

## Foreword

It is now recognised within Northern Ireland that health is determined by a range of social, economic and environmental conditions. It is also acknowledged that health cannot be the exclusive concern of one professional sector and that people's health and wellbeing must be central to policies and plans within the region.

In practical terms, assessing the impact of these policies and plans and making recommendations will contribute to maximising the health outcomes. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the term used to describe this approach, an approach which is now attracting considerable attention across Europe and emerging interest within Northern Ireland. A Community Health Impact Assessment (CHIA) is a process for communities to bring forward the health concerns of their community and allow them to be considered early in the process of policy and project developments. It creates the opportunity for planners to reduce the negative health impacts of these proposals and maximise the positive ones.

Belfast Healthy Cities has been funded by Community Foundation Northern Ireland, through the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety's *Investing for Healthier Communities* Grant, to pilot a Community Health Impact Assessment process within two geographical communities.

The production of a community profile is one of the key stages in the CHIA process. The purpose of the profile is to provide information on the many factors which contribute to health in the community and to outline the proposals for the area. It is from these proposals that through a screening tool the community will select the proposal that has the potential to have greatest impact on health and on which a health impact assessment will be conducted.

The CHIA process in Ards has been a partnership approach and has involved all those with an interest in public health including housing; education; health and social services; the local council; local voluntary, church and community organisations and local people.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the production of this profile; to those from other government departments and public and voluntary organisations who provided information and especially to Ruth Fleming and Victoria Creasy in the Healthy Cities office. Special thanks go to members of the Community Steering Group, who made a significant contribution in sourcing and providing information for this profile.



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## **Introduction to Community Health Impact Assessments**

Community Health Impact Assessment (CHIA) enables people in local communities to estimate the effects that a particular policy or action has on the health and wellbeing of those who live in a community. In doing this it suggests what action they might take to maximise the health benefits and minimise the harm to health of policies or actions.

CHIA is not meant to determine if a particular project is right or wrong and is not a substitute for decision making or an evaluation of a project. It is a process which can be used to guide thinking and can influence plans or proposals to improve their impact on the health of specific communities, whether geographical or a community of interest.

## **Purpose of the Community Profile**

The information in the Community Profile is provided in twelve sections. The content of each section outlines available relevant statistics on that subject and a brief analysis on trends and patterns which are apparent from the statistics. It provides information on the provision and usage of relevant services where appropriate and anecdotal information provided by Community Steering Group members (Appendix 1). At the end of each section there is a short description of related programmes, projects and policies which are currently being delivered or are proposed for delivery in the community. The inclusion of the projects/programmes/policies is to support the community to select a proposal which will be the focus of the Health Impact Assessment.

The content and breadth of information in the Community Profile has been determined by the Community Steering Group, which consists of representatives of a range of organisations from across all sectors of the community.

## **Areas covered in the Community Profile:**

The areas covered in the profile have been selected by the Community Steering Group. The Community Profile covers the 4 ward areas of Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portaferry, and Portavogie which includes also the villages of Cloughey (within Kircubbin ward), Ballyhalbert (within Portavogie) and Greyabbey (within Ballywalter). Statistics for Carrowdore are not included within this profile as it became a newly designated ward in 1992 and therefore is no longer counted as part of Ballywalter ward.

## **Background Information on the Areas:**

**Ballywalter** - Ballywalter is a coastal village on the eastern side of the Ards Peninsula, 17 kilometres from both Newtownards and Bangor. It has a range of services including but not limited to the following: Spar grocery store, home bakery, chemist, butcher's, hairdresser's, a fish and chip shop, Chinese takeaway, public house, off licence, sub-post office and fire station. The local children are catered for with a Toddlers Group, Pre-school and a Primary school. There is a health centre and community facilities, a large recreational area including tennis courts, a bowls and football Club along with 4 churches. The harbour area and the adjacent picnic area and amenity space are important tourist assets.

**Cloughey** - Cloughey is located on the east coast of the Ards Peninsula on the A2 road from Bangor to Portaferry, 29 kilometres south east of Newtownards. It is 4 kilometres south of Portavogie. It has a primary school, a church, a supermarket and general store, a sub-post office, and a fish and chip shop. Cloughey also has a bowling green, pavilion and 2 tennis courts. Kirkistown Golf Club and an expansive beach contribute to the village's popularity as a recreational and tourist destination. Cloughey is a linear settlement stretching for approximately 2.5 kilometres along the coast. The two headlands of Ringboy Point to the north and Slanes Point to the south effectively contain the village, which sits in the rim of Cloughey bay.

