



Communities Leading Change

Participatory Budgeting in
Newry, Mourne and Down

Community Planning: Your plan – Our priority

All people in Newry, Mourne and Down...



Communities Leading Change

In 2018, Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership decided to implement Participatory Budgeting (PB) through the Communities Leading Change initiative, as a method of extending democracy and increasing civic engagement, by giving people in the district a say on allocating funding to address issues that matter most to them. For the first time citizens of Newry, Mourne and Down District took part in two Participatory Budgeting (PB) initiatives; Communities Leading Change in the Mournes and Youth Leading Change.

Our aim for both PB initiatives was to help people to lead and make real changes in their communities. Every group submitted a funding application and were invited to attend a community voting event to pitch their ideas for funding.

A total of over 5500 votes were cast on which projects the community wanted to see funded in their local area. Of the 30 Groups which participated across the district, 21 groups were

successful in receiving a share of £10,500 and we would like to showcase and celebrate their achievements through this short report.

This report complements two short films that were commissioned for the events in the Mournes DEA and the Youth Leading Change district wide youth event held in Newry.

They can be found at:

www.newrymournedown.org/communities-leading-change

Communities Leading Change Partners



Aims of the Project





Our Approach

The Communities Leading Change partners decided to pilot two completely different types of Participatory Budgeting initiatives to see which worked better and to learn from each type of event. The focus was on achieving the PB principals of openness, transparency, fairness and inclusion. We wanted to pilot voting online and in person, a small rural community with a district wide community. We wanted to target a demographic (youth) and

make it open. The Communities Leading Change partners decided the bigger area would get more funding as they anticipated that more community groups would apply. The only criteria on the expression of interest forms was that the projects would positively impact on the priority areas; Improving the area, mental health and emotional wellbeing, social isolation, and improving the lives of young people.

Mournes Leading Change	Youth Leading Change
 <p>Non-Technical</p>	 <p>Technical</p>
 <p>All ages</p>	 <p>Young people</p>
 <p>Small, Rural Area</p>	 <p>District wide</p>
 <p>£3,000</p>	 <p>£7,500</p>

The Mournes Story

The first event was a non-technical, localised event based in the Mournes DEA. Over 70 Mournes DEA residents voted at an event on 18 October 2018 in Newry Street Unite Community Centre, Kilkeel, in which nine projects pitched their ideas. Each person was given three votes which they had to use for 3 different projects. The votes were counted, and the following six projects were each awarded £500 funding:

- The Ladies of Mourne: Cultural Trip to Stormont
- MYMY: Updating their multipurpose and crisis room

- Advocacy VSV: Finishing their website and promotional leaflets
- Atticall: Youth Participation project
- ARK Community Gardens: Winter Market
- Newry Street Unite: Big Community Quiz.

Each of the projects tackled one or more of the three priority areas of rural isolation, mental health and emotional wellbeing, and improving the area.



The Youth Story

The second pilot, Youth Leading Change, saw 24 groups send in their project ideas in short videos. Each project benefitted youth in the district. These videos were uploaded online and the local communities were asked to vote for their top three favourite projects. Over 5000 votes were cast online. The successful projects were announced at a special awards ceremony hosted by Pamela Ballantine, on Saturday, 24 November in Newry's Canal Court Hotel. Representatives from almost all the organisations, which entered a project, attended and enjoyed an interactive event where everyone was able to view each other's project videos and have fun voting for best video, soundtrack and story.

15 groups were successful in their bids and were awarded £500 each:

- Autism Families, Newry, Therapy Tuesdays
- Bryansford Amateur Boxing Club, Newcastle, Stepping up BAB
- Carnagat Community Association, South Armagh, Cultural Workshop Project
- Clanrye Group, Newry, BASE project
- Cloughoge Primary School, Newry, Garden Gang-Urban Allotment Project
- Croabh Rua Camlocha Hurling Club, Bessbrook, Community Gym
- Downpatrick Scouts, Raising Our Camping Game;
- EA Social Inclusion Group, Newry, Inclusion Project
- Jason Benson Drama Collective, Rostrevor, Intergenerational Drama Project
- Mourne Heritage Trust, Annalong, Youth Path Team
- Shimna Stars Special Olympic Group, Castlewellan, Dodging the D Man
- St Oliver Plunkett Youth Club, Crossmaglen, The New Lease Project
- St Patricks Primary School, Newry, The Happy Hive
- Teconnaught Cross Community Pre-School, Downpatrick, Playhouse Project
- Upper Creggan Pantomime Group, Crossmaglen, Pantomime 'Ole King Cole'.



Some Facts and Figures

Communities Leading Change in the Mournes

- Engagement with 12 groups from the Mournes area
- 9 groups pitched their project ideas which benefitted one or more priority areas (Rural Isolation, Mental health and Emotional Wellbeing, Improving the area)
- 70+ residents voted
- 6 Groups awarded funding totalling £3000
- 2 unsuccessful groups applied for the second pilot - Youth Leading Change, in which one group received funding
- Mournes Promo video 1.5k views.



