

# THE ARMAGH PLACE PLAN

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon  
Community Planning Partnership



Armagh City  
Banbridge  
& Craigavon  
Borough Council

**Housing  
Executive**



Commissioned by the  
Department for

**Communities**  
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**Pobal**

Department for  
**Communities**

CELEBRATING  
OUR STARS  
AND STORIES



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# 1. Introduction

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## About this report

ABC Community Planning Partnership is committed to involving local people in the decisions about its plans and actions, and has adopted the Scottish Community Engagement Standards to benchmark for good practice.

This engagement report documents the findings from the engagement carried out during the Place Shaping Plan process for Armagh. The project kicked off in December 2020 and a Steering Group was setup to help ensure the codesign of the plan by key stakeholders and the community, as well as to advise and help support a broad range of engagement and involvement of the community from an early stage of the plan.

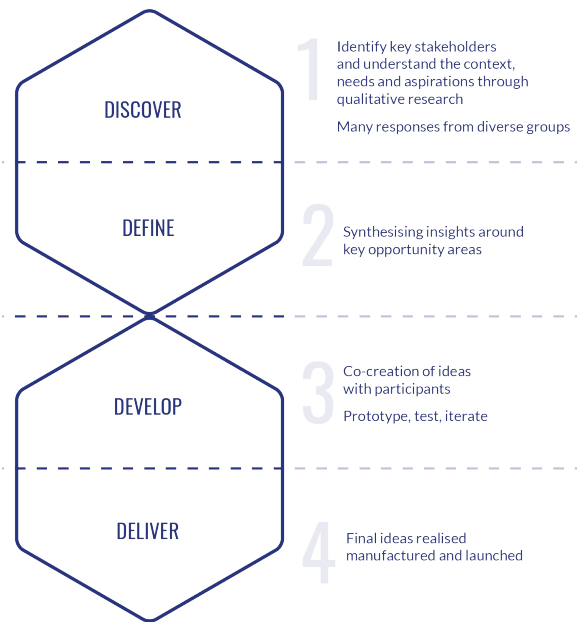
## The Double Diamond Inclusive Design Process

USI used the four key stages of the double diamond to shape a codesign process whereby engagement started early on in the planning process, and has continued throughout, helping to shape the engagement, methods of inquiry, and key insights have informed each stage of the plan making process.

## Methods of Engagement

From an early stage, a priority was placed on appropriate and quality engagement with the local community of Armagh. Insights drawn from the Discover phase helped shape a prioritisation on both older and young people. The first was particularly concerned about the younger generation, as they are leaving the city, so understanding this issue and delving into their lived experience was an essential aspect of the plan.

The engagement methods used were online public workshops, a citizen survey, a creative schools pack, youth and older people focused workshops, and two live engagement days at key locations in the city.





## 2. Overview of community engagement carried out

### Website

*Throughout 2021*

The [shapingarmagh.com](https://shapingarmagh.com) website has been a place to share information, key engagement dates and to allow the community to submit comments, feedback and suggestions.

### Public Online Workshops

*22 - 26 March 2021*

Four public online workshops took place to find out what people valued and what they would like to improve in Armagh. 33 people attended the workshops. One of the workshops was aimed solely at older people's issues. A summary of the workshop findings can be [found here](#).

### Community Wide Survey

*1st - 26th July 2021*

The survey ran online throughout July and was made available on the council's own engagement platform, citizen space. 135 online responses and 1 offline response were received.

### Schools Creative Challenge

*June 2021*

School children in the Armagh area were given packs to complete to identify what they love about their city and what they would improve. 159 children completed the activity packs.

### Live Engagement Days

*29th & 30th July*

For two days USI setup at the Shambles Market and the Mall to talk to people out and about what they think are the priorities for the city. The team also dropped in at the Parkrun at the Palace. 61 people were engaged at these events.

### Youth Focused Workshops

*27th & 28th July*

Two workshops were held in the epicentre via the EA youth programme, one with 8-11 year olds and the other with 12-17 year olds. 11 children carried out a focused assessment of Armagh using an adapted version of the Place Standard Tool.





## 2. Overview of community engagement carried out

### Public Consultation

1st Nov 2021 - 23rd Jan 2022

A 12 week public consultation took place to give residents an opportunity to feedback on the Draft Armagh Place Plan. During this time opportunities for comment, feedback and prioritisation of the plan were given as detailed below.

### Survey

1st Nov 2021 - 23rd Jan 2022

A total of 85 people completed the survey. They were asked to prioritise the outcomes and actions and to comment on what they felt the priorities of the plan should be.

### Community and Voluntary Sector Workshop

9th November 2021

9 people attended this workshop hosted by the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel for the area.

### Traders and Businesses Workshop

9th November 2021

5 people attended the business workshop.

### Drop In Consultation Event

8th December 2021

A drop in was setup on 8th December in the Mall Shopping Centre, during which time 200 leaflets were circulated to members of the public, 120 businesses were approached, and approximately 30 conversations were held around the Plan.

### Public Open Workshop

12th January 2022

5 people attended the first workshop of 2022.

### Public Open Workshop

18th January 2022

12 people attended the final workshop of the public consultation process.



### 3. Public Workshops

33  
participants

#### Introduction

The workshops were held during the lockdown and therefore took place online using zoom and miro. The workshop format was interactive, allowing participants to suggest, vote and discuss their lived experience of Armagh and what they felt were the real assets of the city.

#### Who responded?

People that attended the workshops came from across the Armagh area, as well as those that work in Armagh, and a number of people who no longer live in Armagh but feel a strong connection to it still came to the online workshops.

#### What did people say?

There were four exercises as part of the workshops:-

1. Understanding the different 'places' of Armagh
2. Identifying the stars and stories of People in Armagh
3. How people get around in Armagh
4. Visioning Exercise

The Mall was mentioned 45 times.

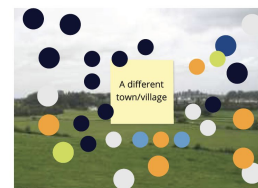
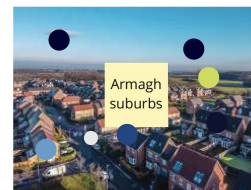
19 people pointed out the traffic in Armagh as needing addressed.

No one in the workshops said that they would cycle around Armagh - the main reason was that it is too dangerous.

The Callan and Folly Rivers were brought up 15 times in the workshops.

The planetarium was brought up in conversations on 7 occasions.

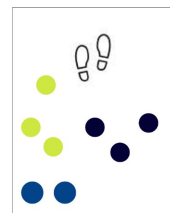
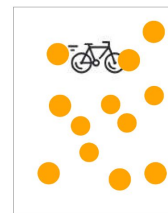
People feel a real sense of pride in the history and heritage of the city, including Archbishop Robinson.



● [Live] ● [Work] ● [Buy groceries] ● [Get healthy] ● [Socialize] ● [Relax]

#### Journey and barriers

How often do you use...  
Take a circle and place it below in the corresponding means of transportation



● [Daily] ● [Once a week] ● [Once in a month] ● [I don't]

### 3. Public Workshops

More attendees voted for a high street that prioritises spaces for wellbeing for both physical and mental health.



*What if...the high street was a place to connect to nature?*

'The Mall Quarter'

'It would be great to buy Armagh apples in Armagh'

'Traffic free cycle paths between the various nature spaces could really attract visitors!'

