

**Cloughmills**

Village Plan

March 2024

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# A white background with black dots Description automatically generated1.0 Introduction

Cloughmills village is located a short distance from Ballymoney. Its proximity to major roadways, including the A26, facilitates convenient access to neighbouring areas, providing residents with transport links to urban centres and scenic attractions, including the Causeway Coast. In addition, local bus services ensure connectivity within the village and to surrounding towns.

An aerial view of a green area

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Figure 1: Aerial View of Cloughmills Village, (Source: Google Earth)

The history of Cloughmills dates back many centuries, with evidence of human settlement in the area dating as far back as the prehistoric era. The village has grown into a vibrant agricultural community, with its economy centred around farming and milling industries. The picturesque River Bush, which flows through the village, played a crucial role in powering the local mills, contributing to the area's prosperity and development. Today, remnants of the village's rich heritage can still be seen in its historic buildings and landmarks, providing a glimpse into the area’s storied past.

Cloughmills is home to several key assets and community groups that enrich the village's cultural and social fabric. The Old Mill stands as a historic landmark, reflecting the village's industrial heritage, while the Cloughmills Community Centre serves as a hub for various community activities and events. In addition, the Cloughmills District Memorial Orange Hall and Cloughmills Reformed Presbyterian Church are integral parts of the village's cultural and religious identity.

Notably, Cloughmills boasts an EV charging point and a Community Fridge, showcasing its commitment to sustainability and community welfare. The presence of Incredible Edible initiatives, which aim to support the development of personal and community ‘patches’ and landscapes into abundant sources of healthy food, and a Heritage Trail further enhance the village’s appeal as a vibrant and inclusive community.

In terms of community engagement, Cloughmills is supported by active groups such as:

* Cloughmills Community Action Team (CCAT), which leads a variety of community development projects to enhance village life.
* Giving Shed, which provides essential resources and support to those in need, reflecting the village's spirit of generosity and solidarity.
* Cloughmills Community Association, Cloughmills Cultural and Historical Society, and the Golden Oldies Senior Citizens Group play vital roles in developing community cohesion within the village.
* The village is also home to Cloughmills Football Club and St Brigid’s Gaelic Football Club.

However, the village was impacted by one of its key assets, St Brigid’s Primary School, closing in 2023, resulting in Cloughmills Primary School being the only primary school in the village.



*Figure 2: Cloughmills Community Centre*

A building with a garage

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Figure 3: The Old Mill

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key Assets** | **Community Groups** |
| The Old Mill  Cloughmills Community Centre  Cloughmills District Memorial Orange Hall  Cloughmills Primary School  Cloughmills Reformed Presbyterian Church  EV Charging Point  Community Fridge  Churches  Incredible Edible  Bypass link to A26  Heritage Trail | Cloughmills Community Action Team (CCAT)  The Giving Shed  Cloughmills Community Association  Cloughmills Cultural and Historical Society  Golden Oldies Senior Citizens Group  Cloughmills Football Club  St Brigid’s Gaelic Football Club  Crown Defenders Flute Band  Mum and Tots Group  Crochet Club  Golden Oldies  Luncheon Club |

Table 1: Summary of Key Assets and Community Groups Located in Cloughmills

# 2.0 Strategic Context

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Description automatically generated2.1 Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council: Community Plan 2017-2030**

At its core, community planning aims to develop a holistic, forward-looking strategy for the area. This involves a thorough examination of its requirements, priorities, and opportunities, integrating social, economic, and environmental considerations. A Community Plan aims to unite stakeholders and encourage collaborative endeavours to realise a collectively envisioned future.

The Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Community Plan serves as the leading vision for steering the area towards a better future. Through the Community Plan, the Council aspires to instigate positive change, foster sustainable development, and elevate community well-being.

Embracing inclusivity, the Community Plan is designed to address the diverse needs and aspirations of the whole community, positioning the area on a trajectory towards a prosperous, harmonious, and resilient future. It facilitates coordinated efforts to achieve improved outcomes in health, education, housing, public safety, communities, the economy, and the environment.

Operating on both a Council-wide scale and within local and neighbourhood contexts, the Plan is a collaborative initiative developed in close partnership with key stakeholders. Extensive engagement with local communities, groups, and individuals ensures the Community Plan is reflective of the community’s diverse perspectives and tailored to address the unique needs of the area.

