

Our Balbriggan 2019 - 2025 Rejuvenation Plan

# New Thinking Fresh Leadership Ambitious Initiatives



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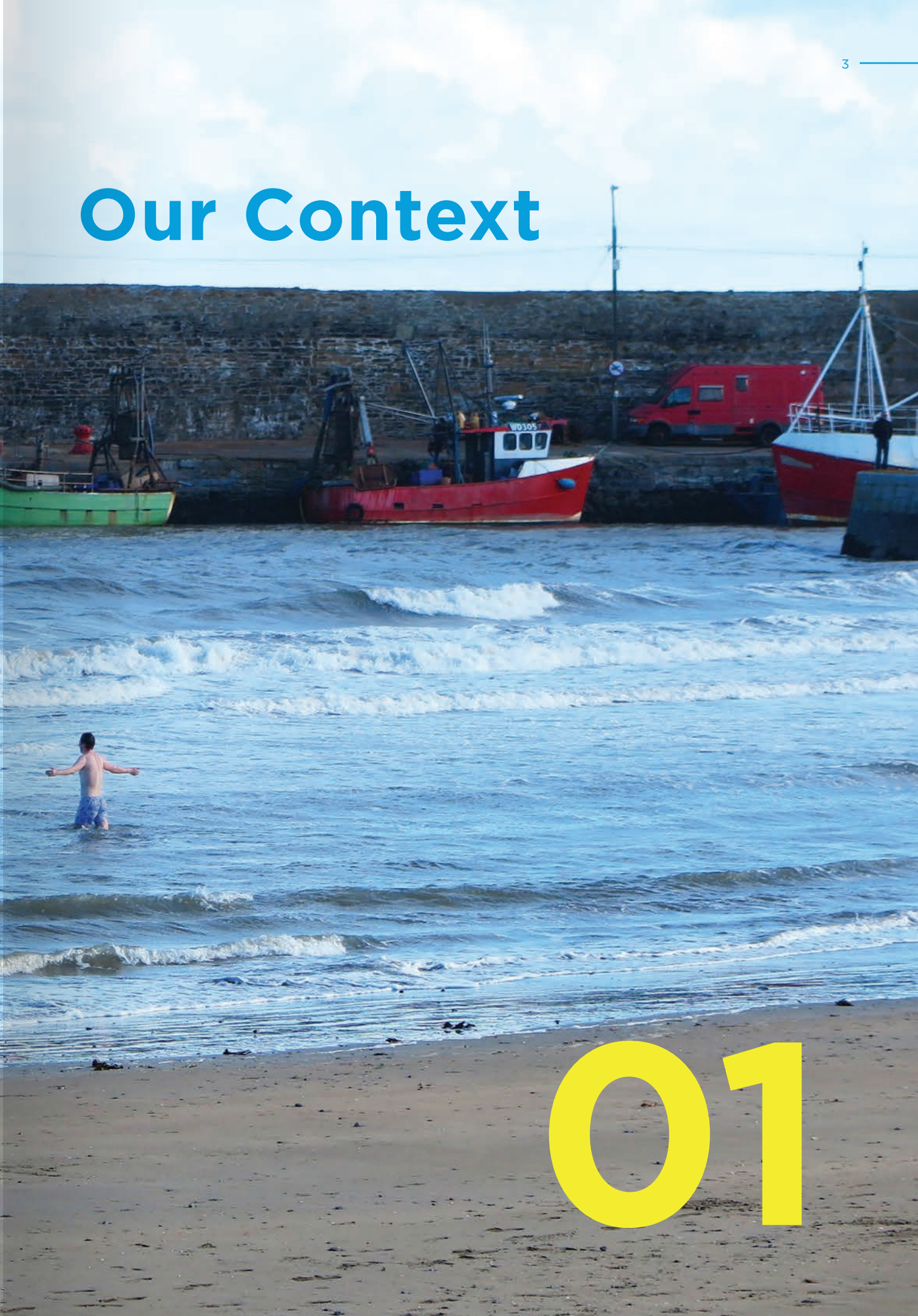
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# Our Context



01



BALBRIGGAN

M1

FINGAL

SWORDS

DUBLIN  
AIRPORT

M2

N3

M50

R122

HOWTH

DUBLIN CITY  
CENTRE

N4

N7

IRISH SEA



North  
Atlantic  
Ocean

Irish Sea

### PURPOSE

To connect with residents, public services and business in a meaningful way. To create positive change and build a prosperous, vibrant, inclusive town that is united, ambitious and committed.

**‘Balbriggan is at a critical moment, get this right and a new vibrant resilient Balbriggan can be achieved.’**

**Neil McInroy,**  
CEO, Centre for  
Local Economic  
Strategies,  
Manchester, UK



### THE RATIONALE

Balbriggan has witnessed rapid expansion of new housing areas and a retail centre outside the traditional town core during the 2000s. It is now the youngest and one of the most ethnically diverse towns in Ireland (Census, 2016). Amenities have not kept pace with population growth, the local economy and main street have struggled, perception of place is poor, and previous plans have failed to be implemented.

There is now a need for a sustained focus on rejuvenating the original town centre and main street and how they relate to the expanded town, with a view to creating a more attractive, connected place that people want to live and spend time in for work, shopping or recreational purposes. Further, there is a need to focus on community driven renewal by strengthening the relationships between the public, social and commercial economy, to create a more resilient, sustainable Balbriggan.



**Brian MacCraith,**  
President DCU,  
Chairperson  
Balbriggan  
Leadership Group

In agreeing to oversee the development of a socio-economic strategy for Balbriggan, I first had to satisfy myself that the approach that would be taken would meet the expectations expressed to me by the people of the town, and that the strategy would lead to real and sustained transformation.

That necessary desire and commitment was evident to me in the Chief Executive and management team of Fingal County Council, the locally elected members and representatives from civic, business, public and social life, whose sense of purpose, commitment and leadership made my job easier and guaranteed a positive outcome.

The voice of the people of Balbriggan was to the forefront throughout the process. They have proved themselves more than equal to the task of grasping the opportunity for change, and I look forward to their continued involvement in shaping Ireland’s youngest and most diverse large town.

The journey so far has been one of engagement, ambition, creativity, and intent. The next stages will reveal a town transformed, harnessing its economic, physical and human advantages and enabling an excellent quality of life for all of its people.

I remain committed to overseeing the implementation of the plan in what will be an exciting and uplifting time for Balbriggan and its citizens.



**Paul Reid,**  
Chief Executive,  
Fingal County Council

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that in the not too distant future Balbriggan, will become more widely known again, as a fantastic place to live, work and do business.

Balbriggan’s youthfulness, natural amenity, heritage, diversity and location are just some of the qualities which make it great.

In my role as Chief Executive I am proud to have worked with the elected members to secure a significant €20 million capital investment towards the town’s rejuvenation. When the total spend across council departments is taken into account I expect this amount will be closer to €50 million by 2021. Fingal County Councils commitment will not end there; I expect strong leadership and financial support will continue beyond this period again.

The people of Balbriggan met the challenge to ‘Get Involved’, and engaged in their thousands, influencing the plans for the town. I expect their continued involvement working alongside Fingal County Council and leaders from academic, business, civic and public life will result in many more positive changes.

I look forward to watching progress throughout the lifetime of this plan, 2025 and beyond.

'It was really cool that the public could have their say about what was going to happen in Balbriggan.'