Attendees want the city to involve people by providing community outdoor activities and allowing car parking spaces to be taken over with new interesting uses.



*What if...we were all part of the change?*

'I think Armagh could be marketed as centre of learning...there is huge scope for collaboration between...institutions.'

'Mental health for all should be considered'

'Gardens bringing colour!'

'A charter to be the cleanest place!'

Attendees want outdoor spaces in Armagh to be used differently.



*What if...Armagh was full of unique experiences?*

'Little gardens in unexpected places'

'Let's get people up to the spires to ring the bells!'

'Can the schools use their rooftops for urban farms and bees?'

'Playfulness is not just for children'

'I do think the traffic on the Mall really needs to be addressed!'



### 3. Public Workshops

Attendees want more colour to be brought to the streets of Armagh.



**What if...the mall, the streets around it and all the buildings around became one big arts centre?**

'More art...less street clutter!'

'Business rates put off renters and people wanting to utilise the empty shops.'

'The Market Square on English Street in underused.'

'Showcase the musical heritage Armagh has.'

Attendees want to see more places for the community to come together.



**What if...the city helped everyone to feel part of it?**

'There is a high level of BAME in the Armagh area....[we need to be] educating people to help integration.'

'Rural Armagh has a strong tradition of street bowls...might be an idea to bring it into the centre.'

'I love all of these...imagine fun exercises/yoga on the mall - how fantastic!'

Attendees want ways to bring more people to the river and use it.



**What if...the river became the coolest in the UK?**

'There are a few new groups established'

'We need to clean our rivers - the Folly is bad in places!'

'Bring wildlife and biodiversity into the city.'

'The Mills of Armagh!'

## 4. Survey

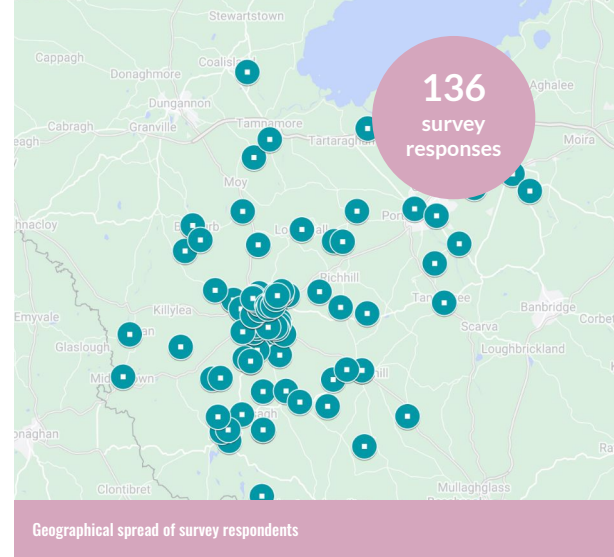
### Introduction

A community wide survey was carried out in July 2021 to understand what the community felt were the priorities for their city and should be considered as part of the development of the Armagh Place Plan. The survey was intended to supplement the engagement already carried out by reaching more residents who hadn't yet engaged in the process.

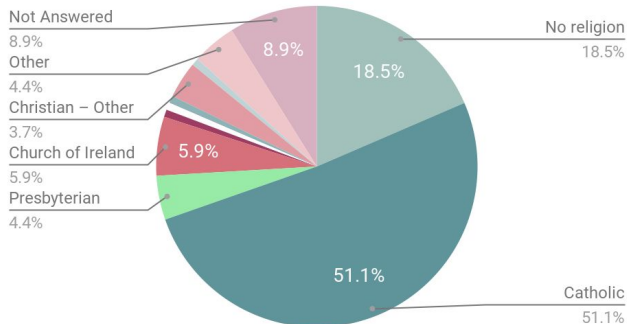
The survey ran online from 1st July to 26th July 2021 and was made available on the council's own engagement platform, citizen space. 135 online responses and 1 offline response were received, and a summary of the findings are set out below.

### Who responded?

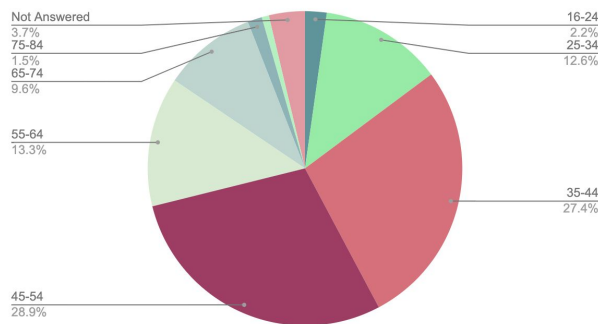
Below is the information on the location, age and community background of the survey respondents.



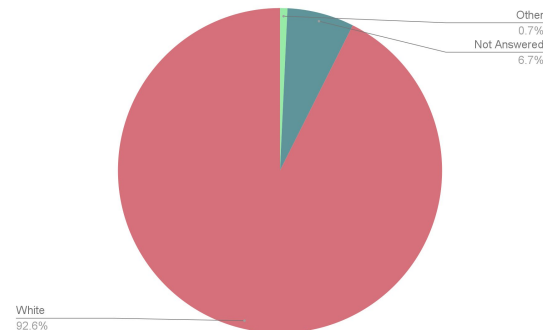
### Religion



### Age



### Ethnicity

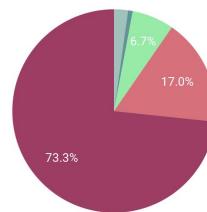


## 4. Survey

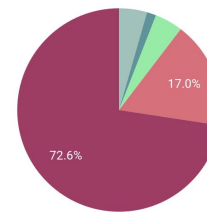
### What did people say?

People were asked to select the priority of different aspects for the city. The results are set out below in order of how many people felt they were of high priority.

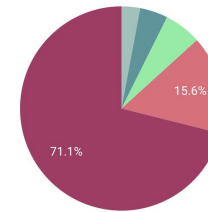
1. Health and Wellbeing



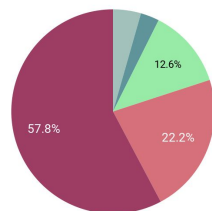
2. Jobs and employment



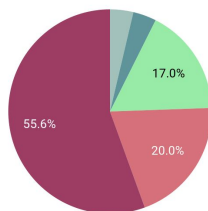
3. Involvement in decision making



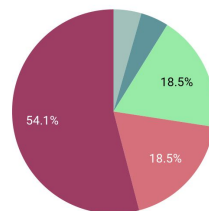
4. Physical connectivity



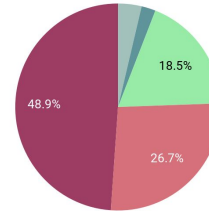
5. Walkable city



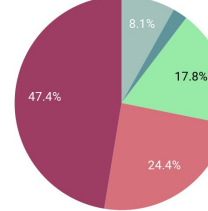
6. Safer streets



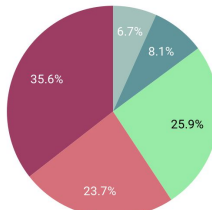
7. Connecting the city socially



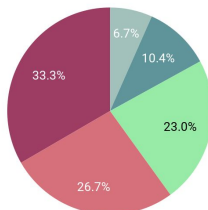
8. Reducing inequality



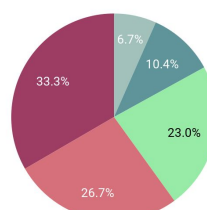
9. Bringing nature into the



10. Tackling climate change



11. Connecting the city digitally





## 4. Survey

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### What do you think is special about Armagh?