The Community Plan has three overarching, long-term strategic Population Outcomes, along with 12 Intermediate Outcomes in-line with the proposed Programme for Government, outlined below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A Healthy**  **Safe Community** | **A Sustainable**  **Accessible Environment** | **A Thriving**  **Economy** |
| Individuals will contribute to and benefit from a healthy, connected, and safe community that nurtures resilience, promotes respect, and supports everyone to live well together. | Individuals will value and benefit from a diverse, sustainable, and accessible environment, with an infrastructure that is fit for purpose and that enables connections. | Individuals will contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy, built on a culture of growth, entrepreneurship, innovation, and learning. |

|  |
| --- |
| **A Healthy Safe Community** |
| * **Outcome 1:** All people of the Causeway Coast & Glens benefit from improved physical health and mental wellbeing. * **Outcome 2:** Our children and young people will have the very best start in life. * **Outcome 3:** All people of the Causeway Coast & Glens can live independently, as far as possible, and access support services when they need it. * **Outcome 4:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area feels safe. * **Outcome 5:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area promotes and supports positive relationships. |

|  |
| --- |
| **A Sustainable Accessible Environment** |
| * **Outcome 6:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area is widely recognised and celebrated for its unique natural built landscapes. * **Outcome 7:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area has physical structures and facilities that further growth, access, and connections. * **Outcome 8:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area has sustainably managed natural and built environment. |

|  |
| --- |
| **A Thriving Economy** |
| * **Outcome 9:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area provides opportunities for all to contribute to and engage in a more prosperous and fair economy. * **Outcome 10:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area attracts and grows more profitable businesses. * **Outcome 11:** The Causeway Coast & Glens area drives entrepreneurship & fosters innovation. * **Outcome 12:** All people of the Causeway Coast & Glens area will be knowledgeable and skilled. |

The Community Plan serves as a blueprint for addressing multifaceted needs, ranging from health and education, to housing, public safety, communities, the economy, and the environment. This scope aligns with the objectives of the Village Plan, which is specifically tailored to address the unique characteristics and requirements of the individual villages within the Causeway Coast & Glens area. By strategically aligning these plans, we can create a cohesive and comprehensive approach that maximises resources, ensures efficient coordination, and facilitates targeted interventions at both the regional and local level.

**The Village Plan contributes to each of the three strategic Population Outcomes as follows:**

**A Healthy Safe Community**

The Village Plan is designed to foster a healthy, connected, and safe community that prioritises the well-being of residents. Through initiatives focused on public health, recreational spaces, and community programmes, the Village Plan aims to create an environment that nurtures resilience, promotes respect, and supports everyone in living well together.

Health and safety measures, including accessible healthcare facilities, community policing, and awareness campaigns will be integral components. By emphasising mental and physical health, fostering social connections, and implementing safety measures, the Village Plan contributes to building a community that is not only physically secure but also emotionally and socially supportive.

**A Sustainable Accessible Environment**

The Village Plan places a strong emphasis on creating a sustainable, accessible environment that values and benefits from diversity. This includes careful consideration of environmental conservation, green spaces, and infrastructure that supports accessibility for all residents. Sustainable development practices, such as energy-efficient technologies and waste reduction initiatives, will be incorporated.

The Plan envisions an environment where diverse ecosystems thrive alongside well-planned infrastructure that encourages connectivity. By investing in accessible public spaces, efficient transport systems, and environmentally friendly practices, the Village Plan aims to create an inclusive and sustainable environment that residents can value and benefit from.

**A Thriving Economy**

To contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy, the Village Plan adopts a holistic approach centred on growth, entrepreneurship, innovation, and learning. Economic development strategies will be integrated to support local businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, and attract new investments. Educational programmes and initiatives that foster a culture of innovation and continuous learning will be promoted.

The Plan envisions a community where economic opportunities abound, creating a vibrant and dynamic local economy. By facilitating an environment that encourages business growth, job creation, and skill development, the Village Plan aims to contribute to the development of a thriving community with a robust and sustainable economy.

The Village Plan, being an integral part of the broader Community Plan, inherits the overarching goals and principles, tailoring them to the distinctive nuances of each village. Through collaborative efforts and shared objectives, the implementation of the Village Plan becomes an integral part of the larger narrative outlined in the Community Plan, fostering a sense of unity and purpose.

In conclusion, the strategic alignment of the Village Plan with the Community Plan presents a unique opportunity for collaborative development. By leveraging the strengths of both plans, we not only enhance the overall impact on the community but also create a roadmap that guides sustainable development, fosters community resilience, and promotes a harmonious future for the Causeway Coast & Glens area. This strategic integration will ensure that our efforts are coordinated, targeted, and collectively directed towards a shared vision of prosperity and well-being.