**Greyabbey** - Greyabbey is situated on the Strangford Lough shore of the Ards Peninsula on the A20. It is approximately 26 kilometres from Belfast and 11 kilometres south east from Newtownards. The village functions as a minor service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland. It also has a role in meeting the needs of day-trippers. It provides a range of retail outlets including grocery shops, newsagents, chemist, dentist, public houses, café/hot food bars, a post office, a craft shop and antique shop.

**Kircubbin** - Kircubbin is located at the mid-way point of the Ards Peninsula on the A20 Newtownards to Portaferry Road. It is approximately 33 kilometres from Belfast and 17 kilometres from Newtownards. Portaferry is approximately 12 kilometres to the south. The settlement is a local service centre and a base for water-borne recreation located at Kircubbin Sailing Club. The main street has a variety of shops, an opticians and retail services including a post office and provides the focus of the village. Other facilities include 2 churches, 2 schools and a college of further education, a community centre, chemist, dentist, health care centre and medical centre. Kircubbin extends around a small bay and is enclosed by steep slopes inland.

**Portaferry** - Portaferry is located in the southern part of the Ards Peninsula and sits opposite Strangford village at the entrance to Strangford Lough. It is approximately 46 kilometres from Belfast, 30 kilometres from Newtownards and 14 kilometres from Downpatrick. Portaferry village has developed as a service centre for the local area, with a broad range of shops located mainly at the Square, Church St, High St, Castle St, and Ferry St. The village also provides a range of services including an optician, three solicitor's, and community facilities and a small industrial base. The attractive shoreline setting has enabled the growth of a recreational and tourist role. The village is linked to Strangford by means of a car and passenger ferry across the narrow channel.

**Portavogie** - Portavogie is located on the east coast of the Ards Peninsula on the A2 Bangor to Portaferry Rd, 25 kilometres from Newtownards and 0.7 kilometres to the north of Cloughey.

The village provides a number of local services, including shops, churches, a primary school, post office, chemist and a community hall. It remains one of the principal fishing ports in Northern Ireland. Fishing and fish processing are therefore the major source of employment in the village. The main concentration of housing is located in an area bounded by Warnocks Rd, Springfield Rd, Harbour Rd, and Main Rd.

**Ballyhalbert** - Ballyhalbert is a small seaside village situated on the eastern side of the Ards Peninsula, approximately 23 kilometres from Newtownards and 6 kilometres from Ballywalter with the small settlement of Glastry in close proximity to the west. The village contains a shop and post office and a primary school. A community hall has recently been constructed on High Street. A long sandy beach which runs from the north to the south east of the village down to Burr Point contributes to its popularity as a holiday destination. Holiday accommodation is provided by a large caravan park to the west of the settlement.

*Background information on the areas was provided by the Community Steering Group (Appendix 1) and the draft Ards and Down Area Plan 2015, Department of the Environment, (2002).*



# Demography

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## Population

Within the 4 ward areas of Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portaferry, and Portavogie, including the villages of Greyabbey, Cloughey and Ballyhalbert, at the last count there were 13,071 resident in these areas (approx 50% male and female) (*Census 2001*). This figure had fallen slightly from the 1991 census count which showed a population of 13,133. Population numbers have risen within Ballywalter, but they have fallen in the other 3 ward areas over the last 10 years.

Kircubbin is the least densely populated area of the 4 ward areas, Portavogie is the most densely populated area (0.74 persons per hectare compared to 1.53). In total there are 73244 people living in the Ards Borough, 18% of which live within the 4 ward areas listed above.

**Table 1: Population by Gender and Distribution**

	All persons	Males	Females	Area (hectares) <sup>1</sup>	Population density (number of persons per hectare)
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>821449</b>	<b>863818</b>	<b>1413540</b>	<b>1.19</b>
Ballywalter	3350	1671	1679	3288	1.02
Kircubbin	2931	1486	1445	3940	0.74
Portaferry	3286	1640	1646	3059	1.07
Portavogie	3504	1737	1767	2296	1.53

(*NISRA, Census, 2001*)

## Age

Approximately 6.5% of the population within the 4 areas are aged 0-4 years which is similar to the Northern Ireland average (6.8%).

Portaferry has the highest child/teenage population figures of the 4 areas (917 (28%) of the population aged between 0-17 years which is similar to the Northern Ireland average of 27%). Ballywalter has the lowest child/teenage population figures (21%) but has the highest elderly population aged 65 plus - 585, (17.5%) compared to 422 (12.8%) in Portaferry (NI average of 14.5%).

1991 census figures show that the elderly population in Ballywalter has risen over the last 10 years and has fallen in the other 3 ward areas. Over the last 10 years the population aged 0-4 years has also fallen slightly in all 4 ward areas (*NISRA, Census 1991*).