- Beautiful buildings and layout
- Being built on seven hills
- Central Library
- Compact rural city
- Forests, Tassagh Viaduct, rivers, lakes, heritage, culture, crafts, family farms
- Georgian architectural influences
- Good access to the north and south
- Historical links both Celtic & Georgian
- House prices are affordable
- Independent traders
- It's heritage and history: Eamon Macha, pre-Christian heritage, St Patrick, Vikings, Brian Boru etc.
- Lots of opportunity for sports
- Market Place Theatre
- Navan Fort
- People are friendly, welcoming and honest
- Southern Regional College
- The Book of Armagh
- The Gaol
- The Mall
- The Palace
- The Planetarium
- Unique independent retail provision

### How do you think Armagh could be improved?

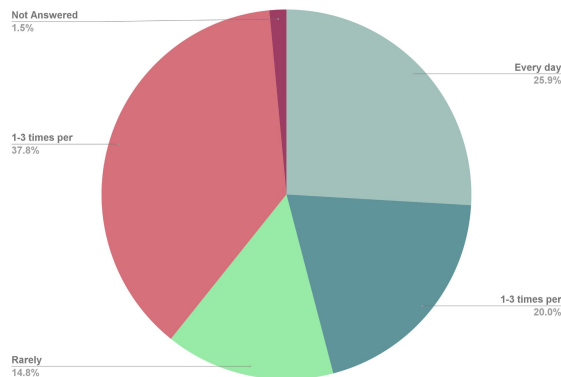
- Address pollution
- Address the traffic in the city
- Address vacancy and dereliction
- Better facilities for tourists
- Better planning policies
- Boost the night time economy
- By pass
- Culture nights: tours, music, theatre, creative input, discounts to locals for events
- Cycle links
- Employment offerings to young people
- Encourage more start ups
- Greenways connecting town
- Infrastructure - rail and road
- Integrated secondary school
- Less bureaucracy in the Council
- Litter and cleanliness
- More disabilities equipment and inclusion
- More flexible use of the Mall: outdoor music
- More flowers beds and hanging baskets
- More frequent and reliable bus service
- More IT businesses
- More outdoor continental style dining
- More outdoor vending
- More things for young people to do
- More use of the Shambles
- Navan Fort bid for World Heritage Site
- Open the Gaol as a tourist attraction
- Pedestrianise the town centre
- Protect its character
- Railway line between Armagh and Belfast
- Removal of flags
- Running track
- Sports village, running track,
- Support owners of historic buildings to sustainably manage them
- Swimming pool
- Unique offerings in the city centre

## 4. Survey

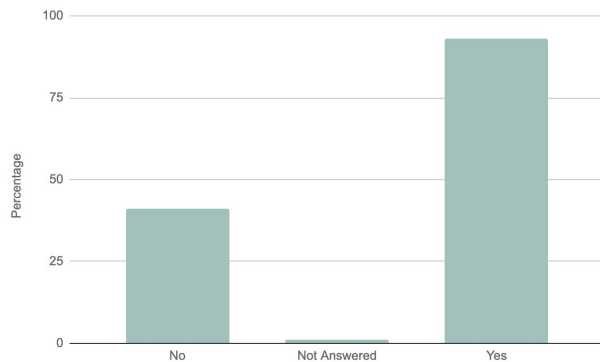
### Who do you think needs to be involved in the Armagh Place Plan?

- 18-25 year olds
- Arts Council
- Businesses, start ups, female led etc.
- Chairpersons of clubs
- Children and young people
- Community groups
- Community sector
- Elected representatives
- Emergency services
- Environmental Health
- Ethnic minority representatives
- Experienced town planners
- Government departments
- Heritage NI
- Key institutions
- Local government coordinate only
- Newcomer families
- People that work in Armagh
- Ratepayers
- Residents
- Rural and urban residents
- School governors
- Sporting clubs and organisations
- Visitors

### How often do you walk around Armagh?



### What people think about the four aspirations of the plan: Connected City; Engaging City; Green City; Healthy City.



## 5. Schools Packs

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159  
participants

### Introduction

As part of the young people engagement, a pack was developed by USI and distributed through the ABC council in the Armagh schools.

The pack aimed to involve the children, raising awareness about the place plan and let them have their say on the present and future of Armagh.

The exercises were based on the idea of Joe Wicks coming back to Armagh to help get the city into shape. They were available to do either as an interactive Miro Board online or as a printable worksheet and accompanied by guidance notes for teachers.

### Who responded?

The responses came from the following five schools in Armagh: the Royal School Armagh, St Catherine's College, St Malachy's PS, St Patrick's Grammar School and St Patrick's Primary School; young people age range was between 8 and 14 years old, and of the 159 responses 65% came from Armagh residents.

### What did they say?

Most participants appreciate the outdoor spaces, with Gosford, the Mall and Navan Fort being their favourite.

Their point of reference in the city is its iconic buildings, especially the Cathedrals, the cinema and some popular shops where they meet.

When asked about a special moment in the Armagh, they most recall the Christmas time and the lights, followed by St. Patrick's day and Georgian day.

### Key insights

Young people value the history and the heritage of the city, and they would like adults to cherish it and enhance it even more. While they think there is a need for new shops, they would like to see the empty buildings come to life first.

Even if they enjoy meeting and being in the mall, traffic is a deterrent to making this space truly accessible.

Exploring the city outdoor spaces, having an active life, and enjoying the city cultural offer were high priorities.

On the following page, you can find the responses to the pack prompts.



## 5. Schools Packs

### GETTING ARMAGH INTO SHAPE

**We need your help!**

**Hello Everyone!**  
I'm helping to reshape Armagh to make it a better city for everyone... but I need your help! Shaping our city is like shaping our bodies. We need a clear plan and steps to take to get there. You might have heard of me and my fitness programme... can you imagine using this idea to shape the streets and places of our city too? Let's give it a go...

**STEP 1: WARMING UP**  
Imagine I'm coming to Armagh for a big PE session. I need to get to know the city first. Tell me a little bit about you using the box to the right.

Now... can you show me what is really great about Armagh and how could it be made better? Let's go!

MY FIRST NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_  
MY AGE IS \_\_\_\_\_  
I LOVE IN (town/city) \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 2: LET'S GET IN SHAPE**  
Use the boxes below, show me the places of Armagh you love and what makes them so special. Drop in a photograph, or a description in the boxes below that show...

Something I've done in Armagh	Where you meet your friends	Where you go to feel active
A special moment that takes place here	Something beautiful in the city	A secret place absolutely...

### STEP 3: FUELLING UP

Shaping us is also about what you eat, and making sure it's healthy and full of goodness!

Imagine you were putting together the perfect plate of food for Armagh... what you put on it, and why?

Make up your plate of food for Armagh by adding pictures, photos, words and descriptions below.



**STEP 4: COOLING DOWN**

You did great guys, well done! Now we just need to get the adults in shape... make sure to tell your parents and teachers to go online and sign up to find out more about the plan you are helping develop.