Eve Wall



# Some Key Facts & Figures

**BALBRIGGAN HAS BEEN ONE OF IRELAND'S FASTEST GROWING TOWNS**

This once homogeneous and close knit Irish Town of approximately 8,500 inhabitants (Census, 1996) has grown rapidly in the intervening years to a present day town settlement population of 21,722 (Census, 2016) or 24,611 if the full electoral districts of Urban and Rural are considered.

**21,722**

**TOWN SETTLEMENT POPULATION (CENSUS 2016)**

That's an increase of **194%** since 1991

**24,611**

**BALBRIGGAN RURAL & URBAN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (CENSUS 2016)**

In the same period (1991-2016):

Ireland's population grew by **35%**  
Fingal's grew by **94%**

**BALBRIGGAN IS THE YOUNGEST LARGE TOWN IN IRELAND**

**30.8 YEARS**

**AVERAGE AGE OF RESIDENT IN BALBRIGGAN**

By comparison the average age is:

**37**  
YEARS NATIONALLY

**34**  
YEARS IN FINGAL

**30.5%**

**OF THE POPULATION ARE BETWEEN 0-14 YEARS**

**75%**

**OF BALBRIGGAN'S POPULATION IS 44 YEARS OF AGE OR YOUNGER - NATIONALLY THIS FIGURE IS 63%**

A detailed Socio-economic profile, including small area analysis, is available at [www.balbriggan.ie](http://www.balbriggan.ie)

BALBRIGGAN IS ONE OF THE MOST CULTURALLY DIVERSE TOWNS IN IRELAND

**28%**

OF BALBRIGGAN'S POPULATION WAS BORN OUTSIDE OF IRELAND

That's significantly higher than the national figure of 13%

BALBRIGGAN'S LOCAL ECONOMY IS RELATIVELY WEAK COMPARED TO OTHER FAST GROWING TOWNS

**0.411:1**

JOBS : RESIDENT WORKER RATIO

Settlement Name	Population 2016	Resident Workers	Total Jobs	Jobs: Resident Workers
Balbriggan	21,722	8,362	3,436	0.411
Navan	30,173	12,190	8,970	0.736
Portlaoise	22,050	8,438	8,410	0.997
Swords	39,248	19,531	15,338	0.785

Source: Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework

‘Balbriggan is our home. When we go to China we go on holiday and then we come back home.’

Jiaying Wang and Jade Wang



# Our Vision





**Building on its rich history and its diverse and growing talent base, Balbriggan will be an ambitious, inclusive and prosperous community, harnessing its economic and physical advantages and enabling an excellent quality of life for all its people.**



# Our Process

# 03

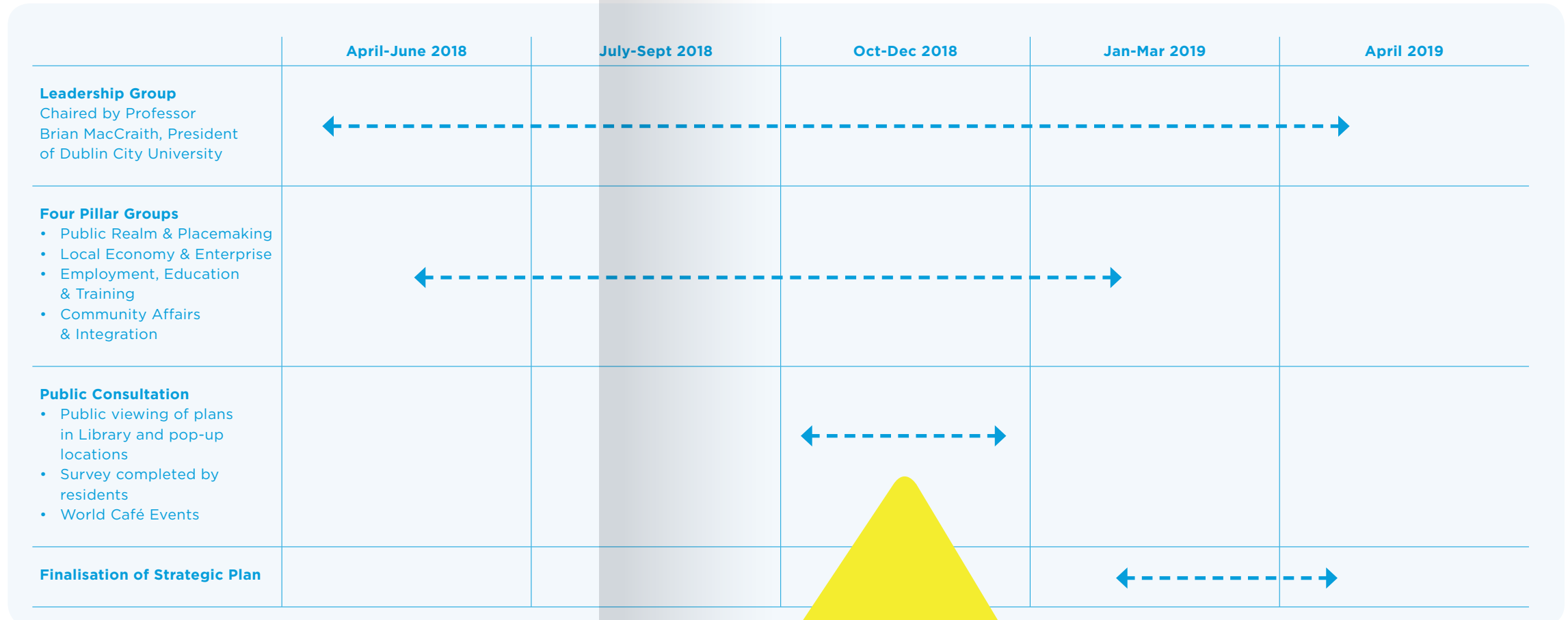
# Our Process

Ambitious timelines from the outset, ensured a strong momentum.

The leadership group met monthly from May-Oct 2018 and bi-monthly thereafter.

The four pillar groups, led by expert chairs, brought together over 65 participants from business, public bodies and community groups during the summer. The groups examined the town's strengths and weaknesses, where it was in the present, it's past, it's current position and the potential challenges and opportunities ahead. The workshops generated over 60 hours of insights, contributions were invited from the UK's Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Ireland's National Economic Social Council and an EU expert in placemaking.

A final workshop was held in February 2019, with stakeholders from all four pillars. This event helped define the plans higher level objectives and actions.



	Tuesday 27th Nov	Wednesday 28th Nov	Thursday 29th Nov	Friday 30th Nov	Saturday 1st Dec	Sunday 2nd Dec	Monday 3rd Dec	Tuesday 4th Dec
<b>World Café Events Workshops</b>		<b>7pm - 9:30pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel		<b>9:30pm - 12pm</b> Balbriggan Schools Event				<b>7pm - 9pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel
<b>Consultation Events</b>	<b>2pm - 5pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel	<b>2pm - 5pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel	<b>5pm - 9pm</b> Flemington Community Centre	<b>5pm - 9pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel	<b>2pm - 5pm</b> Millfield Shopping Centre	<b>2pm - 5pm</b> Millfield Shopping Centre	<b>5pm - 9pm</b> Castlelands Community Centre	<b>2pm - 5pm</b> Bracken Court Hotel
<b>Leafletting/Pop Up</b>	<b>6am - 8am &amp; 5:30pm - 7:30pm</b> Railway Station	<b>8am - 10am</b> Railway Station		<b>7am - 9am</b> Railway Station				

Survey results and World Café event findings are available at [www.balbriggan.ie](http://www.balbriggan.ie)

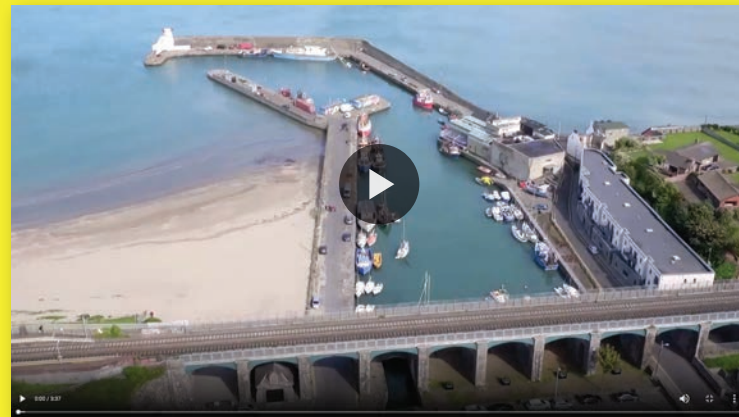
Our Balbriggan consultation area was available in Balbriggan Library throughout the online survey period 26th November - 14th December.