**Table 2: Population by Age, Census 2001**

Age	0-4	%	5-17	%	18-24	%	25-64	%	65+	%
<b>NI</b>	115,238	6.8%	336,276	20%	858,024	9.4%	852,404	50.6%	223,325	14.5%
<b>Ballywalter</b>	209	6.2%	520	15.5%	225	6.8%	1,801	53.9%	585	17.5%
<b>Kircubbin</b>	192	6.6%	588	20.2%	227	7.7%	1,528	52.2%	391	13.4%
<b>Portaferry</b>	225	6.8%	692	21%	306	9.2%	1,659	50.2%	422	12.8%
<b>Portavogie</b>	225	6.4%	615	17.4%	313	8.9%	1,896	54.1%	461	13.1%

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

### Household Composition

Within the 4 ward areas there is a high percentage of married couples (47% of the total households) with 4% of couples cohabiting. Lone parent households account for 9% of the total households.

**Table 3: Household Composition**

	All households	One person		One family and no others								
		Pensioner	Other	All pensioner	Married couple households			Cohabiting couple households			Lone parent households	
					No children	With dependent children <sup>1</sup>	All children non-dependent	No children	With dependent children <sup>1</sup>	All children non-dependent	With dependent children <sup>1</sup>	All children non-dependent
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>626718</b>	<b>80486</b>	<b>91087</b>	<b>40769</b>	<b>66484</b>	<b>152218</b>	<b>50385</b>	<b>13282</b>	<b>9900</b>	<b>1041</b>	<b>50641</b>	<b>28986</b>
<b>Ballywalter</b>	<b>1391</b>	224	150	156	226	292	108	40	29	3	55	47
<b>Kircubbin</b>	<b>1059</b>	128	114	76	136	273	105	26	19	-	71	60
<b>Portaferry</b>	<b>1156</b>	168	136	71	117	299	115	20	21	3	75	46
<b>Portavogie</b>	<b>1320</b>	158	164	109	191	331	127	31	23	4	59	36

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

### Cultural Diversity

There is a very small ethnic minority population within the 4 ward areas – only 52 (0.4%) of the total population (13075) are from an ethnic group other than ‘white’. This small number is made up of: mixed ethnicity (23); Chinese (14); Indian (4); Irish traveller (3); and other (8) (Census, 2001).

In terms of religion, Portaferry is predominately Catholic (81%); the majority of persons in Kircubbin are also Catholic (59%). In Ballywalter and Portavogie the majority of persons are of the Protestant faith or in the ‘other’ categories (78% and 71% respectively). On average within the 4 areas, 16% are categorised as having no religious status.



**Table 4: Population by Cultural Diversity**

	All persons	Percentage of persons stating current religion as:						Percentage of persons with no religion or religion not stated
		Catholic <sup>1</sup>	Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Church of Ireland	Methodist Church in Ireland	Other Christian (including Christian related)	Other religions and philosophies	
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>40.26</b>	<b>20.69</b>	<b>15.30</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>6.07</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>13.88</b>
Ballywalter	3348	3.91	38.35	26.58	4.21	8.69	-	18.25
Kircubbin	2931	58.89	14.57	7.88	1.50	2.39	0.14	14.64
Portaferry	3286	80.52	3.71	3.59	0.33	0.76	0.12	10.96
Portavogie	3504	9.90	33.93	15.44	4.99	16.81	0.23	18.69

*(NISRA, Census, 2001)*

### Disability

It would appear the best source of information for the number of disabled persons living within the 4 ward areas is identified by the numbers of persons claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) as the vast majority of disabled persons or those with a long-term illness receive DLA. Since April 2001, Severe Disablement allowance (SDA) is no longer available to new claimants therefore it would not be accurate to quote current SDA figures for persons who are severely disabled (DLA office, Social Security Agency, 2003).

The table below suggests that a higher number of disabled persons live within Portaferry and Portavogie than in the other two ward areas. The numbers claiming DLA have risen from 1094 in February 2002 to 1170 in February 2003.

**Table 5: All Persons Claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at 2002/2003**

Ward	February 2002		February 2003	
	All ages Male	All ages Female	All ages Male	All ages Female
Ballywalter	117	110	116	122
Kircubbin	119	111	123	112
Portaferry	154	150	167	161
Portavogie	181	152	192	177
All NI	69,230	58,966	71,567	78,905

*(Social Security Agency, 2003)*

During 2003, 491 persons in the 50-64 age category were claiming DLA and 92 persons aged 16 and under were claiming DLA (see glossary for persons entitled to DLA).