Sign up at: [www.shapingarmagh.com](http://www.shapingarmagh.com)

**"I like Navan Fort because you can learn a lot about nature and the birds"**

St Malachy's PS 11 years old from Armagh

**"The Palace Stables is a fun park with lots of people"**

St Patrick's Primary School 10 years old from Armagh

**"As weird as it sounds for nature, I just find a bunch of trees and walk around, it's like a forest"**

St Catherine's College 12 years old from Moy

**"Mall & Palace Stables – food carts, picnic tables, outdoor gym"**

Royal School Armagh 13 years old from Richhill

**"I meet my friends at The Mall. It's a big nice pitch and there is a seating area"**

St Catherine's College 12 years old from Moy

**"The historic buildings in the city; cathedrals, forts etc"**

Royal School Armagh 13 years old from Richhill

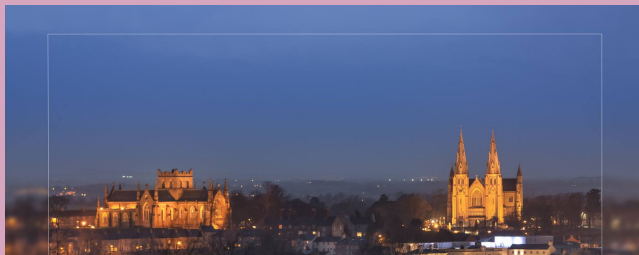
**"I love the Christmas light show"**

Royal School Armagh 13 years old from Portadown

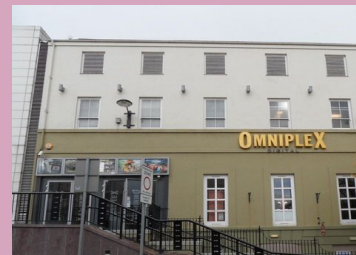
## 5. Schools Packs



1 every 3 mentioned  
**Park and outdoor activities**



1 every 3 mentioned  
**The cathedrals** as something beautiful in Armagh  
© Patrick Hughes Photography, 2018



45% mentioned  
**Culture** related activities as something fun to do in Armagh



1 in every 6  
want the **Old prison** to be put to better use



1 every 4 mentioned  
getting rid of the **traffic on the Mall**, and states that pedestrian crossing is unsafe



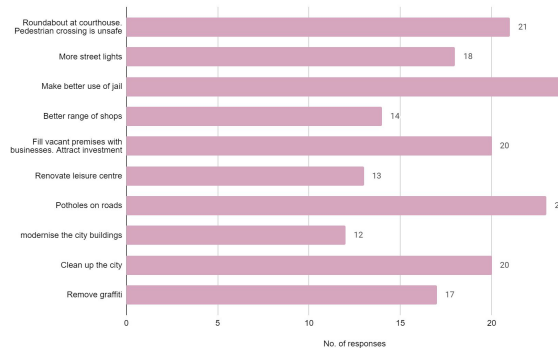
A special moment is  
**Christmas**



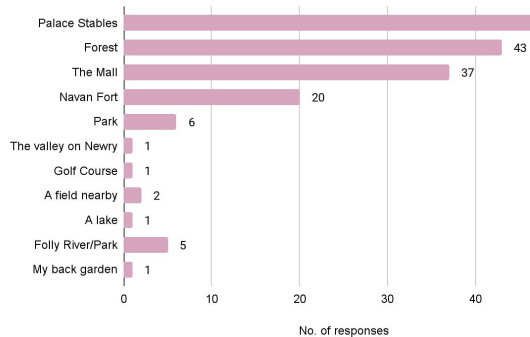
**The mall** was mentioned 123 times

## 5. Schools Packs

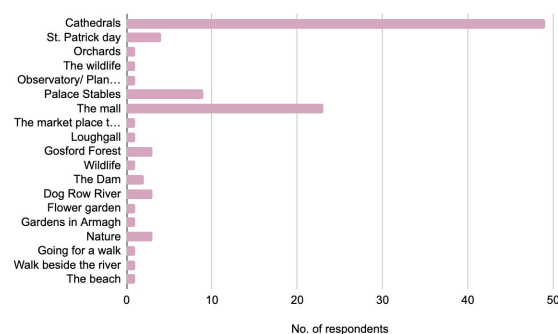
### Things I would like to get rid of?



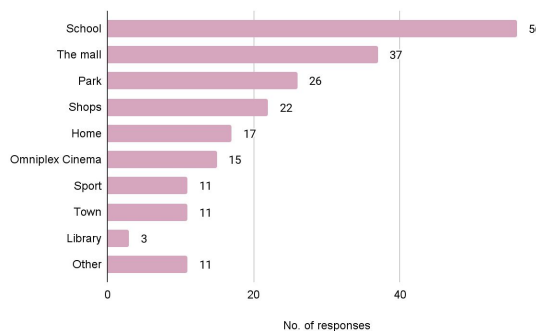
### Where do you go to find nature?



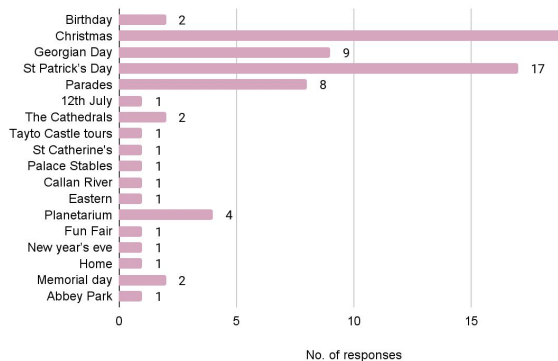
### Something beautiful in the city



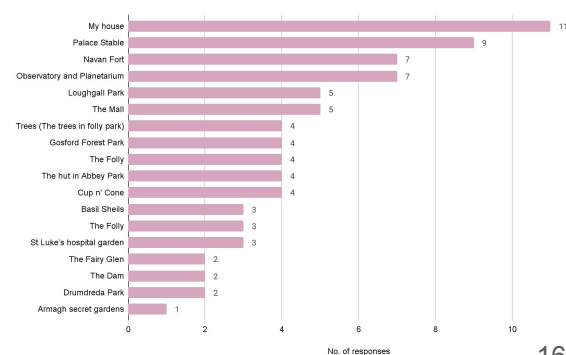
### Where do you go to meet your friends?