# Our Balbriggan

The notion of 'Our Balbriggan' first took root at workshops in the summer where a local resident representative spoke with affection and pride about the term 'Our', a phrase much used in the past as a term of endearment, kinship and belonging.

The term was co-opted by the Leadership Group and Our Balbriggan was born, with the call to action: Imagine the Possibilities - Get Involved.

The design, materials and social media platforms created to accompany the brand made an immediate connection with local people. A call to action for people to get involved, complete the survey and influence the shape of the town, "Our Balbriggan" into the future. The campaign generated significant national and local media.



**Join the Conversation**

Attend one of our World Café events in the Bracken Court Hotel Wed 28th Nov Or Tuesday 4th Dec 7pm - 9:30pm by Emailing [ourbalbriggan@Fingal.ie](mailto:ourbalbriggan@Fingal.ie)



**View the Plans at the Drop in Centres**

Bracken Court Hotel, the Library and your Local Community Centre



**Share across your Social Media**



# Engagement

A public engagement took place between November 26th - December 14th, 2018. Through an online survey residents chose four ideas from a menu of different initiatives developed during the summer workshops. An undertaking was given that the results would inform and influence the emergent priorities, investments and plans for Balbriggan.

A total of 4,001 surveys completed. If you exclude those 11 or younger, approximately 25% of the town's residents participated. Over 140 adults and 60 school children participated in World Café events. Two events were open to the public and a third to schools.

The World Café events brought greater understanding and clarity to the survey results.

Hundreds of local people engaged in the process through conversations, at drop ins, interacting with the display materials and with Fingal County Council staff.

A total of 4,001 surveys completed, if you exclude those 11 or younger, approximately 25% of the towns residents participated.



World Café event 28th November, 2018





The rejuvenation scheme could help the harbour reach its full potential and ensure Balbriggan's rich fishing heritage is maintained.

Richard Guildea, 5th Generation Fisherman.

# In the Press



Tuesday, November 27, 2018



Tuesday, November 20, 2018



Tuesday, December 4, 2018



The Irish Times, Monday, November 26th, 2018



The Herald, Monday, November 26, 2018

# Results & Analysis

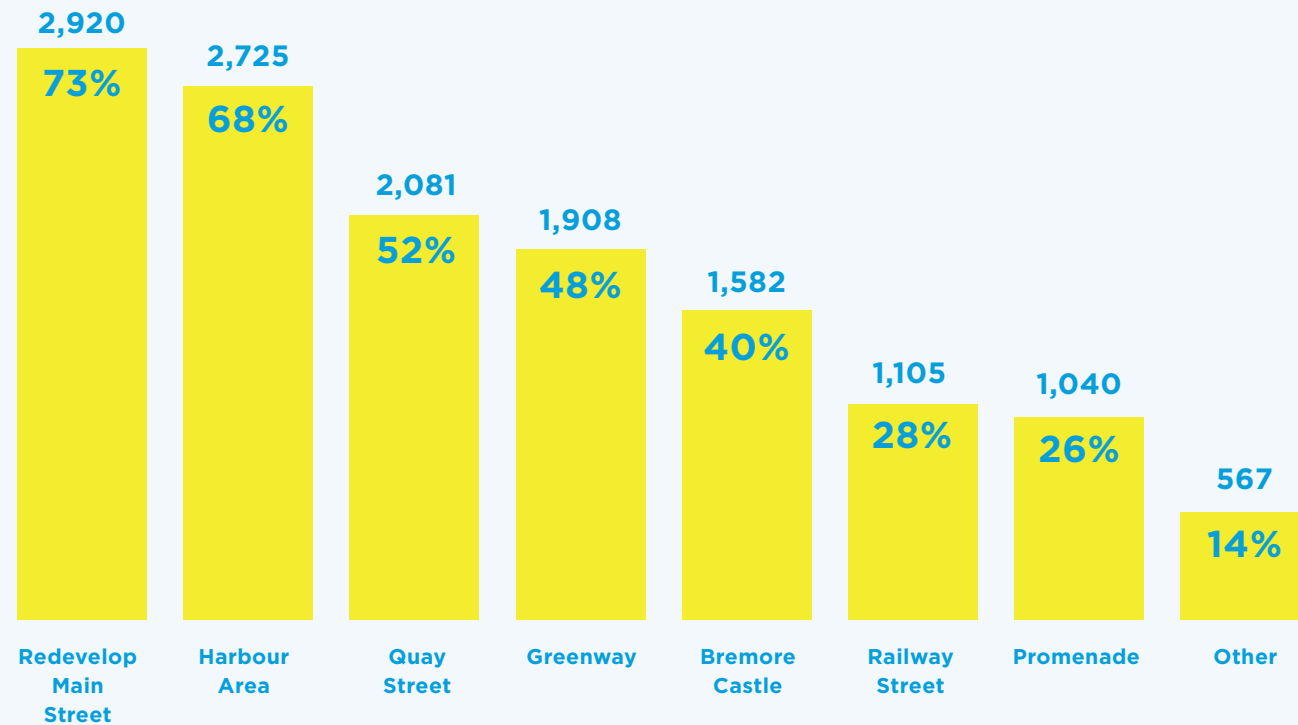
A comprehensive report on the online survey results and analysis of the World Cafe event findings is available on [www.balbriggan.ie](http://www.balbriggan.ie), what follows is a brief summary of both:

## Public Realm & Placemaking

### Q. WHAT PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS DO YOU THINK WILL BRING THE MOST BENEFITS TO OUR BALBRIGGAN

Redeveloping the heart of the Main Street, with 73% of participants placing this in their top 4 most preferred choices, followed by Reimagining the Harbour area (68%), Transforming Quay Street (52%) and the cycling and walking Coastal Greenway from Balbriggan to Skerries (48%).

An analysis of quantitative and qualitative data reveals investment in the physical landscape, streetscapes and social spaces is overwhelmingly seen as the most important, impactful and positive change that could happen for Balbriggan.