**2.2 Wider Strategic Alignment**

| **Theme** | **Policy Alignment** |
| --- | --- |
| **Business Development** | * Economy 2030 – Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland (Department for the Economy) * Circular Economy Strategy (Draft, Department for the Economy) |
| **Capacity Building** | * PEACE Plus (Special EU Programmes Body) * Together Building a United Community (The Executive Office) |
| **Community Engagement** | * PEACE Plus (Special EU Programmes Body) * Together Building a United Community (The Executive Office) |
| **Youth Development** | * Northern Ireland Children and Young People’s Strategy 2020 – 2030 (Department of Education) * Local Assessment of Need 2023 – Causeway Coast & Glens (Education Authority) |
| **Environment & Infrastructure** | * Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Department for Infrastructure) * Regional Transport Strategy 2025 (Department for Infrastructure) |
| **Good Relations** | * PEACE Plus (Special EU Programmes Body) * Together Building a United Community (The Executive Office) |
| **Sports Facility Development** | * Active Living – The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland (Sport NI, Department for Communities) |
| **Housing** | * Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Department for Infrastructure) |
| **Play Park Development** | Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Play Investment Strategy |

**2.3 Local Community Groups**

Local community groups will play a pivotal role in supporting the successful delivery of this Village Plan. These grassroots organisations are the heartbeat of the community, possessing an intimate understanding of needs, aspirations, and challenges. By actively engaging with and involving these groups in the planning and execution phases, the Village Plan gains valuable allies in its mission to create positive and lasting change.

First and foremost, local community groups serve as conduits of local knowledge and expertise. They have established trust and connections within the community, making them adept at identifying nuanced issues and opportunities that may not be immediately apparent. This grassroots insight is invaluable in crafting a Village Plan that is not only comprehensive but also tailored to the specific needs of residents.

Moreover, community groups bring a wealth of social capital to the table. Their established networks and relationships within the community facilitate effective communication and outreach. This social fabric enhances the Plan's reach, ensuring it resonates with a broad cross-section of the population. Through collaborative efforts with local community groups, the Village Plan can leverage existing community ties to garner support, participation, and feedback.

Additionally, local community groups often have a proven track record of delivering successful projects and initiatives. Their experience in mobilising resources, organising events, and driving community engagement can significantly contribute to the effective implementation of the Plan. By tapping into this wealth of experience, the Plan can benefit from tried-and-true strategies for fostering community cohesion and achieving shared goals.

By fostering collaboration with these local community groups, the Village Plan gains not only expertise and resources but also the collective energy and commitment of the community itself. Together, they form a powerful alliance dedicated to realising the shared vision for a vibrant, thriving, and inclusive community.

# A white background with black dots Description automatically generated3.0 Socio-Economic Profile

The statistics referenced in this Village Plan reflect the most current data available, extracted from the 2021 Census, and has been supported by analysis of the 2017 Multiple Deprivation Measures, specifically data in relation to the ‘Ballymoney J’ Super Data Zone, in which Cloughmills is based.

**3.1 Population**

At the time of the 2021 Census, the population of the Cloughmills settlement was 1,233. This represents the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency figure obtained for the Cloughmills settlement.

**3.2 Statistical Profile**

This statistical analysis accounts for key characteristics of the ‘Ballymoney J’ Super Data Zone population. Data is also included from the September 2022 Business Register & Employment Survey.

It should be noted that the boundaries of this statistical zone vary from the boundaries of the NISRA Settlement area used to calculate the population figure presented at Chapter 3.1.

A map of a city

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Figure 4: Map of Ballymoney J Super Data Zone, (Source: Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency)

**3.2 Age Profile**

The population of Cloughmills has an age profile that is broadly in line with local and regional averages across each age demographic, as evidenced by the composition of the village in terms of its age profile in the below table:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Age 0-14 yrs** | **Age 15-39 yrs** | **Age 40-64** | **Age 65+ yrs** |
| Cloughmills / Ballymoney J | 19% | 32% | 33% | 16% |
| Ballymoney DEA | 19% | 30% | 33% | 18% |
| Causeway Coast & Glens  Borough Council Area | 18% | 29% | 34% | 19% |
| Northern Ireland | 19% | 31% | 32% | 17% |

The 2021 Census indicates the population was almost evenly split between females (53%) and males (47%).

**Household Size**

The number of usual residents in the household on Census Day 2021 in Cloughmills was:

* 1 person - 31%;
* 2 people - 32%
* 3 people - 18%;
* 4 people - 13%;
* 5 people or more - 6%.

**Household Tenure**

On Census Day in Cloughmills, 64% owned their house (includes shared ownership), 12% social rented, 21% private rented and 3% lived rent free.