### A special moment in Armagh?



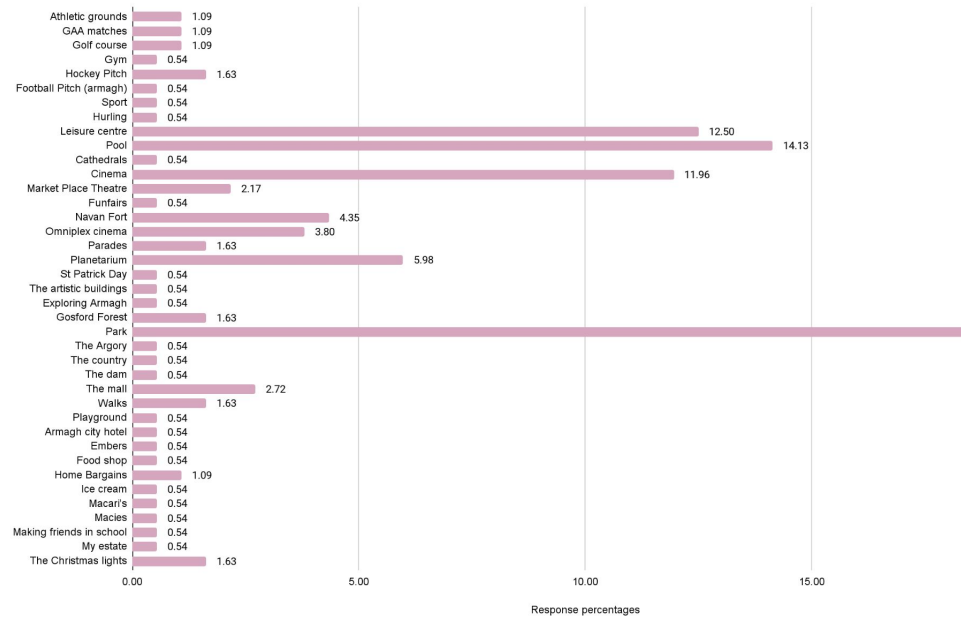
### A secret place



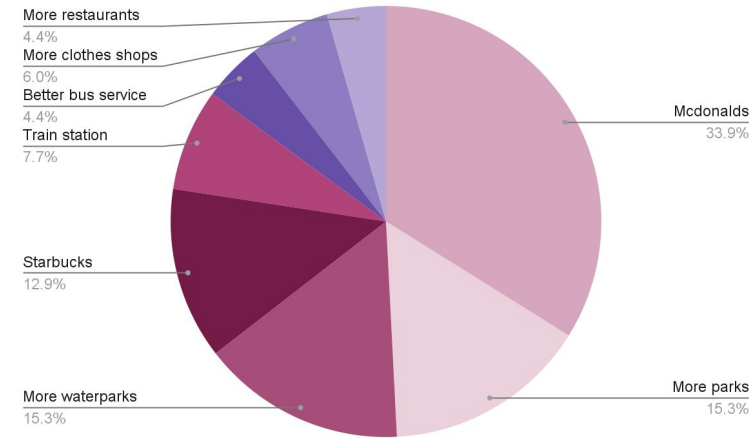


# 5. Schools Packs

Identify something fun about Armagh?



What would the perfect plate of food for Armagh look like?



## 6. Youth Focused Workshops

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11  
young people

### Introduction

During the sessions with 8 - 17 years old, the Scottish Place Standard Tool was employed to assess the places in Armagh. Most of the young people at the sessions already completed the school pack. These workshops were helpful to dig deeper into their opinion of the quality of the spaces that already came up. One participant came with their work already done, having written down already her ideas for the city (page 20).

### Who responded?

The sessions were held on the 28th and the 29th of July in the Epicentre Youth Club with 11 young people divided into two groups, 8-11 and 12-17 years old.

### What did they say?

It was clear that the younger group ( 8 - 11 years old) was proud of Armagh and its people and was particularly fascinated by telling the place stories. They struggle to access independently recreational spaces.

Although the older group (12 - 17 years old) love Armagh and see themselves coming back to it after an experience elsewhere in NI or abroad, they were more critical when it came to scoring the city.

### Key insights

All the children have Armagh's heritage close to their heart, the Cathedrals and the Georgian buildings, and enjoy outdoor spaces, like the Mall and the hill behind the Epicentre.

Lastly, all the participants are willing to be actively involved and participate in the city making and decisions.

On the following page, you can find the Place Standard Tool used during the session and some comments, and on page 21 you can find the tool completed during the sessions.

## 6. Youth Focused Workshops

THE ARMAGH PLACE PLAN

**WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ARMAGH?**

**Step 1** About you  
Add your first names and your ages (for example Greg - 12)

**Step 2** Let's give the city some marks!  
Score each item on the wheel and fill in how what you think of Armagh.  
1 is the lowest score and 7 is the highest.

**Step 3** Let's see how well Armagh performed!  
After the diagram is complete, draw a line between each point and action. The bigger areas are where the city performed well and the smaller ones where it needs improvement.

Your contribution will help us write a plan for the city's future closest to what you would like to see!

Notes

### Space

"The Mall technically it is not a green space, but I like it anyway! I would go there to meet my friends"

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

"I love the Mall but there is not much to do on it. Gosford Forest is great and people would use it even if there is a parking ticket"

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

### Movement

"The traffic on the Mall is unbearable!"

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

"I go around always by walk, I never bike or take the bus"

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

### People

"There are so many cool stories in Armagh, let me tell you about the green lady..."

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

"There should be more activities to open our eyes to diversity. You need to be introduced to the other side to not be afraid of people."

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

### Senses

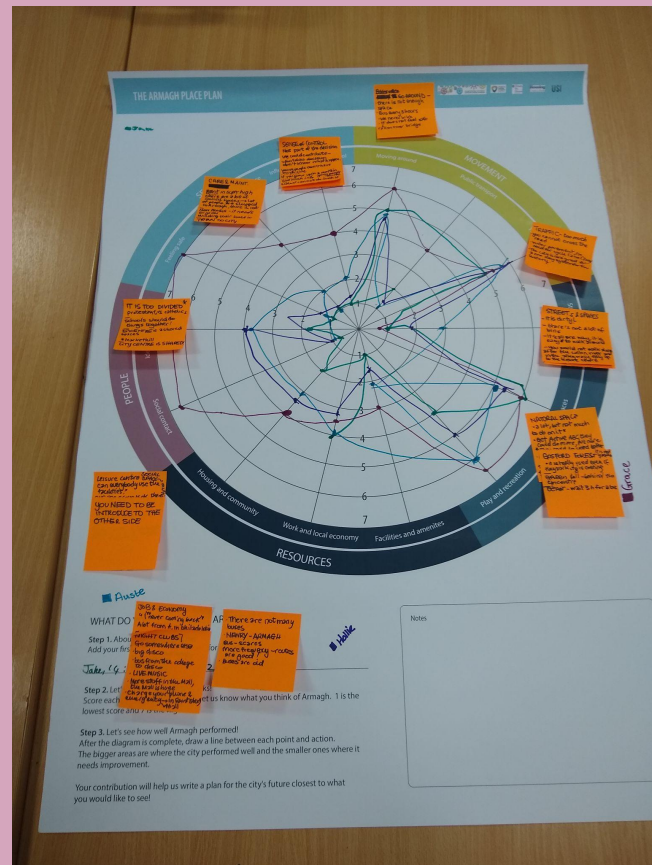
"It would be great if we could have our say and do things for our city"

Youth focused workshops, July 2021

## 6. Youth Focused Workshops



Pictures from the sessions

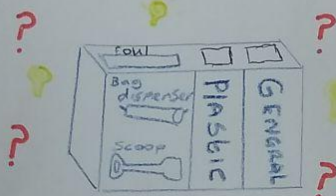




More bins in town,  
Especially in the more  
Popular Parts of town.

- Shamble Area
- Railway street
- Cathedral Road

Also we could add a  
Poop scoop feature  
to some of the main  
bins to cut out the  
excuse of "I forgot  
my bag."



# ARMAGH Slipper Factory.

Cinema

Food court

Bowling  
Alley /  
Arcade.

- \* Boost the economy
- \* Provide multiple jobs
- \* Give kids/teen a place to go
- \* Attract out of town visitors

Armagh  
Arcadium

Put more into the redeveloping  
of derelict buildings instead  
of new developments.