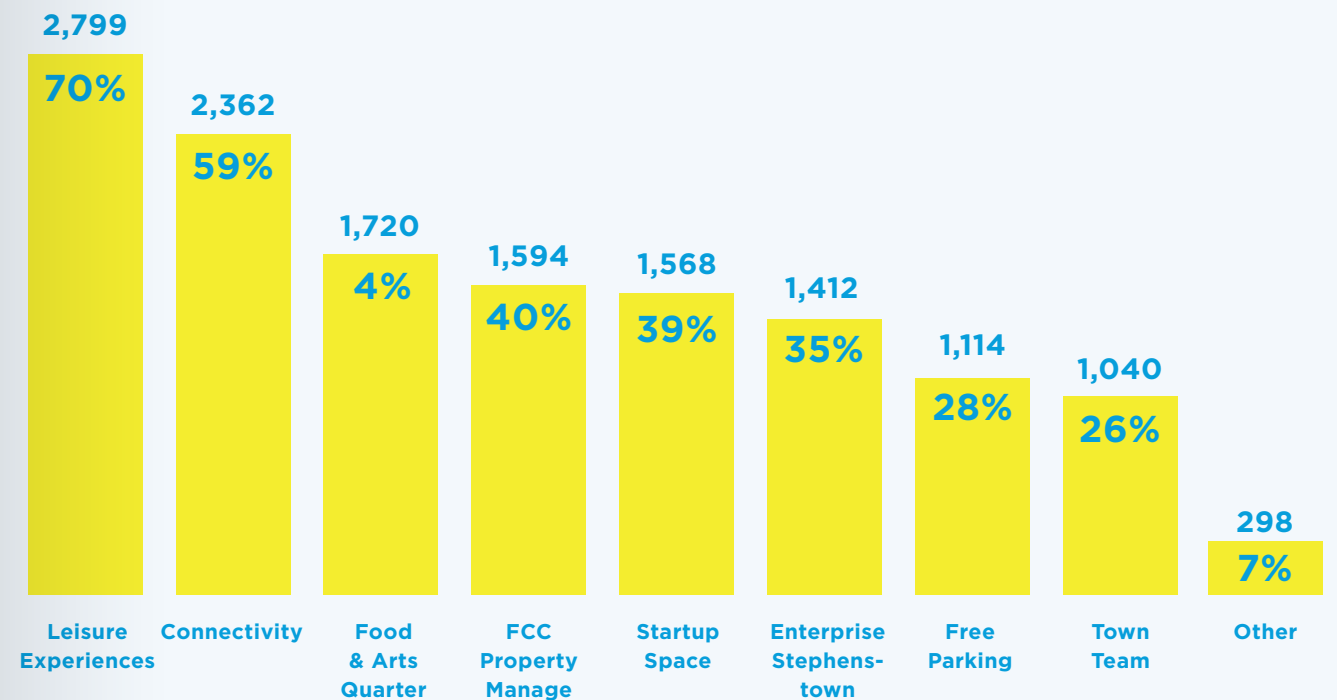
## Local Economy & Enterprise

### Q. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN IN OUR BALBRIGGAN TO HELP THE LOCAL ECONOMY DEVELOP AND GROW?

Developing quality leisure experiences based on the potential of the harbour, river, coastline and castles is viewed as the most important factor, gaining support from 70% of participants. This is followed by developing better connectivity between the harbour, beach and Quay Street area and the main street (59%), creating a food and arts quarter for the town (43%) and Fingal County Council taking a more proactive role in property management in the town centre (40%).

A deeper look at the data reveals the vast majority believe the opportunity to grow the local economy resides largely in significant investments in the public realm. In addition there is strong support at the world cafés on growing more jobs in the Stephentown industrial area, developing new centrally located enterprise space and growth opportunities, in particular in the food and arts sectors.

Responses in this category are particularly vocal on the need for proactive land management and acquisition, leadership, accountability and dedicated personnel being assigned responsibility for the plan's implementation.



## Community Affairs & Integration

**Q. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN IN OUR BALBRIGGAN TO ENSURE A STRONG, INCLUSIVE PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL?**

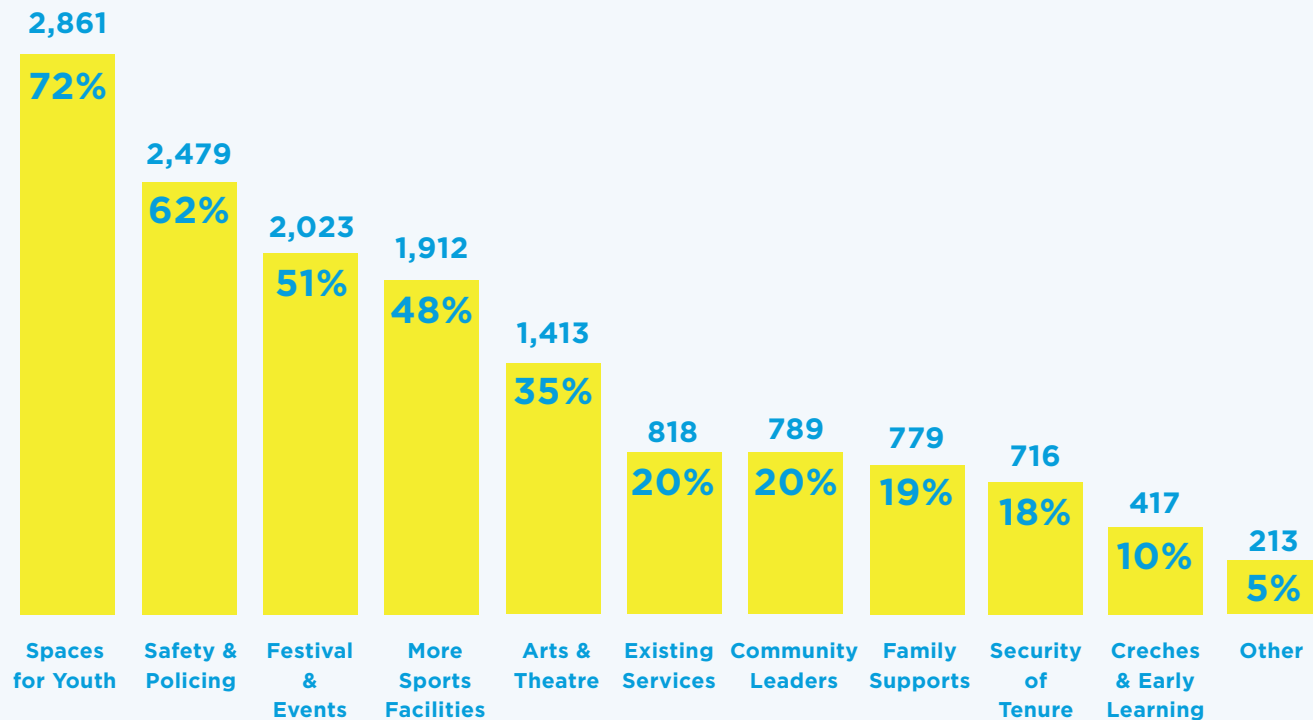
Social spaces for young people generated 72% support, increased safety and policing had 62% support, while more festivals and events to promote pride and greater integration in the town and more sports facilities had 51% and 48% support respectively.

The vast majority of respondents to this category indicated increased quality social spaces for young people to gather and mix is a vital element of a vibrant community,

alongside more Garda presence and investment in community policing initiatives. Further, a strong belief emerged at the world café workshops that Balbriggan needs to embrace and celebrate its difference, authenticity and diversity.

In the World Cafés, Balbriggan's youthfulness is seen as a major strength. More amenities and access to arts, music, theatre and sports were called for in response to this.

A feeling that the town felt divided, and a sense that a lack of integration and identification with local place, was holding back the town's potential was mentioned a number of times. Finally, better services and support for families is viewed as a complimentary way of improving outcomes for many of the town's residents, specifically childcare facilities and GP Out of Hours services feature quite strongly.