**3.3 Religion and Ethnicity**

* Approximately 60% of the local population recorded their ‘Religion’ or ‘Religion brought up in’ as Protestant, with 34% of the population recording Roman Catholic.
* 6% of village residents recorded no religious affiliation.
* 99% of village residents reported being from a white ethnic background.
* 94% of those living in the area were born in Northern Ireland.

**3.4 Health**

77% of Cloughmills residents report having either a ‘Very Good’ or ‘Good’ standard of general health, which is broadly consistent with the Ballymoney DEA rate of 78%, the Causeway Coast & Glens rate of 77%, and the NI national average of 79%.

Moreover, 75% of citizens note they are not limited by a long-term health problem or disability, a rate which is consistent with regional and national averages.

**3.5 Labour Market & Qualifications**

The 2021 Census compiled information relating to the economic status of those living in Cloughmills, as well as a profile of skill and qualification level held. Whilst the areas boasts an unemployment rate of just 2%, 40% of the population over the age of 16 are economically inactive.

The skills profile of the local population is presented below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **No Qualifications** | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4+** | **Apprenticeship or Other** |
| Cloughmills / Ballymoney J | 31% | 7% | 14% | 18% | 21% | 9% |
| Ballymoney DEA | 27% | 6% | 15% | 16% | 27% | 9% |
| Causeway Coast &  Glens Council Area | 26% | 6% | 14% | 16% | 29% | 9% |
| Northern Ireland | 24% | 6% | 14% | 16% | 32% | 8% |

**Industry of Employment**

In Cloughmills on Census Day 2021, the classification of people aged 16 and over in employment, by the industry they work in, was as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Industry Classification** | **Percentage of Population** |
| Agriculture, energy & water | 5% |
| Manufacturing | 10% |
| Construction | 13% |
| Distribution, hotels & restaurants | 25% |
| Transport & communication | 4% |
| Financial, real estate, professional & administration | 11% |
| Public administration, education & health | 26% |
| Other | 5% |

**Number of Employee Jobs Based in Cloughmills Ward**

According to the September 2022, Business Register & Employment Survery NI (BRES NI), the number of employee jobs based in the Cloughmills ward excluding agriculture was as follows. An employee is defined as anyone aged 16 yrs+ that an organisation directly pays from its payroll.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of Employee Jobs Based In Cloughmills** |
| 2022 | 841 |
| 2021 | 822 |
| 2020 | Not available due to Covid pandemic |
| 2019 | 848 |
| 2018 | Not available |
| 2017 | 841 |

**Car or Van Availability**

In Cloughmills on Census Day the number of cars or vans that were owned, or available for use by members of a household (includes company cars & vans that are available for private use) was:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Car or Van Availability** | **(%)** |
| No cars or vans | 15% |
| 1 car or van | 40% |
| 2 cars or vans | 32% |
| 3 cars or vans | 9% |
| 4 cars of vans | 2% |
| 5 or more cars or vans | 1% |

**3.6 Deprivation Analysis**

In 2017, the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency published its findings in relation to the relative levels of deprivation facing communities across Northern Ireland. This analysis was carried out at a Super Output Area level, enabling detailed analysis of smaller populations to be carried out.

For the purposes of this analysis, the Cloughmills population fell under the ‘Clogh Mills’ Super Output Area, which covered the village and surrounding rural areas. Key findings include:

* Clogh Mills was ranked as the 483rd most deprived area in Northern Ireland (out of 890). This is a decline compared with 2010, when the area was ranked 535th.
* The area is ranked in the top 20% most deprived areas in Northern Ireland in relation to ‘Access to Services’ Deprivation, ranked at the 176th most deprived out of 890 Super Output Areas.
* Between 2010 and 2017, the area’s relative deprivation declined across most measures, including Income, Employment, Health, and Living Environment. However, measures for Education, Access to Services, and Crime deprivation all improved slightly.

**3.7 Conclusions**

Overall, the socio-economic landscape within Cloughmills can be said to be in line with local and national averages. However, there are some particular challenges identified in this statistical analysis that should be addressed. In particular, the area has a higher percentage of the population with no qualifications than both the Causeway Coast & Glens regional average and the Northern Ireland national average. Although relative improvements have been made since 2010, the village still faces high levels of isolation and disadvantage brought about by its rurality and the poor provision of, and access to, basic services.

# 4.0 CoA white background with black dots Description automatically generatedmmunity Engagement

**4.1 Consultation Phase 1: Setting Objectives & Gathering Data**

Causeway Coast and Glens Council facilitated the review and development of an updated Village Plan for Cloughmills.

Phase 1 consisted of setting out a programme of works to finalise objectives and the consultation process required ensuring feedback from the community could be captured.