Closed



\* Family  
fun  
days

Staff Appreciation Days

\* PAY RECOGNITION

Fun  
Days

to Our Council / Staff &

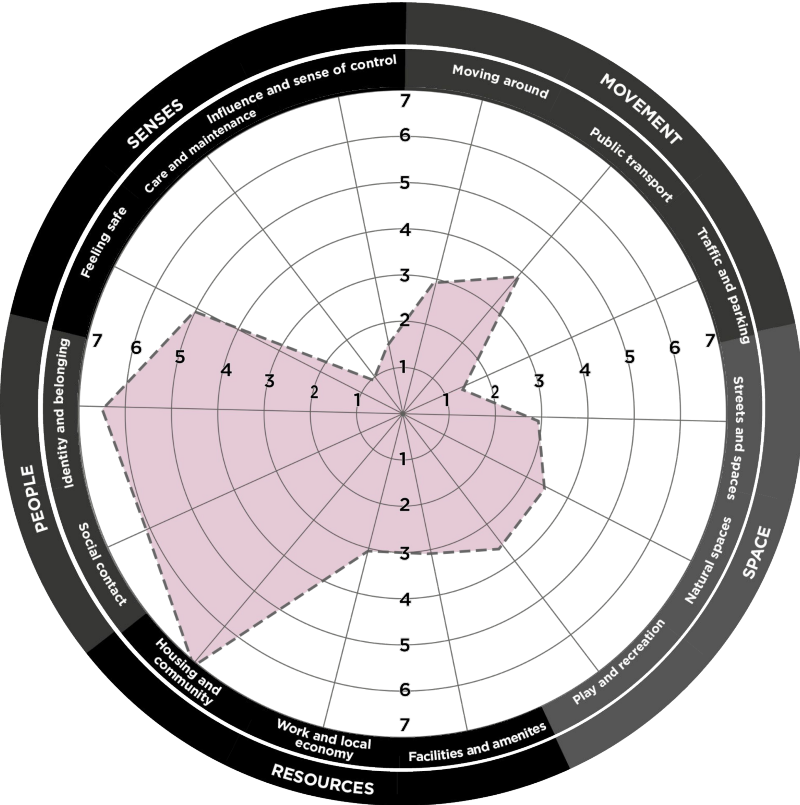
Community Workers Who Provide

ESSENTIAL SERVICES to OUR TOWN

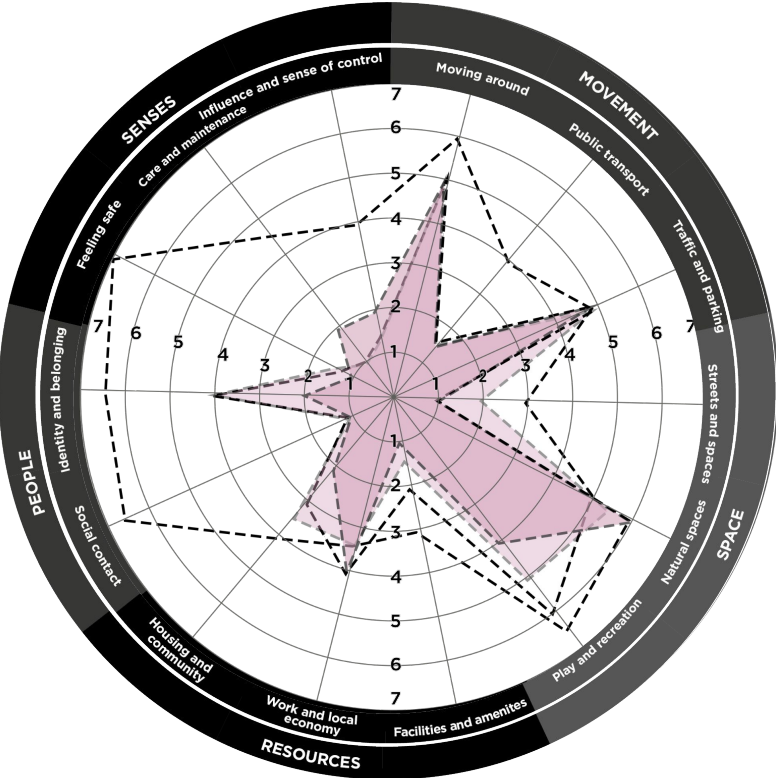
Young people contribution to the plan



# 6. Youth Focused Workshops



Place standard assessment 8 - 11 years old



Place standard assessment 12 - 17 years old

## 7. Live Engagement Days

61  
conversations

### Introduction

The live engagement sessions took place on the 30th and 31st of July in the Shambles Market and the Mall. It was an occasion to involve and raise awareness in the plan to people that otherwise would not engage in the public decisions. The sessions consisted of information sharing about the plan, asking people to identify their top priorities for the city, and getting people's feedback on the four aspirations. Engagement boards were created and installed at both locations between 10am and 4pm each day.

The engagement team also dropped in at a Park run on 31st July in the Palace Demesne. Here leaflets were distributed about the plan and the website, and conversations took place with interested residents.

A DIY corner was set up for the children to draw and write their opinions on the city. Some business owners and traders were

informally engaged through drop ins and informal conversations at the two locations about.

### Who responded?

People who interacted were mainly older people (60+) , families with young children visiting the Mall, dog walkers, and a number of people who had been informed and had an interest in the plan e.g. members of the Portadown Armagh Railway Society.

### What did they say?

The key issues identified by people were:

- Safer streets for pedestrians
- Cleaner streets and better maintained public realm
- Traffic congestion and parking along English Street
- Need for more facilities for active lifestyles
- The issues of traffic around the Mall
- Need for more green space in the city



## 7. Live Engagement Days

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- Need for better facilities for people with disabilities in the city centre e.g. changing facilities for parents with children with disabilities
- Need for the council to engage citizens on key decisions about the city
- Making better use of the Mall
- Need for more functional and vibrant green spaces - more animation
- Design of streets for physical impairments

Safer streets was the priority that was most commented on during the engagement sessions. Comments included:

- One way traffic systems do not work
- City has gotten dirty - the footpath out to Navan Fort needs better maintained
- Stick to the basics, keep the city clean and focus on basic maintenance
- Streets should be more clean
- People need educated for clean streets to be possible

- Waste and rubbish is a problem, wheelie bins along the streets detract from the conservation area
- The Mall is surrounded by cars and is unsafe to cross to
- At night some streets need lighting

### Aspirations for the city

In terms of a green city, people asked for more wildflowers and less formal bedding and planting schemes, planting of more trees, and introducing more wildlife into the city. People really value the green spaces already in the city, but feel that they could be doing more to increase biodiversity in the city.

For a connected city, many feel let down that the ring road has never been built and this is causing a lot of congestion in the city centre. People felt that connectivity could link everything together in the plan, similar to the community plan.

People felt that the city could be more engaging for new residents coming in to the city, could

have more for young people to do. Participants also said that we should be telling more stories about the monastic history of the city, more engagement by the council and volunteers of the churches. People also want to see more cross community efforts in schools and clubs.

For a healthy city, people pointed out the difficulties getting around on foot, the congestion and air pollution problems around the Mall and dealing with the bumper to bumper traffic that was observed during the engagement day on the Mall.

The Portadown and Armagh Railway Society pointed out the wide ranging benefits that a restored railway would bring to the city, and cited all of the aspirations as being able to be advanced in terms of health, prosperity, connectivity, engagement and sustainability that could be enhanced through a reopened train line to Belfast. There was concern expressed over the government's commitment to this idea.



## 7. Live Engagement Days



## 7. Live Engagement Days

### Engagement Board used during the live engagement

Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon  
Community Planning Partnership

the  
**ARMAGH PLACE PLAN**  
Celebrating Our Stars and Stories

**Help shape the future  
of your city!**

The Armagh City Place Shaping Plan is a new way of planning for the city that puts people at the heart of it. We want to hear from everyone about what makes Armagh special, and how it could be improved.