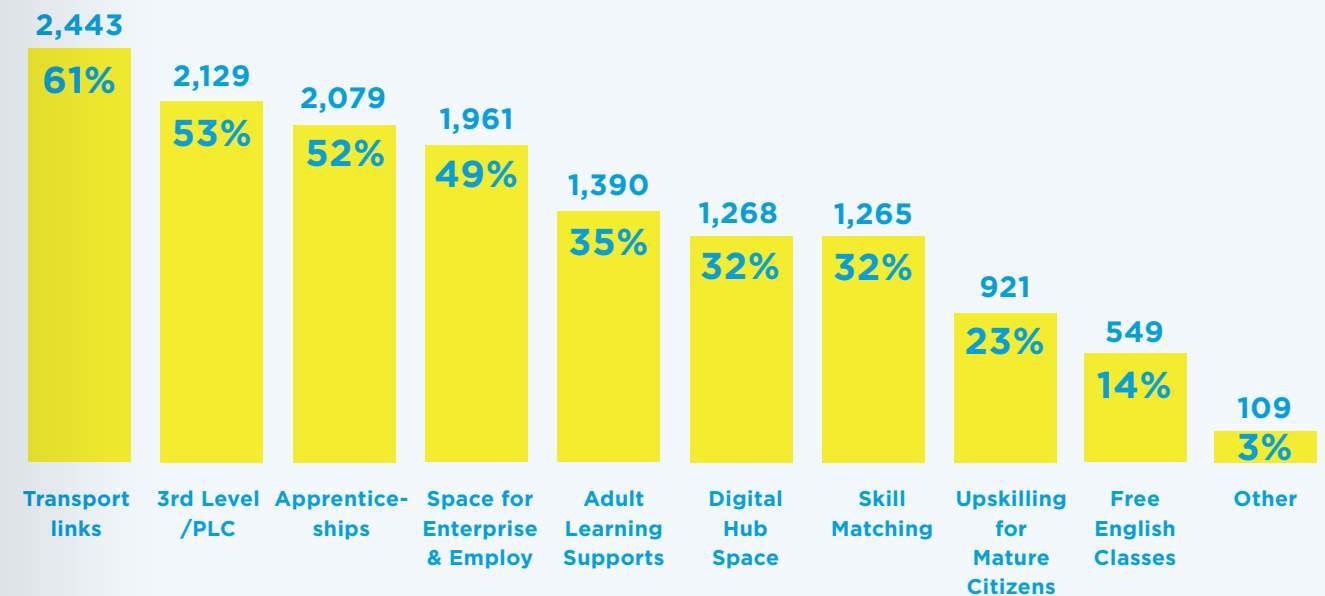
## Employment, Education & Training

**Q. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN IN OUR BALBRIGGAN TO BE ABLE TO ACCESS QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES? HOW CAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING SUPPORT THIS?**

Participants viewed improving transportation links as the most beneficial idea, with 61% including this idea in their top 4 choices. This is followed by the introduction of a 3rd level or post leaving certificate college (53%), encouraging apprenticeships and traineeships (52%) and a dedicated space in the town centre to support social enterprise and employment opportunities (49%).

Insights to responses in this category demonstrate a strong feeling that new and improved spaces in central locations are required to accommodate new enterprises and modes of working. Making Balbriggan less reliant on transport to access employment and higher level education is a strong aspiration for many.

Within the conversations on transport, greater connectivity in the town and with outlying villages and centres feature strongly, as do the need for greater connectivity and opportunities with digital technologies. Access to education and upskilling opportunities feature strongly, from the need for post leaving cert provision to third level options and matching training provision to the skill needs of local employers now and in the future.







# Our Strategy



Reimagined Viaduct & Quay Street area, impression indicative only.

04

# National Factors

The National Planning Framework's Project Ireland 2040, identifies compact growth as one of its strategic objectives for large towns. This objective is particularly relevant to Balbriggan, with a high level of population growth and a weak employment base, reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self sustaining.

The draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Eastern & Midlands 2019 - 2031 reinforces the need for towns similar to Balbriggan to 'catch-up' and reach an acceptable place standard. That growth where it occurs in population and housing terms, is incremental and commensurate with appropriate amenity and infrastructure.

'There is a category of historically larger town, mainly in Leinster, that experienced significant commuter based residential growth, but not jobs growth, in part due to the decline of traditional industrial and process-based employment. These include, for example, Balbriggan, Navan & Portlaoise'

Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, p.59.



# Local Factors

Past plans such as the Balbriggan Urban Design Framework (2004), Heart of Balbriggan Plan (2011), & Railway Street - A New Beginning (2012) made little progress for a variety of reasons. The strategic drivers they identified remain relevant:

- "Exploiting the coastal assets as an economic and social driver for the town by anchoring new recreational and leisure uses on the shore." (Urban Design Framework, 2004)
- "Creating 'people places' in the public spaces and on the streets of the town centre that balances the needs of all the users of the place, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, that are safe, well maintained and easy to navigate." (Heart of Balbriggan, 2011)
- Making places active by building on the strengths of existing uses while promoting new compatible uses, especially to address vacancy, and in particular by utilising public spaces for more outdoor events and festivals. (Heart of Balbriggan, 2011)
- Communicating the rich industrial history of streets like Railway Street to encourage passing by commuters to stop and spend some time on the streets in the town centre. (Railway Street - A New Beginning, 2012)

# Enabling Factors

Four key themes emerged from the people of Balbriggan and how they viewed the rejuvenation project. These insights will guide implementation moving forward.

## 01

The ideas within "public realm and placemaking", are key to successful rejuvenation and to making Balbriggan a "destination".

## 02

The development of a 'local economy' is vital as a means of creating social cohesion and local wealth building.

## 03

Celebrate the diversity of Balbriggan, own the difference. This is critical in forging a shared sense of place: An identity which is reflective of its unique history and heritage, but also fully embraces the new.

## 04

A self-sustaining and community driven renewal will require strong leadership and commitment from the local authority, involvement and partnership with residents and strong public services.

### IN ADDITION TO THESE, FOUR MORE KEY ENABLERS WERE IDENTIFIED:

**Resources:** A dedicated manager, with an adequately resourced and skilled staff team responsible to a board of management for the delivery of all aspects of a SMART implementation plan.

**Communications & Awareness:** Further develop the Our Balbriggan branding. Strengthen awareness of the town's unique selling points, celebrate success, promote community involvement, ownership and a stronger sense of place.

**Proactive Land & Property Management:** Acquire land and property (with sanction where necessary), including a review of public assets, with the purpose of more fully realising social and economic benefits for the town.

**Transport & Connectivity:** Improved sustainable transport network across the town, with specific reference to pedestrians and cyclists and connectivity between the town's center and residential areas. Improved linkages to and from the town particularly in relation to employment and further education.



‘What I love about Balbriggan is the people. Everyone is so friendly. There are great sporting facilities but we need more for the Arts.’

Colm Timmins

Comhairle Contae Fingal  
The Balbriggan Library Bell and clock mechanism, built in 1906 by W.H. Bailey & Co, Salford, removed from its external position on the building during renovation work in 1980, now restored and on permanent display at Balbriggan library. The return of the Bell was marked by a visit to the library by the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Mary McCamley on 12th October, 2017.

# Implementing Values

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Publish periodic updates on the implementation and delivery of the plan.

## CREATIVITY

Be bold, be imaginative and have the courage and vision to see things through.

## EMPOWERMENT

Enable meaningful opportunities for people to have their say, take initiative and bring forward solutions to make positive change in their communities.