A comprehensive socio-economic analysis of the area was conducted to gain insights into the area's demographics, economic dynamics, and social trends. The previous Village Plan from June 2018 was reviewed, which provided valuable insights into lessons learned and opportunities for improvement, ensuring continuity and building upon existing efforts.

Cloughmills Community Action Team (CCAT) were engaged, acting as lead community partner in Cloughmills, whose support has been appreciated in this process. A thorough site visit of Cloughmills was conducted to understand the physical environment and infrastructure, further informing decision-making.

**4.2 Consultation Phase 2: Engaging Stakeholders & The Community**

Phase 2 focused on engaging stakeholders through a robust consultation process. To ensure as many local people as possible had the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the development of the Village Plan, a range of consultation and engagement activities were undertaken. This included:

* A site visit to the village on Thursday, 1st February 2024.
* A consultation day, with two sessions (one during the day and one in the evening) held in the Cloughmills Old Mill on Monday, 26th February 2024.
* An online survey, facilitated by Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council between Friday, 9th 2024 and Friday, 1st March 2024.

Two consultation sessions were held, one during the day and one in the evening, to accommodate residents' diverse needs and schedules. Extensive promotion and outreach efforts were made through various communication channels, including direct email outreach, social media campaigns, and via council platforms to encourage broad participation. As a result, members of the local community were engaged in either the afternoon drop-in session or evening focus group.

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Figure 5: Social Media Graphic to Communicate Consultation Events

Consultations were structured to ensure comprehensive engagement and participation from the Cloughmills community. Through this structured approach, consultations fostered inclusive dialogue, ensuring broad community voices and perspectives were incorporated into the Village Plan. Consultations included:

* A presentation on the Village Plan process, offering a brief overview of its significance, key objectives, and strategic context, with a Q&A session for clarifications.

* Engagement activities, including an area profile facilitated discussion, where participants were divided into small groups to discuss specific aspects of the Plan.
* A SWOT analysis activity, allowing participants to move between stations, providing input on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the Village Plan, with facilitators documenting responses on visual boards.
* An action planning session, encouraging participants to provide actionable ideas, with reference to the review of the previous Plan.
* Participants were given the opportunity to complete a survey, which was also made more broadly available for individuals to complete who were unable to attend an in-person consultation.

**4.3 Consultation Phase 3: Data Analysis & Draft Plan Development**

Following the stakeholder and community consultation, Phase 3 included data analysis, identifying key findings, and developing a draft Village Plan. Emphasising a co-design approach, key findings and a proposed Action Plan were shared with community groups for feedback. This approach ensured inclusivity and collaboration. Council was also provided with an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Plan, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives and priorities.

This comprehensive process successfully engaged the Cloughmills community, gathered valuable input, and developed a Village Plan that reflects the aspirations and priorities of residents.

# A white background with black dots Description automatically generatedA white background with black dots Description automatically generated5.0 Key Findings

Through consultation, Cloughmills Community Action Team were identified as being strong and leading on many community initiatives in the village. There were also many positive points raised in relation to good cross community relations, limited anti-social behaviour, and a good selection of local amenities. The following key Community Assets were identified:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Commercial Assets** | **Healthcare Assets** | **Recreational Assets** |
| * Shops including a Butcher * Tyre Depot * Post Office | * GP surgery * Chemist * Optician | * Access to North Coast * Access to Glens * Gym * Pub |
| **Educational Assets** | **Community Assets** | **Other Assets** |
| * Quality primary school | * The Old Mill * Cloughmills Community Centre * Cloughmills District Memorial Orange Hall * EV charging points * The work of CCAT * Cloughmills Reformed Presbyterian Church * Giving Shed * Community Fridge * Men’s Shed | * GAA Club * Football Club * Recent improvements to broadband * Bypass to A26 |

Existing activities, services, and programmes identified by those living in the area include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Heritage Activities** | **Community Activities** | **Sporting Activities** |
| * Vintage Rally * Vintage Club | * Tractor Run * Craft activities (Church) * Environmental activities (Mill) * Ladies Group * Crochet Club * Mums and Tots (Church) * Events run by the Community Action Team * Golden Oldies Group * Community Carol Service * Services for elderly people | * Good selection of indoor sports * Football Club * GAA Club * Yoga |

**5.1 SWOT Analysis**

Consultation participants provided an insight into daily life in Cloughmills, before identifying strengths and weaknesses of the local community, and potential opportunities and threats:

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| --- | --- |
| **Community Relations:** no conflict reported in relation to cultural symbols or emblems and inter-community relations are strong.  **Amenities:** good variety of quality and local community amenities, such as the Old Mill. Range of capable community organisations and impactful community programmes, such as the Giving Shed. There is a particularly good range of activities for elderly people in the area.  **Infrastructure:** lots of good road links, which connect Cloughmills to neighbouring towns and villages. | **Transport/Road Safety:** bus services are infrequent, and roads need investment.  **Amenities:** scope for additional amenities in the village, such as an on-street ATM.  **Volunteers:** an ongoing challenge associated with recruitment and retention of volunteers within local community organisations.  **Housing:** limited supply of new houses.  **Economic Development:** limited business units for start-ups or new enterprises.  **Public Realms Works:** lack of flowers/planters, negatively impacting village aesthetics.  **Youth Services:** few opportunities or activities for young people in the area.  **Good Relations:** whilst relations were reported as good, there is a limited number of cross-community programmes in the area. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| **Community Development:** scope for additional community-led programmes, particularly in terms of youth services.  **Sporting Development:** the quality of sporting amenities could be improved and made more accessible.  **Housing:** scope to increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing to support young families.  **Public Amenities:** scope to upgrade the play park and make it disability friendly.  **Good Relations:** capacity to deliver increased cross-community events in the village. | **Amenity Closures:** possible closure of the Post Office would be detrimental for residents who rely on its services (mail/banking).  **Cost of Living Crisis:** the ongoing ‘cost of living’ crisis continues to impact on the everyday lives Cloughmills residents.  **Youth Services:** there is a risk that the lack of investment in youth services could lead to a sustained issue of anti-social behaviour in the village. |

**5.2 Survey Findings**

To supplement the findings of the consultation exercises, residents were afforded the opportunity to provide their views and highlight priorities to inform the development of the Village Plan via an online survey. The survey was open from Friday, 9th February 2024 and closed on Friday, 1st March 2024.

Questions posed to respondents sought to obtain the following information and insights:

* Demographic profile of respondents, such as age and gender.
* The length of time they have been residents in the village.
* Perceptions of the village, and an assessment of the quality of amenities, including:
  + Overall cleanliness and village aesthetics.
  + Infrastructure and connectivity.
  + Crime and anti-social behaviour.
  + Standard of facilities and public assets.
  + Availability and variety of Commercial Outlets.

Respondents were also asked to provide feedback in relation to their favourable aspects of living in the village, as well as their biggest challenges or concerns.

**Survey findings, and key emerging themes, are presented below:**

**5.2.1 Demographic Information**

* 1.6% of respondents are aged between 0-14.
* 47.9% of respondents are aged between 15 and 39.
* 44.2% of respondents are aged between 40 and 64.
* 6.3% of respondents are aged over 65.

Most responses (67.2%) were received from female residents, with 29.7% being received from male residents. 3.1% of respondents preferred not to state their gender.

All respondents were from the village, with 95.3% stating they had lived in the village for ten or more years. These findings provide survey legitimacy as a representative view of local residents.

**5.2.2 Quality of Life**

Perceptions of respondents were generally mixed:

* 27.1% had either a ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ perception of the village.
* 31.3% felt life in the village was ‘Acceptable’.
* 41.7% had either a ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’ perception of the village.

Moreover, most respondents stated on a Likert scale of 1-10, with 1 being least favourable and 10 being most favourable, they would be likely to recommend the village to others, with an average score of 5.5.

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on a range of aspects relating to life in the village. A summary of responses provided is presented below:

| **Aspect of Everyday Life** | **Commentary** |
| --- | --- |
| **Cleanliness of Streets** | Identified as a concern by the majority of respondents, with 58.3% stating ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Condition of Streets** | Similarly, the condition of the streets was also perceived by most respondents to be in need of improvement, with 53.1% stating ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Accessibility** | Overall, accessibility was deemed to be ‘Acceptable’ by 44.8% of respondents, the most commonly selected response. |
| **Pedestrian Friendly** | Generally negative, with 39.1% of respondents stating ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’ and 37.5% stating ‘Acceptable’ (76.6% combined). |
| **Availability of**  **Public Transport** | Overall, availability of public transport was deemed adequate, with 42.2% of respondents noting it to be ‘Acceptable’. |
| **Traffic Congestion** | Traffic congestion in the village was considered to be at a reasonable level, with 45.3% of respondents stating ‘Acceptable’, the most commonly selected response. |
| **Street Lighting** | There were no serious concerns about the quality or quantity of street lighting amongst survey respondents, with 41.7% considering current levels to be ‘Acceptable’. |
| **Availability of**  **Car Parking** | Parking was a source of significant concern amongst respondents, with 63% considering the availability of parking to be either ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Village Signage** | Considered ‘Acceptable’ by the majority of respondents (53.6%). |
| **Open Space** | A salient issue highlighted through survey responses, with 65.6% of respondents believing the quality and availability of open space to be ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Play Park** | The majority of respondents (73.4%) considered the play park to be ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’, highlighting this as an area for improvement. |
| **Sports Facilities** | Survey respondents almost unanimously (94.8%) considered the quality of sports facilities to be ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’, suggesting this is an urgent priority for those living in the village. |
| **Anti-Social Behaviour**  **(ASB)** | Anti-Social Behaviour was considered an issue by a majority (50.5%) of respondents, who stated they felt the levels of ASB were either ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Vandalism** | Vandalism was also considered to be an aspect of village life that could be improved, with 42.7% of respondents deeming current levels to be ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Littering** | Village aesthetics was an issue that resonated strongly with respondents, with 66.7% believing litter levels in the village are either ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Derelict Buildings** | Building dereliction was perceived by respondents to be an issue of a similar scale to littering. 66.1% believe the levels of dereliction to be ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. |
| **Friendliness of People** | This was the most positive aspect of the survey. 69.8% of respondents stated the friendliness of people is either ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’. |
| **Shops** | Feedback in relation to retail outlets in the village resulted in mixed opinions, though the general consensus was that the quality (41.7%) and variety (38.0%) of shops in the village is ‘Acceptable’. |
| **Eateries** | The quality of cafés and takeaways is viewed positively by respondents, 38.5% of whom believe they are either of a ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ standard. |

**5.2.3 Favourite Aspect of Living in Cloughmills**

Respondents were given the opportunity to state what they feel is the best thing about living in the area. Some of the most notable responses included:

* Community cohesion and spirit.
* Proximity to large towns and civic hubs.
* Variety of services that are able to be availed of in the village.
* The work of the Cloughmills Community Action Team.
* Community safety overall.

**5.2.4 Key Issues To Be Addressed**

Respondents were also asked to provide feedback on what they believe to be the highest priority issues to be addressed in the village. The most salient responses included:

* Village aesthetics, such as dog fouling, availability of bins, and littering.
* Infrastructural issues, such as quality of roads and pavements, and availability of parking.
* The play park at the Mill was cited as needing investment.
* Increased services for children and young people.
* Need for investment in sports facilities.
* Anti-social behaviour.
* Support for new businesses and new shops to open in the village.

The consultation process included an examination of actions from the previous Village Plan. A range of themes were highlighted as being continually relevant, including:

* Community Engagement;
* Environment and Infrastructure;
* Communication and Participation;
* Health and Wellbeing; and
* Basic Service Provision.

**5.2.5 Additional Feedback**

The Giving Shed collected written feedback from a group of adults over 55 years old. This feedback provides valuable insights into perceptions of Cloughmills village, and the needs identified by older residents. Concern was expressed regarding:

* Various aspects of the village's infrastructure and amenities, highlighting the cleanliness and condition of streets, accessibility, and availability of public transport.
* Issues such as traffic congestion, littering, and the presence of derelict buildings.
* Noteworthy issues such as the need for better park facilities, addressing dog fouling and drug-related problems, and enhancing social spaces for both young and elderly residents.

Priorities identified for the Village Plan encompass enhancing community services, tackling anti-social behaviour, and improving the appearance and safety of the village. Additionally, feedback underscores the necessity for programmes focusing on sports and recreation, particularly for local youth, and addressing lighting deficiencies on roads.

# 6.0 Action Plan

Following the completion of all research and consultation activities, the priorities for the Cloughmills Village Plan are summarised below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Description** | **Why is it needed?** |
| **Business Development** | Establishment of a Trader’s Forum. | Increased lobbying and support opportunities for local businesses in the village. |
| **Capacity Building** | Training and skills development initiatives for the benefit of local residents and specifically for volunteers of local community organisations. | There is an overall need to invest in the capacity and skills of volunteers. |
| **Community Engagement** | Delivery of inter-generational programmes and increased promotion of activities successfully delivered at the Old Mill. | There is an identified need to increase the confidence of older people in the area and to build overall community cohesion. |
| **Youth Development** | Undertaking a youth survey and the delivery of programmes that support young people to tackle ongoing problems such as substance abuse and poor mental health. Provision of youth leadership and education programmes. | There is an identified lack of youth engagement initiatives in Cloughmills. |
| **Environment & Infrastructure** | Undertaking a range of public realm improvements that improve the visual impact of the village for the benefit of locals and visitors, as well as supporting to address identified issues such as dog fouling.  Exploring the feasibility of infrastructural improvements in the village, such as increased availability of car parking and pedestrian crossing | There is a need to foster an increased sense of community pride in the village, as well as addressing some infrastructure-related concerns identified during consultation. |
| **Good Relations** | Delivery of cross community programmes and events. | Scope for additional programmes to be delivered to consolidate already positive relations between communities in the in the village. |
| **Sports Facility Development** | Secure land and premises to establish a soccer pitch in the village. | There is currently no provision for soccer in the village, and the local soccer team are required to play fixtures elsewhere. |
| **Housing** | Provision of additional affordable housing in the village. | There is an identified lack of affordable housing in the Cloughmills area. |
| **Play Park Development** | Exploration of options to develop and upgrade the village’s play park | The play park was identified through consultation as being in need of upgrade and development. |