**Step 1**  
Use the stickers to vote on your top 3 priorities for the city

**Step 2**  
Choose one of the 4 aspirations of the plan that you think is most important for this plan to deliver.

The plan is a project of the Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership and is managed by the Council. Through the plan, partners and the community are being invited to work together to create a vision for this city that puts people and wellbeing at the heart of it.

There are lots of ways to get involved including live pop ups across the city, surveys and online sessions. Visit [stephingsarmagh.com](http://stephingsarmagh.com) to find out more about the plan and ways to be involved!

**Tackling climate change**

**Bringing nature into the city**

**Reducing inequality**

**Creating jobs and employment**

**Improving health and wellbeing**

**Connecting the city physically, digitally and socially**

**Armagh people being involved in decisions about their city**

**Safer streets**

**Creating a walkable city**

**A Green City**

**A Connected City**

**An Engaging City**

**A Healthy City**

**Step 1** What are your top priorities for Armagh?

**Step 2** Which of the four plan aspirations above do you think is most important?

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Council

Greater North Down Council

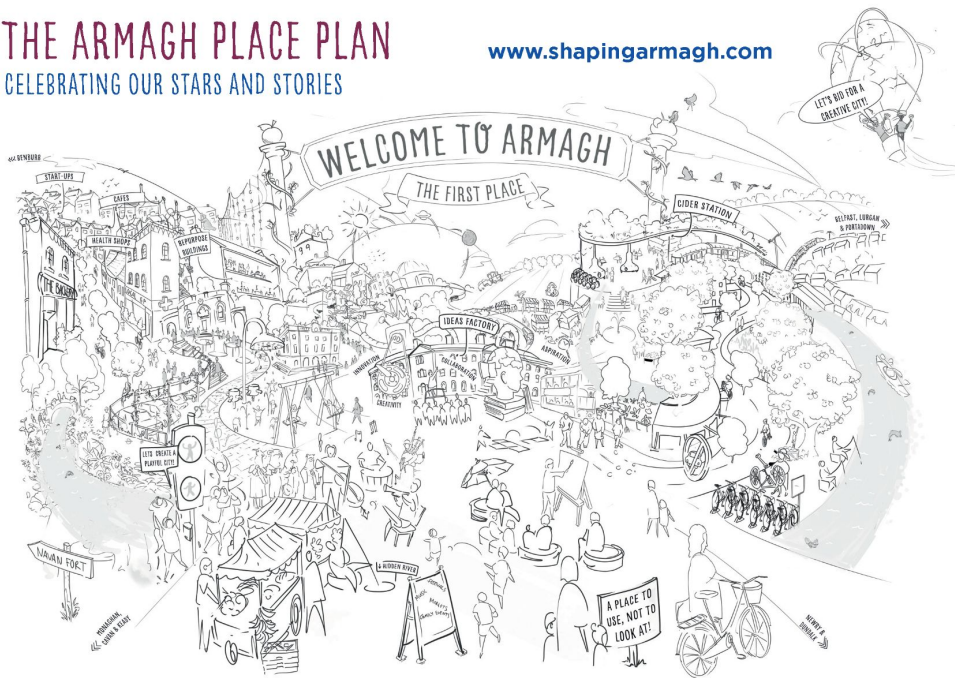
Housing Executive

USI



Over 500 leaflets were distributed at the live engagement days on 30th and 31st July

[www.shapingarmagh.com](http://www.shapingarmagh.com)



## 7. Public Consultation Findings

### Introduction

The formal twelve week public consultation period took place from Nov '21 to Jan '22. This included a live engagement day in The Mall Shopping Centre, a public online survey, 4 online workshops that took place at various times of the day to accommodate different schedules, ezines and leaflet distribution.

### Who responded?

85 people completed the survey, whilst 31 people attended the workshops and approximately 30 conversations were held face to face during this time.

Of those that responded in the survey...

- 8 were local businesses
- 12 were members of a community group, club or society
- 60 were residents of Armagh
- 7 were students, and
- 10 were visitors.

\* numbers above do not equal 85 above due to double counting.



## 7a. Survey

### Introduction

A community wide survey was carried out in late 2021 to gain feedback on the draft plan and to prioritise the key actions contained within it.

The survey ran online from 1st Nov 21 to 23rd Jan 2022 made available on the council's own engagement platform, citizen space. 85 online responses were received, and a summary of the findings are set out below.

### Who responded?

The gender ratio of respondents was male 54%, female 46%. Below is information on the location, age and community background of the respondents.

### What did people say?

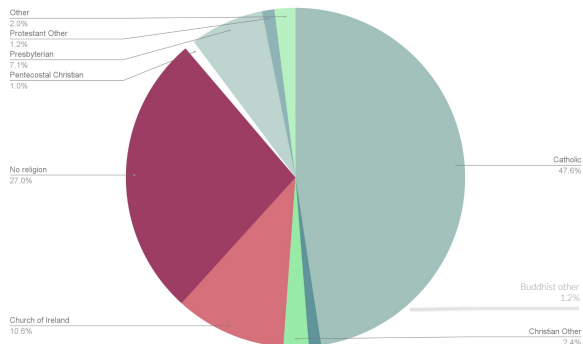
People were asked a range of questions primarily focusing on the following:

- Prioritisation of the outcomes and the key strategies
- Prioritisation of the actions
- Measuring progress within the plan
- Involvement in the Plan delivery

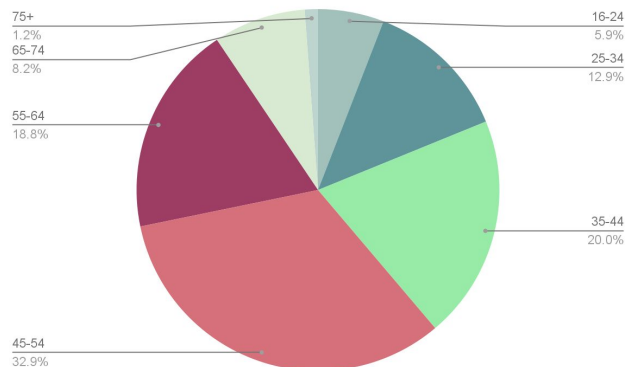
### The outcomes

69 out of 85 respondents agreed with the four outcomes for the plan. Out of those who did not (16) 10 people commented based on the current situation in Armagh (e.g. is Armagh currently a green, connected, engaging and healthy city?), rather than commenting as future outcomes of the Plan. One person suggested an outcome of 'vibrant city' should be considered. With these discounted, this leaves a validation rate of 92% which is very satisfactory and a testament to the codesign process.

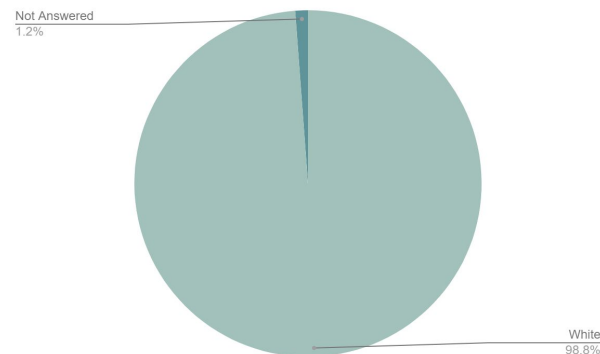
Religion



Age



Ethnicity



## 7a. Survey

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### The outcome strategies

The highest prioritised outcome strategies based on the percentage of people who placed them in the top 3 categories of prioritisation are:

#### A CONNECTED CITY

Bring dead and vacant space back into use (69%)

#### A GREEN CITY

Reducing air pollution (60%).

