outcomes** |
| Village Renewal  | There are areas which are in need of maintenance in the village; to create a focal point in the village | 1. Village tidy up – weeding of footpaths etc
2. **Provision of public seating in village to create a meeting space**
 | High; Year 1 | 1. n/a
2. **£10,000**
 | -**RDP Village Renewal** | Council Community Association | Outcome 1; 8Health & wellbeing; Environment |
| Enhancing Community Association premises | To enable the Association to promote both its work and the wider Feeny area | 1. Provision of signage to identify Community Association as an information point
2. Enhancing front door entrance to be more energy efficient and disability friendly
 | High; Year 1 | 1. **£2,000**
2. £10,000
 | **RDP Village Renewal**Council | Community AssociationCouncil  | Outcome 1; 6Health & wellbeing; Landscape;  |
| Tourism infrastructure  | To enable the village to promote its heritage and share history with residents and visitors  | 1. **Information facilities on heritage trail, including signage**
2. Ensure access is up to date and footbridge is maintained
 | High; Year 1 | 1. **£15,000**
2. - n/a
 | 1. **RDP Village Renewal**
2. -
 | Council Community Association | Outcomes 6 & 8 Landscape; Environment  |

**Theme: Recreation and Leisure**

**Rationale: T**o provide the Feeny community with access to recreation and leisure facilities to promote health, wellbeing and positive relationships.

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| **Project****Action** | **Why is it an Issue?** | **How Will it be Tackled?** | **Priority and** **Timeframe** | **Indicative Cost £** | **Potential Funding Sources** | **Potential partners (inc. lead)** | **Linkage to Community Planning Outcomes** |
| Recreation facilities  | Support was expressed to develop safe and accessible recreational facilities which can be used by the Feeny community | 1. **Community allotments at green space beside play area**
2. **Installation of a “magic mile” with outdoor gym stations beside play area**
3. Feasibility study to explore potential for developing recreational space, including a MUGA
 | 1. High; Year 1
2. Medium; Year 2
3. Low; Year 3
 | 1. **£25,000**
2. **£50,000**
3. £3,500
 | 1. **RDP Village Renewal**
2. **RDP Village Renewal**
3. Council
 | Community AssociationCouncilSport NI | Outcome 1; 2; 5Health & wellbeing; Children & young people; Positive relationships  |

**Theme: Building Our Capacity**

**Rationale:** To build community capacity and confidence, enabling groups to fully participate in village renewal through gaining skills, confidence and joint working.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project****Action** | **Why is it an Issue?** | **How Will it be Tackled?** | **Priority and** **Timeframe** | **Indicative Cost £** | **Potential Funding Sources** | **Potential partners (inc. lead)** | **Linkage to Community Planning Outcomes** |
| Capacity building  | Groups are keen to develop projects and are in need of support to proceed | Support on making funding applications, including computer suite | Ongoing  | - | CouncilAwards for All | All groupsCommunity NetworksCouncil | Outcomes 1; 5; 12Health & wellbeing; Positive relationships; Knowledge & skills |

**Prioritisation:**

In order to proceed with implementation, potential Village Renewal actions have been prioritised as follows:-

1. Provision of public seating in village to create a meeting space
2. Information facilities on heritage trail, including signage on trail and at Community Centre
3. Community allotments at green space beside play area
4. Installation of a “magic mile” with outdoor gym stations beside play area

**Community Planning Outcomes**

In order ensure fit with the local policy environment and integrated development and delivery, Village Renewal actions have been aligned with the Community Planning outcomes for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area as much as possible. The full list of Community Planning outcomes is as follows:-

**Outcome 1:**

All people of the Causeway Coast and Glens benefit from improved physical health and mental wellbeing

**Outcome 2:**

Our children and young people will have the very best start in life

**Outcome 3:**

All people of the Causeway Coast and Glens can live independently as far as possible and access support services when they need it

**Outcome 4:**

The Causeway Coast and Glens area feels safe

**Outcome 5**:

The Causeway Coast and Glens area promotes and supports positive relationships

**Outcome 6:** The Causeway Coast and Glens area is widely recognised and celebrated for its unique natural built landscapes

**Outcome 7:** The Causeway Coast and Glens area has physical structures and facilities that further growth, access and connections

**Outcome 8:** The Causeway Coast and Glens has a sustainably managed natural and built

Environment

**Outcome 9:** The Causeway Coast and Glens area provides opportunities for all to contribute to and engage in a more prosperous and fair economy

**Outcome 10:** The Causeway Coast and Glens area attracts and grows more profitable businesses

**Outcome 11:** The Causeway Coast and Glens area drives entrepreneurship and fosters innovation

**Outcome 12:** All people of the Causeway Coast and Glens will be knowledgeable and skilled

**Other Considerations**

Every effort has been made to ensure that the action plans developed for each village are comprised of realistic and achievable project actions. In some cases, issues have been raised which are of real concern to local people but may be beyond the remit of the Village Plan – aspirational as opposed to achievable. In these instances, such issues are identified in the Village Plan as a concern but have not been included as a practical action point.