Some Facts and Figures

Youth Leading Change

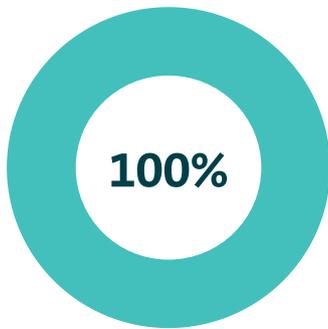
- Engagement with 24 Youth groups from across the District
- 21 project ideas which benefit youth in the area were submitted online (video)
- Over 5000 votes cast
- Representation from almost all groups at event
- 120 Young people attended the awards event
- 15 groups awarded funding totalling £7500



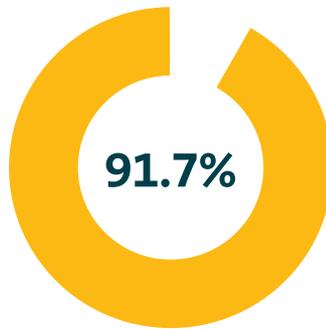
Some Facts and Figures

Feedback from participants

Youth



of respondents agreed they found the process easy

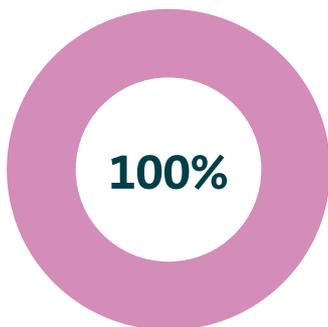


of respondents agreed the process was worthwhile and they would likely do it again.

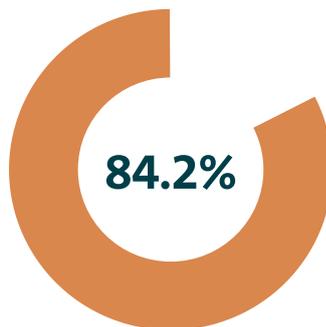
“The process was straightforward and fair. The event was entertaining and informative. It was great to see other group ideas and projects.”

“Opportunity to see what groups are doing for the community”

The Mournes



of respondents agreed they found the process easy.



of respondents agreed the process was worthwhile and they would likely do it again.

“It was people driven - not decided by bureaucrats.”

“Everyone given a chance to promote their group.”

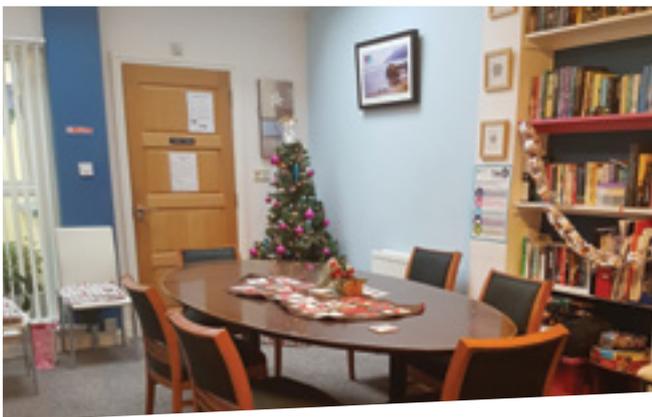
Successful groups



Advocacy VSV gained funding to design a new Website and fliers to promote this new charity that helps victims of sexual violence. Based in Newcastle. www.advocacyvsv.com



Bryansford Amateur Boxing Club gained funding for new equipment for their club. Now they are fighting fit and able to compete. The new equipment promotes good health through exercise.



MYMY gained funding to give their crisis room a facelift. 20 people got involved in helping with the painting and decorating of the room. Improvements have been made to make the room more inviting which encouraged more drop in sessions. The service users now feel the room is cleaner and of a higher standard. *“This has made a huge difference to the overall feel of the house and we are very grateful for the grant”*



Downpatrick Scouts gained funding for new hammocks. The scouts now have more options and have no need to sleep on the ground while camping.

What have they done so far?



The Ladies of Mourne used their funding to go on a cultural trip to Stormont. As you can see they looked like they had a great time!



Upper Creggan Pantomime Group the children put on a pantomime called Ole King Cole which they enjoyed thoroughly. Friendships were made and confidence grew which positively impacted their health and wellbeing.



Cloughoge PS, Newry spent their funding on a gardening project. The children had great fun making their garden grow by planting flowers and vegetables in their new poly tunnel. Not only does this garden help the environment but it gives the children a new place to be relaxed and learn new skills.

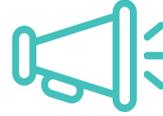


Carnagat Youth Group organised and participated in a cultural event for their community which included Chinese dancing, Bollywood dancing and African drumming. The children learned about other cultures and traditions and developed skills in leadership, budgeting and communication.

What have we learned?



PB increases knowledge of groups in the area



PB gives the community a voice



PB gives the community confidence in applying for funding



The process is open and transparent

“The PB projects pilot was very worthwhile and enjoyable for those organisations involved in rolling it out. We approached it in an enabling frame of mind which helped us work positively together for our organisations & the groups. We were able to engage a good broad range of groups all of whom demonstrated a passion for and belief in their work. On the organising side of things, the use of video-conferencing saved valuable travel time which made the project more do-able for Voluntary sector groups. The groups were delighted with the awards they received.”

Raymond Jackson, CCG

Challenges



Encouraging community to get involved with initial idea generation and co-design



Scaling up



Making it easier for groups to gain funding (accessibility)



Moving beyond PB as simply small-scale grant provision



Resourcing



Extending community's decision making on local budgets and service provision (long term)



Further engagement with groups

What's next?

The Communities Leading Change team are hoping to run this initiative in the coming year (2019) and develop the experience of PB with communities across Newry, Mourne and Down district over the next four years.

Our plans are to co-produce PB with communities all over the district, expand PB as an innovative and alternative option to current small grant schemes and fund even more projects.

PB is an exciting, creative and fun way of engaging with communities to identify priorities and to enable people

to have a say in where funding can be best used in line with community needs.

To find out more about PB contact communityplanning@nmandd.org or keep an eye on the council's Facebook page [f /nmdcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/nmdcouncil)





 /nmdcouncil

 @nmdcouncil

Living well
together :-)