#### AN ENGAGING CITY

Adapting former retail units for new uses (56%).

#### A HEALTHY CITY

Creating inclusive venues and spaces (51%)

### Selection of comments made on the outcome strategies

*The high number of vacant shops in the city is astonishing attracting new business and restaurants must be a priority. I would like to see ABC encourage a wider range of retailers into the city with a particular emphasis on sole traders, perhaps lower rates and positive incentives would help as well...*

*Establishment of better routes for walking and cycling, without competing with vehicles, especially the ones that connect culturally important sites.*

*Reduce the traffic congestion and it'll make a world of difference with the air pollution.*

*Armagh should become a city of sporting excellence*

*Events to celebrate the arts, literature and music of Armagh. More inclusive social events which bring the people of the city together to celebrate our shared cultural heritage.*

*Make better use of city spaces especially The Mall and Palace Demense for family events etc.*

*A better-developed town centre is needed. Less focus on retail and more focus on hospitality and nightlife. The town goes dead after 5pm!*

*A focus on city-centre living, together with improved public transport (most notably the restored rail link) will lead to an overall improvement not only in air quality but quality of life. The Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo has initiated a project referred to as the '15 minute city', where everyone should have access to facilities within a 15 minute walk of their home.*

## 7a. Survey

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### Top 5 actions that the most no. of survey respondents strongly agreed with-

J1 Explore potential benefits of reinstating a rail link to Armagh (76%).  
IA7 Armagh Townscape Heritage Initiative. Funding scheme to bring a number of derelict heritage buildings back into use (69%).  
IA1 Bring the Gaol building back into an alternative use (67%).  
G3 Empty to Occupied – funding for regeneration of empty shops (67%).  
J2 Integrate case for ring road into a sustainable transport strategy for the city (64%).

### Top 5 most undecided actions of survey respondents-

IA4 Explore establishing a social supermarket in Armagh (27%).  
H3 City stewardship through a streetscape design guide (26%).  
IA5 Find a city centre location for Armagh City Library (25%).  
IA2 Build a leisure village at Mullinure (24%).  
GT1 Young people design gateways to the city (22%).

### Actions that most people either agreed or strongly agreed with were:

G3 Empty to Occupied – funding for regeneration of empty shops (95%).  
IA7 Armagh Townscape Heritage Initiative. Funding scheme to bring a number of derelict heritage buildings back into use (93%).  
G1 Deliver place making projects to enliven dead spaces like Armagh's alleyways and back lands (95%).  
H2 Make Market Square and the high street more people-centred (91%).  
J1 Explore potential benefits of reinstating a rail link to Armagh (91%).

### The most popular key actions for each spatial typology were;

**City Wide** - Deliver Local Full Fibre Network project in public buildings (84%)

**Icons and Anchors** - Armagh Townscape Heritage Project and Heritage Framework to bring vacant heritage buildings back into use. (95%)

**Journeys** - Explore potential benefits of reinstating a rail link to Armagh. (91%)

**High Street** - Make Market Square and the high street people-centred. (90%)

**Gateways** - Young people design gateways to the city (65%)

**Open Spaces** - Get Places Moving (89%)

**Grey Spaces** - Empty to Occupied (95%)



## 7a. Survey

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**When asked what else we should be measuring in the city, some comments included;**

- Active uses of buildings in the city centre
- Business start up and business closure rates
- Car park use and income
- Insects, pollinators
- Light pollution
- Litter and dog fouling
- Mental and physical wellbeing data
- Nature of jobs and average salaries
- Night time economy data
- Parking spaces and usage
- Passing through traffic
- Pollution incidents
- Private owned housing rent
- Public transport usage statistics
- Regular surveying of residents
- Speeding fines
- Success in the borough eg awards
- Traffic flow and congestion
- Tree numbers
- Vehicle counters inc other modes of transport
- Visitor accommodation
- Visitors to the visitarmagh.com website
- Volume of litter picked from the street

**When asked are there any other organisations not listed under the actions that have an important role to play in the delivery of the Armagh Place Plan, the following answers included;**

- Angling clubs
- Armagh City Centre Management
- Armagh Old Boys,
- Artists and crafters
- Band singers
- Blackwater Community Barge
- Businesses and SME's
- Churches
- Community groups and associations
- Cultural groups,
- Disability groups
- Friends of the Folly River
- History Society
- Keepers of the Callan River
- Minority faith communities
- Schools
- Sports clubs and groups
- The Mall Trustees
- Translink
- Ulster Scots and Irish Language Culture
- Universities
- Voluntary youth groups

## 7b. Online Workshops

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### Main findings from business workshop 9th Nov

- Adapt the high streets of Armagh with more variety
- Anchor stores to draw in other business and investment
- Armagh tourism is it joined up, marketed correctly. eg Culture packages, Sports packages
- Engage with large businesses and find out what the large businesses need to develop in Armagh
- Night time economy was a concern, loss of restaurants
- Opportunity to look at Armagh as a good place to live (inc living over the shops) and work remotely
- Promotion of the market and attract new customers to the market, great facilities.
- Traffic and congestion is a problem

### Main findings from the CVSE workshop on 9th Nov

- Built environment: protect and maintain the public realm. Stakeholder interests and responsibilities for streets eg DfI, utilities, council etc.
- Improve the cultural tourism offering and sport tourism offering in the city
- Streets at night: years ago people lived above the shops and in the streets, custodians of the streets at night, less opportunity for ASB at night.
- Vacant shops: a lot of vacancy in the city, there are no lights or life in the streets at night
- Tourism: is there enough tourism accommodation in Armagh?
- Regular and safe public transport in and out of the city serving towns, villages and rural areas.

### Main findings from the public workshop on 12th January

- Armagh has good offering eg museums, libraries etc
- Cathedral gardens are available and could be better used eg schools
- Could make better use of city centre properties and spaces.
- Evening business - more restaurants and business openings needed, pre covid the city had an array of different restaurants with bespoke menus
- Importance of maintaining heritage and craft skills for the next generations
- Need for a ring road
- Plan themes to chime with wellbeing and sustainability.
- The Mall, significant flows of traffic and noise can be disruptive.
- Traffic volumes make it very difficult for an even to be run on

### Main findings from the public workshop on 18th January

- Armagh is sport rich, more sport in the Mall
- Attract jobs and employment to the city through new business eg offices
- Built environment – need to value the assets in Armagh and street maintenance
- Importance of play in the community, street play, pop up play and urban spaces
- Infrastructure - need for a link road and a rail link
- More heritage in the plan
- Need to zone land for industrial development
- Proactively work with stakeholders DFI, HSE and the Health Trust
- Promote the heritage/culture/arts stars and stories
- Sustainability in Armagh, using green spaces. There may be and opportunity to work with schools environmental committees/groups
- Temporary pedestrianisation (in the evenings as pilot)



## INTERESTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARMAGH,

for further information or  
to get involved with the  
delivery of an action?

### **We want to hear from you.**

Please contact the **Community  
Planning Department** at  
Armagh City, Banbridge and  
Craigavon Borough Council



0300 0300 900



[communityplanning@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:communityplanning@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)



[armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](http://armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)