In the course of the community consultation process, a number of other issues were raised by the Feeny community which are outlined below here as challenges or issues facing the community:-

* A need for improved Broadband provision
* Provision of a zebra crossing at the village shop and play park
* Designated disabled parking

**6.0 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

It is recommended that a Village Forum be established to provide a co-ordination role to ensure the actions within this Plan are progressed. Individual project actions will be taken forward by relevant led organisations, individuals or collectives as identified in the Action Plan.

The Village Forum may establish sub-committees to take forward the actions arising from this Plan. The promoting groups should be represented by people across a broad spectrum of the Feeny community and should involve public, private and community interests. Only the people in the area can make the Action Plan become reality.

As groups research and investigate the best way forward in each project area, the full financial implications will become known and applications for funding and fund-raising activities will take place. It is recognised that Council and RDP will not have sufficient funds to carry out all the activities in this plan and other sources of funding will be required. The full Village Plan provides details of potential opportunities to grasp.

The Village Forum will monitor progress and report to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council on a quarterly basis.

Appendix 1- Socio Economic Analysis

**Usually resident population**

On Census Day 27 March 2011, the usually resident population of Feeny Settlement was **690** accounting for **0.04%** of the NI total.

**Households**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, there were **690** people **(100.00%)** of the usually resident population) in Feeny Settlement living in **243** households, giving an average household size of **2.84**.

**Demography**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, in Feeny Settlement:

* **26.67%** were aged under 16 years and **8.55%** were aged 65 years and over
* **49.57%** of the usually resident population were male and **50.43%** were female
* **31** years was the average (median) age of the population

**Ethnicity, identity, language and religion**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, in Feeny Settlement, considering the resident population:

* **99.86%** were from the white (including Irish traveller) ethnic group
* **94.35%** belong to or were brought up in the Catholic religion and **5.36%** belong to or were brought up in a ‘Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)’ religion
* **12.03%** indicated that they had a British national identity, **62.03%** had an Irish national identity and **28.70%** had a Northern Irish national identity

\**Respondents could indicate more than one national identity*

On Census Day 27th March 2011, in Feeny Settlement, considering the population aged 3 years old and over:

* **16.29%** had some knowledge of Irish
* **3.96%** had some knowledge of Ulster Scots
* **0.00%** did not have English as their first language

**Health**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, in Feeny Settlement:

* **17.97%** of people had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities
* **81.59%** of people stated their general health was either good or very good
* **6.96%** of people stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others

**Housing and accommodation**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, in Feeny Settlement:

* **67.08%** of households were owner occupied and **30.45%** were rented
* **21.81%** of households were owned outright
* **8.23%** of households were comprised of a single person aged 65+ years
* **7.41%** were lone parent households with dependent children
* **18.93%** of households did not have access to a car or van

**Qualifications**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, considering the population aged 16 years old and over:

* **15.42%** had a degree or higher qualification
* **52.57%** had no or low (Level 1\*) qualifications

*\*level 1 is 1-4 O Levels/GCE/GCSE (any grades) or equivalent*

**Labour market**

On Census Day 27th March 2011, considering the population aged 16 to 74 years old:

* **65.02%** were economically active, **34.98%** were economically inactive
* **52.88%** were in paid employment
* **10.29%** were unemployed

**Deprivation**

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010 provides information on seven types of deprivation and overall measure of multiple deprivation for small areas. NISRA has recently been commissioned to initiate work to update this Measure with a view to publish results mid-2017. See the NISRA website for further information on Deprivation.

Wards are ordered from most deprived to least deprived on each type of deprivation and then assigned a rank. The most deprived is ranked 1, and as there are 582 wards, the least deprived ward has a rank of 582. The deprivation rankings for Feeny Ward are given in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Rank**Dungiven** |
| Multiple Deprivation Measure | 202 |
| Income Deprivation | 220 |
| Employment Deprivation | 156 |
| Health Deprivation and Disability Deprivation  | 310 |
| Education Skills and Training Disability | 167 |
| Proximity to Services Deprivation | 78 |
| Crime and Disorder | 471 |
| Living Environment | 543 |

1. A Better Future Together – A Community Plan for Causeway Coast and Glens 2017 - 2030 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)