## SIMPLICITY

Create clear and simple solutions and communicate these in a way that resonates with community.



# Implementing Principles

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Take positive steps to mitigate against the effects of climate change, promote cleaner and greener initiatives, sustainable practices and living.

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Take positive steps to support people and communities to protect and improve their health.

## INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY

Take positive steps to include and respect the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, faith and disability.

# Our Plan



05

# 20 things in the first 12 months

**01** Establish a place-making and social innovation fund.

**02** Develop an annual Education, Training & Skills festival.

**03** Increase the number of quality public festivals and events.

**04** Establish Ireland's first Grassroots Early Years Arts Festival (0-6yrs).

**05** Establish an "Our Balbriggan" town centre shop front with staff responsible for the delivery of the actions in the plan.

**06** Consult and publish a final masterplan for the development of Bremore Regional & Amenities Park.

**07** Improve George's (town) Square.

**08** Improve the number of public play and exercise facilities in the town.

**09** Progress the process of acquisitions of derelict or vacant lands, buildings or dwellings in the town centre area.

**10** Start refurbishing the RNLI Boat House.

**11** Install lighting inside the town's historic viaduct bridge.

**12** Secure inward investment and jobs into Stephenstown Industrial lands.

**13** Establish an "Our Balbriggan" operations team with responsibility for general upkeep including cleaner and greener environmental initiatives.

**14** Publish provisional design options for the Ardgillan to Bremore section of the Fingal Coastal Greenway.

**15** Improve the harbour area.

**16** Consult on a biodiversity plan for Balbriggan as a model of excellence.

**17** Subject to planning permission the tender for the construction of cycle routes on the Harry Reynolds Road to be completed, the beginning of an improved sustainable transport network across the town.

**18** Increase the number of commissioned public art installations.

**19** Upgrade Balbriggan Library, with a particular focus on digital technology and improved meeting spaces.

**20** Publish an "Our Balbriggan" directory of services.

# Placemaking

Placemaking is a process that draws on the ideas, resources and commitment of a local community along with urban design to create valued places. Once started, placemaking is on-going, with a community creating and developing the spaces where people pursue their business, recreational and social interests in a self-determined way.

For placemaking to be a success, the people of Balbriggan need to be involved.

The plan recognises that to turn places into attractive people spaces, the norms, values and assumptions assigned to some spaces need to be challenged. A placemaking

budget will support ideas which make use of urban design principles. A separate budget will be put in place to support a calendar of events and activities throughout the year in spaces throughout the town.

The Our Balbriggan programme office, located in the Town center will work in partnership with the community to ensure the principles of good place making are embedded in the delivery of the towns plan.



Redevelop the Heart of the Main Street

Placemaking capitalises on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

**There is a danger given the scale of change and need that the place development of Balbriggan gets bogged down in strategy and planning.**

Neil McInroy, CEO Centre for Local Economic Strategies, UK

**Placemaking is about quality of life, which helps attract talent and investment.**

Martin Shannahan, CEO, IDA Ireland



# Town Rejuvenation Map

- 1 - 2 YEARS** ①
- 2 - 4 YEARS** ②
- 2 - 4 YEARS** ③
- 2 - 4 YEARS** ④
- 2 - 4 YEARS** ⑤
- 2 - 4 YEARS** ⑥
- 3 - 5 YEARS** ⑦
- 3 - 5 YEARS** ⑧

## RAILWAY VIADUCT AND RNLI BOATHOUSE

Up lighting of viaducts all year round. Restoration and refurbishment of the RNLI Boathouse for social, community and commercial use. Develop social and enterprise offerings and place making events in Railway Viaduct arches.

## BREMORE CASTLE

Spectacular visitor attraction. The restored castle will be open to the public and large groups with a banqueting offering. The site will include exhibition space, possibility of a cookery school, beautifully restored walled garden with restaurant/café.

## REIMAGINE THE HARBOUR AREA

A leisure destination which makes the most of its scenic location, attracting walkers, visitors and diners. A place where people meet and linger and enjoy the authentic experience of a small working fishing port nestled into a walled harbour, overlooking a wonderful beach, connecting with a rejuvenated quay street, main street and other leisure and tourism opportunities.

## REDEVELOP THE HEART OF THE MAIN STREET

Create a new street edge by demolishing single residential dwelling, improving visibility and access to river, landscaped green, water features, pathways, planting and event space. Re-purpose existing derelict buildings, in line with overall plan, maintaining existing facade and features and attracting new social and economic enterprises.

## BREMORE REGIONAL AMENITY PARK

A premier regional park destination with landscaped features, walkways and world class play facilities. Amenity to include restoration of Martello Tower, Boathouse, public bath area and Bells Cottage. Elevated connectivity with beach ramps, cycle way, enhanced seating, art installations and kiosk space.

## TRANSFORM QUAY STREET

Widen footpaths and increase flow and visibility from main street to a transformed Quay Street, Viaduct and Harbour area. Maintain car park amenity, remove kerbing, enabling its usage in evenings and weekends as a quality civic and meeting space. Develop linear park featuring seating, planting and other green features along the river bank.

## RAILWAY STREET

Improvement scheme designed to provide better connectivity and flow between beach (new ramp), station and main street. Streetscape improvements, signage and refurbishment scheme.

## BALBRIGGAN TO SKERRIES GREENWAY

Initial focus on Castle (Bremore) to Castle (Ardgillan) Coastal Way. Cycle & Pedestrian facilities and upgrades to connecting residential areas. Expanding upwards to Gormanstown and below to Skerries.





# Public Realm

A place associated with an attractive environment and good quality of life for all its people