# 7.0 Implementation & Monitoring Plan

To see the range of priority actions addressed for the benefit of those living in Cloughmills, the following implementation plan has been developed which sets out further detail in relation to the key responsible owners of each action, and the key milestones which would need to be reached.

| **Theme** | **Action** | **Key Activities & Milestones** | **Timeframes** | **Responsible Owners** | **Supporting Partners** | **Potential Funding Sources** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Business Development** | Establishment of a Trader’s Forum. | Creation of new business support network to drive business and economic development in Cloughmills  Appointment of Officers, agreement of constitution, and set up of appropriate governance and financial processes. | Within 6 months of Village Plan finalisation. | Local businesses | Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council | n/a |
| **Capacity Building** | Training and skills development initiatives delivered for the benefit of residents, and specifically for volunteers of local community organisations. | Design and delivery of training and capacity building programmes for volunteers of community organisations. | Design phase within 6 months of Village Plan finalisation.  Delivery phase within 12 months of design phase finalisation. | Local community groups | Causeway Coast & Glens Council | Causeway Coast & Glens Council  TNL Community Fund – Awards for All |
| **Community Engagement** | Delivery of inter-generational programmes. | Based on consultation, design and delivery of programmes will effectively bring young people and elderly people from the village together. | Design phase within 6 months of Village Plan finalisation.  Delivery phase within 12 months of design phase finalisation. | Local community groups | Golden Oldies Group | Causeway Coast & Glens Council  TNL Community Fund – Awards for All |
| Increased promotion of activities successfully delivered at the Old Mill. | Increased communication quality/quantity relating to community activities, including increased use of social media platforms. | Ongoing from Village Plan finalisation | Local community groups | Range of local community stakeholders. | n/a |
| **Youth Development** | Undertaking a youth survey and delivery of programmes to support youth and tackle ongoing problems e.g., substance abuse and poor mental health.  Provision of youth leadership and education programmes. | Completion of youth survey and design of youth engagement programme.  Delivery of programme, ensuring effective recruitment and retention of young people. | Design phase within 6 months of Village Plan finalisation.  Delivery phase within 12 months of design phase finalisation. | Local community groups | Range of local community stakeholders.  EA Youth services | Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  TNL Community Fund – Awards for All |
| **Environment & Infrastructure** | Undertaking a range of public realm improvements that improve the visual impact of the village for the benefit of locals and visitors, as well as supporting to address identified issues such as dog fouling. | Installation of improved street furniture in the village such as bins, flower planters, and lighting. Specific focus on exploring additional lighting on Drumdoon Road | Within 24 months of Village Plan finalisation. | Local elected representatives | Local community organisations  Causeway Coast & Glens Council  Department for Communities  Department for Infrastructure | Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  Department for Communities  Department for Infrastructure |
| Exploring the feasibility of infrastructural improvements in the village, such as increased availability of car parking and pedestrian crossing | Feasibility work to be undertaken to assess viability of creating additional car parking spaces in the village and a potential location for a pedestrian crossing. | Within 24 months of Village Plan finalisation. | Local elected representatives | Causeway Coast & Glens Council  Department for Communities  Department for Infrastructure | n/a |
| **Good Relations** | Delivery of cross community programmes and events. | Design and delivery of programmes that bring all local people together and build on strong community foundations. | Design phase within 6 months of Village Plan finalisation.  Delivery phase within 12 months of design phase finalisation. | CCAT | Cloughmills Giving Shed | Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council  TNL Community Fund – Awards for All |
| **Housing** | Provision of additional affordable housing in the village. | Exploration of possibilities to increase the supply of housing in the village to attract young families to the area. | Within 60 months of Village Plan finalisation | Range of local stakeholders | NI  Housing Executive  Housing Associations | n/a |
| **Play Park Development** | Exploration of options to develop and upgrade the village’s play park | Identification of preferred upgrades  Securing of finance to implement proposed upgrades | Within 36 months of Village Plan finalisation | Causeway Coast & Glens Council | Local community organisations | n/a |