	Higher Level Objective	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Actions
1	<b>Redevelop the Heart of the Main Street (Dublin Street and Bridge Street): Opening up the centre of the town to Millpond Park and the Bracken River with new landscaped civic amenities.</b>	Fingal County Council	Inland Fisheries, Waterways Ireland, Community & Business Interests, Fingal Age Friendly County Initiative.	2019 - 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register derelict sites and move to Compulsory Purchase Order as required.</li> <li>Purchase key buildings and dwellings where required.</li> <li>Initiate Engineering/Architectural survey for Main Street, Millpond and Bracken River.</li> <li>Conduct a study of the Bracken River with a view to improving it as a bio-diverse ecosystem.</li> <li>Review and install appropriate street furniture, artwork, seating, bins, signage, public lighting, high quality surfaces and generous pedestrian and cycleways.</li> <li>Repurpose acquired sites and or initiate Public Private Partnership (PPP) to develop new Main Streetscape &amp; quality green space and public realm.</li> <li>Carry out a walkability survey as part of the Age Friendly Programme.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Reimagine the Harbour Area: Create an exciting, lively pier and waterfront, linking numerous leisure and tourism opportunities.</b>	Fingal County Council	Inland Fisheries, Leisure boat owners & Harbour Group Private & Community Interests	2019 - 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove abandoned boat wrecks, rusty equipment, containers etc.</li> <li>Appoint a Harbourmaster to manage fishery and leisure activities.</li> <li>Initiate engineering/architectural survey for Harbour and connectivity with surrounding area, including feasibility of building a breakwater to facilitate using the harbour/beach area for water leisure activities.</li> <li>Initiate improvement programme to include: resurfacing, barriers, service supply points (water, electricity), planting, lighting, signage and upgrades.</li> <li>Repurpose acquired sites and/or initiate Public Private Partnership (PPP) to develop new offerings and propositions in Harbour area.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Transform Quay Street: Develop a multi-purpose plaza area (with parking) a linear park alongside the Bracken River, featuring tiered seating for events, repurposing the Railway Viaduct arches into a vibrant market space, including redevelopment of the RNLI Boathouse.</b>	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	2019 - 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light up the Viaducts.</li> <li>Restore RNLI Boathouse, and repurpose as a public/commercial space.</li> <li>Complete 'Pocket' Playground facility.</li> <li>Initiate engineering/architectural survey for the Quay Street and surrounding area including redesign of car park area to enable multi-functional use (parking, events, markets, social space).</li> <li>Enhance greenery and planting and develop a linear green park alongside the Bracken River.</li> <li>Repurpose acquired sites and or initiate Public Private Partnership (PPP) to develop new social and enterprise offerings and propositions in Quay Street area.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Develop a Coastal Greenway (cycling and walkway): Balbriggan to Skerries.</b>	Fingal County Council	National Transport Authority, Department of Transport & Tourism & Sport, Irish Rail, Failte Ireland, Landowners & Community & Business Interests	2019 - 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate engineering survey report on route options.</li> <li>Consultation and acquisition of land and road widening where necessary.</li> <li>Issue tender for Balbriggan to Skerries section of the Fingal Coastal Greenway and complete.</li> </ul>
5	<b>Open Bremoore Castle and develop a new Regional &amp; Amenity Park: Develop a premier leisure and tourism experience with key points of interest and connectivity.</b>	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	2018 - 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masterplan for Bremoore Regional &amp; Amenity Park, including Bathhouse, Boathouse, Bells Cottage and Martello Tower (connectivity to Harbour &amp; Beach including possibility of a boardwalk integral part of surveying).</li> <li>Restore bandstand.</li> <li>Develop playground beside Martello Tower.</li> <li>Issue tender and complete Bremoore Regional &amp; Amenity Park.</li> <li>Issue tender and complete Bremoore Castle.</li> </ul>
6	<b>Revamp Railway Street: Improve the historical train station and Station Master's House and its immediate access area to create a vibrant public, social and commercial space.</b>	Fingal County Council & Irish Rail	Community & Business Interests	2020 - 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission management study of traffic flow.</li> <li>Survey buildings in the vicinity for possible acquisition and CPO.</li> <li>Initiate improvement scheme in vicinity to include improved seating, shelter, planting, lighting and paint scheme.</li> <li>Redesign railway carpark, streetscape and signage.</li> <li>Improve access to beach by installing pedestrian ramp from Railway station.</li> </ul>

# Grow the Local Economy

## A strong, vibrant, prosperous local economy

	Higher Level Objective	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Actions
1.a	<b>Enterprise:</b> Actively develop quality commercial and leisure experiences based on the harbour, river, coastline (greenway) and castles (Bremore & Ardgillan).	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the potential for commercial and leisure propositions, arising from public investment, maximise the benefits to the local economy, jobs and community gain.</li> </ul>
1.b	<b>Enterprise:</b> More space for startups & small business and new space for social enterprise.	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing vacant space for size and appropriateness.</li> <li>Actively seek and repurpose where feasible space for entrepreneurs, startups, social enterprise and small &amp; medium business in the town centre.</li> <li>Further develop Balbriggan Enterprise and Training Centre (BEAT, Stephenstown) space and services.</li> </ul>
1.c	<b>Enterprise -</b> Develop digital infrastructure, technology and skills.	Fingal County Council	Magnet Networks, Chamber of Commerce, Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase digital technologies in new and existing settings including the library, enterprise centre and training and educational settings.</li> <li>Develop a dedicated Maker Space, a collaborative space for making, learning, exploring and sharing with a focus on high tech.</li> <li>Maximise the opportunities associated with improved digital infrastructure for the local economy and employment.</li> </ul>
1.d	<b>Enterprise:</b> Enhance and promote supports for entrepreneurs.	Fingal County Council, Local Enterprise Office, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	Empower, LEADER, Rural Development programme Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out increased information and support services to potential entrepreneurs with focus on sectors identified in Skills Strategy and arts, food and hospitality.</li> <li>Increase the programme of supports available annually to support the development of Small and Medium enterprises, with targeted supports for Black and Minority Ethnic communities and young people.</li> </ul>
1.e	<b>Enterprise:</b> Grow Arts & Food Sectors.	Fingal County Council	Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing vacant space for size and appropriateness to establish an Arts and Food quarter.</li> <li>Actively seek, and repurpose where feasible, work space for Artists and Food enterprises.</li> <li>Develop an annual (ethnic) food festival.</li> <li>Develop an annual arts (cultural) festival (see 2.a People &amp; Place, Higher Level Objective for more information).</li> </ul>
2	<b>Industry:</b> Attract new employers and jobs and expand existing business.	Fingal County Council	Chamber of Commerce, IDA Fingal County Council, Department of Employment and Social Protection, Local Enterprise Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract business to the newly serviced 54 acre lands by the new Stephenstown Link Road.</li> <li>Upgrade access roads including old Naul Road (R122).</li> <li>Acquire more industrial land in the Stephenstown/Balbriggan area.</li> <li>Develop a partnership with IDA designed to bring about maximum investment and jobs.</li> <li>Actively promote Our Balbriggan as an attractive, premier destination to do business.</li> <li>Build responsible and sustainable business practice and inclusive workforces through the adoption and implementation of corporate social responsibility in enterprises and organisations.</li> </ul>
3.1	<b>Accessibility &amp; Connectivity:</b> Increase the connectivity and flow between the harbour, beach, Quay Street area and the Main Street, creating more opportunities for people to meet and linger.	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure improvements take place within a framework of maximum connectivity between points of interest and residential areas within the town, with specific reference to pedestrians and cyclists.</li> <li>Make improvements to Georges Square including seating, lighting, planting, and signage.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Accessibility &amp; Connectivity:</b> Optimise the number of visitors to the heart of Balbriggan and enhance the quality of their experience.	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce a comprehensive new town signage scheme and remove unnecessary clutter.</li> <li>Commission a comprehensive parking and traffic flow survey and implement its findings and recommendations.</li> </ul>

# Community Affairs & Integration

An ambitious, confident and inclusive community where all people can realise their full potential

	Higher Level Objective	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Actions
<b>1.a</b>	<b>Young People &amp; Families:</b> Increased social spaces for young people.	Fingal County Council Foróige	Foróige Daughters of Charity Child & Family Service - DOCCFS Community Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a new social space for young people.</li> <li>• Increase the level of universal Youth Services.</li> <li>• Develop quality outdoor multi-use games areas.</li> <li>• Develop quality play and exercise facilities for younger and older age groups.</li> <li>• Complete the Skatepark facility.</li> </ul>
<b>1.b</b>	<b>Young People &amp; Families:</b> Support families and early years to develop and prosper in a healthy, inclusive environment.	Empower, TUSLA - Child & Family Agency, DOCCFS Fingal County Council	Aster Family Support, Daughters of Charity Empower, TUSLA - Child & Family Agency, DOCCFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing family support services, including increasing the number of parenting courses available for parents of young children and teenagers.</li> <li>• Research early child care places available and develop responses to any gaps.</li> <li>• Develop a calendar of early years learning supports &amp; play programmes for 0-6 yrs, parents/guardians, early childcare settings.</li> </ul>
<b>2.a</b>	<b>People &amp; Place:</b> Develop events and initiatives designed to promote active places, opportunities for greater integration and healthy sustainable communities.	Fingal County Council	Community & Business Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase support and ambition for existing festivals e.g. Summerfest, St. Patrick's Day and the Festival of Fire.</li> <li>• Develop in partnership with local groups Food, Arts and Early Years festivals, and increase the number of sporting activities and health promotion events.</li> <li>• Publish a Public Arts programme.</li> <li>• Develop a social Innovation fund.</li> <li>• Develop a place making activities fund.</li> <li>• Publish annual calendar of festivals, events and activities.</li> <li>• Develop a Healthy Balbriggan plan which includes a Sli na Slainte.</li> <li>• Develop a bio-diversity plan.</li> </ul>
<b>2.b</b>	<b>People &amp; Place:</b> Develop landmark sporting, arts and social facilities.	Fingal County Council	Arts Council Department of Arts, Culture & Gaeltacht Community & Business Interests, Private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a swimming pool and multipurpose leisure centre.</li> <li>• Actively pursue and acquire where feasible space in the town for arts, theatre, and exhibition space.</li> <li>• Develop an outdoor basketball facility.</li> </ul>
<b>2.c</b>	<b>People &amp; Place:</b> Promote Balbriggan's diversity and difference.	All social, public, commercial partners	The Department of Justice and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Government's National Migrant &amp; Integration Strategy at a local level.</li> <li>• Implement the Fingal Integration and Social Cohesion Strategy, develop a local action plan.</li> </ul>
<b>2.d</b>	<b>People &amp; Place:</b> Increased feelings of safety & wellbeing.	An Garda Síochána, Fingal County Council	Community & Business interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Balbriggan Community Policing Forum.</li> <li>• Increase visibility of Community Gardaí.</li> <li>• Improve levels of vacancy, eyesores, graffiti, poor lighting, dumping/litter.</li> </ul>

# Education, Training & Employment

A place with excellent Education, Training & Employment opportunities

	Higher Level Objective	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Action
1.a	<b>Education, Training &amp; Employment:</b> Increase access to Further Education & Training, Higher Education and sustainable employment.	Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board, Dublin City University, Technological University Dublin, Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection	Fingal County Council, Regional Skills Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of Further Education &amp; Training opportunities.</li> <li>• Investigate the introduction of new Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) provision.</li> <li>• Implement the Fingal Skills Strategy recommendations, specific focus on matching employer current and future needs including: New Technologies, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), and Green Economy.</li> <li>• Establish new pathways for progression with 3rd level institutions.</li> <li>• Promote awareness and take up of skills development &amp; learning options.</li> </ul>
1.b	<b>Training &amp; Employment:</b> Increase Traineeship and Apprenticeship places.	Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board, Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce, Dublin City University, Technological University Dublin	Fingal County Council, Balbriggan Employers and Industry, Schools and Colleges, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regional Skills Forum, Empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote new Traineeships and/or Apprenticeship models in partnership with existing and prospective employers and industries.</li> <li>• Increase numbers of people being up-skilled whilst in Employment - Skills to advance.</li> <li>• Examine the scope for a local framework for Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme to access quality work experience opportunities.</li> <li>• Ensure the benefits of diversity &amp; inclusion in the work place are promoted and incorporated into recruitment &amp; selection processes.</li> <li>• Promote awareness and take-up of skills development &amp; learning options for job seekers and others inc. those with disabilities, and promote financial incentives for employers.</li> <li>• Deliver new targeted community training interventions for marginalised or low skilled workers.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Training:</b> Enhance and promote adult learning and training opportunities.	Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board, Fingal County Council	Empower, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and roll out a 'Learn' communications and awareness campaign and an annual Education, Training and Skills festival.</li> <li>• Increase evening and part time courses.</li> <li>• Enhance Language and Literacy Skills in the community.</li> <li>• Enhance provision and focus on socially excluded groups where required, including Disability, Traveller, Roma and Refugees.</li> </ul>

# Making it Happen



# 06

# Leadership

Leadership will continue from Fingal County Council, underpinned by professional as well as political commitment. Dedicated local authority staff and personnel under local authority stewardship will be responsible for reporting to a board of management on progressing the actions in the plan for the duration of its lifespan 2019 - 2025.

A Balbriggan Leadership Group representing public, private and community partners was established in May 2018, it currently comprises 13 members and is chaired by Professor Brian MacCraith, President Dublin City University. A leadership group will provide collaborative leadership, oversight and stewardship for the plan's implementation.



**Brian MacCraith**, President DCU, Chairperson Balbriggan Leadership Group

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Strong collaborative networks have been established between the community, private and public sectors. The continued operation and strengthening of these networks will enable an integrated and flexible approach to the resourcing and delivery of the plan's actions.

# Funding

€20million has been ring-fenced by the elected council of Fingal County Council to support the rejuvenation of Balbriggan in its 2019 - 2021 Capital Budget. €10 million of this has been ring-fenced in support of the rollout of the Balbriggan to Skerries section of the Fingal Coastal Greenway and the development of the Bremore Regional and Amenity park. The remaining €10 million will support some of the priorities identified in this plan.

A estimated further €30 million will be spent by Fingal County Council during the plan's period including opening Bremore Castle to the public, improving green infrastructure, roads, cycle infrastructure, development of Industrial lands and further developing arts, culture and leisure amenities.

Balbriggan was successful in its application to the Urban Regeneration Fund, an initiative of the National Development Plan 2018 - 2027. This will contribute towards supporting project planning, technical support and land acquisitions and development.

Other public bodies and stakeholders have an equally important responsibility and have committed to review current resource levels and address deficits where necessary.

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Fingal County Council's Capital spend in Balbriggan during the period 2019 - 2021 will be closer to €50 million in total.

# Managing Performance

Ambitious objectives and actions have been set to be achieved by 2025. The Our Context, and Our Plan sections address the Why & What, but how will we know we are on track?

The 20 things in the first 12 months section recognises the need for maintaining forward momentum. Visible signs of implementation and change on the ground will instil confidence, and ensure the strategy takes hold.

Our Plan sets out the higher level objectives and actions that will help achieve Our Vision. A detailed implementation plan will be developed with a named owner/champion responsible for delivering each action. Actions will have a set of specific tasks and objectives developed that are SMART Specific: Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.



A set of indicators will be developed that we will use to measure progress on a periodic basis. Below are indicative examples:

**OUTCOME NO 1.  
WE WILL SECURE A STRONG, VIBRANT, PROSPEROUS LOCAL ECONOMY**

- Indicative Indicator - Number of jobs
- Indicative Indicator - Vacancy rates

**OUTCOME NO 3.  
WE WILL FURTHER DEVELOP AND GROW EXCELLENT EDUCATION, TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- Indicative Indicator - Numbers progressing to further education/3rd Level
- Indicative Indicator - Number of traineeships/ apprenticeships

**OUTCOME NO 2.  
WE WILL BE SEEN AND EXPERIENCED AS A AMBITIOUS, CONFIDENT AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY WHERE ALL PEOPLE CAN REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL**

- Indicative Indicator - % Sentiment as a place to live
- Indicative Indicator - % Sentiment as an inclusive/integrated community

**OUTCOME NO 4.  
WE WILL BE KNOWN AS A PLACE ASSOCIATED WITH AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL ITS PEOPLE**

- Indicative Indicator - % Sentiment as a place to visit
- Indicative Indicator - % Sentiment safety and wellbeing

It will be the responsibility of the Leadership Group to deal with delays and barriers in a timely manner. The group will ensure that the values and principles, in Our Strategy, inform the delivery of the plans objectives and actions.

Regular progress updates will be available on [www.balbriggan.ie](http://www.balbriggan.ie) and across Our Balbriggan social media platforms



# Acknowledgments

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