**Table 6: Breakdown of Persons Claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Per Age**

Ward	2003 under 16	2003 16-34	2003 35-49	2003 50-64	2003 65+
Ballywalter	24	19	42	97	56
Kircubbin	18	29	50	87	51
Portaferry	25	35	64	145	59
Portavogie	25	46	73	162	63
All NI	11,691	18,345	33,658	52,917	33,861

*(Social Security Agency, 2003)*

# Health and Health Behaviour

“The past ten years of experience in the European Region has clearly revealed that informing, motivating and supporting individuals, groups and societies to lead a more healthy life can best be done by focusing systematically on the places where people live, work and play”

Health 21: An Introduction, *World Health Organisation*

## Long-term Illness

Averages of 21% of the population within the 4 ward areas have a limiting long-term illness - this is similar to overall NI figures (*Census, 2001*). Long term illness is defined as an illness, health problem or disability that limits daily life or work.

**Table 7: Population by Long-term Illness**

	All persons	Persons with limiting long-term illness <sup>1</sup>	Percentage of persons with limiting long-term illness
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>343107</b>	<b>20.36</b>
Ballywalter	3350	753	22.48
Kircubbin	2931	607	20.71
Portaferry	3286	698	21.24
Portavogie	3504	707	20.18

(*NISRA, Census, 2001*)

## Standardised Death Rates

In recent years death rates for men and women aged 15 to 74 years have been gradually falling in Northern Ireland and this trend is similar in the Ards Borough Council Area. In these age groups the all cause-standardised death rates for the period 1997 to 2001 have been lower in Ards than in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board area or Northern Ireland as a whole. Standardisation is a technique which is used to allow for different age patterns in different populations when comparing death rates. The relatively small number of deaths means that there are fluctuations from year to year.

A particular trend of note has been a fall in the death rate from ischaemic heart disease, which may reflect both lifestyle changes in diet and smoking as well as improvements in treatment.

For men, Ards has had lower death rates from stroke, respiratory disease, and lung cancer than the Eastern Board as a whole during 1997 to 2001 but higher rates from road traffic accidents.

For women aged 15 to 74, death rates have been lower for lung cancer but slightly higher for stroke and breast cancer than the rest of the Eastern Board area. The small numbers of deaths in these age groups mean that the numbers can change from year to year (*Department of Public Health, Eastern Health and Social Services Board, 2004*).

**Table 8: Standardised Death Rates for Men aged 15-74 years within Ards District Council for a selected number of causes of death**

Condition	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
All Causes	648	533	586	568	590
Ischaemic heart disease	197.3	116.7	142.6	121.7	132.7
Cardio vascular disease	26.4	27.8	42.5	34.1	21.6
All Respiratory	62.9	68.9	64.5	70.4	45.1
Transport Accidents	16.4	21.1	10.0	32.0	18.0
CA Lung	53.4	23.5	51.9	60.8	67.7
CA Colon	20.3	26.1	8.6	14.3	19.4
CA Stomach	8.3	8.0	10.9	8.4	15.4
CA Rectum	12.2	0.0	0.0	10.7	4.1
Suicide and self inflicted injuries	7.7	17.0	14.7	28.3	19.6

*(Registrar General (NISRA) Mortality Statistics and Home Population Estimates. Rates are per 100,000 population and all rates are standardised to the revised 2001 Home mid year estimate)*

**Table 9: Standardised Death Rates for Women aged 15-74 years within Ards District Council for a selected number of causes of death**

Condition	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
All Causes	360	294	406	387	281
Ischaemic heart disease	69.4	27.7	84.5	73.5	69.3
Cardio vascular disease	53.1	19.9	40.2	16.4	36.5
All Respiratory	28.0	68.5	77.9	63.5	23.2
Transport Accidents	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9
CA Lung	45.2	24.0	13.6	29.6	30.0
CA Colon	32.2	23.3	37.0	46.0	25.5
CA Stomach	17.6	7.0	10.2	3.2	3.1
CA Rectum	3.4	3.4	6.8	6.6	0.0
Ischaemic heart disease	3.4	6.5	3.4	0.0	3.4
Suicide and self inflicted injuries	8.9	15.8	0.0	9.7	0.0

*(Registrar General (NISRA))*

**Table 10: Standardised Death Rates for Men aged 15-74 years within the Eastern Health and Social Services Board for a selected number of causes of death**

Condition	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
All Causes	689	697	673	617	591
Ischaemic heart disease	191.0	177.4	175.7	153.2	133.6
Cardio vascular disease	38.9	42.8	43.0	25.3	28.8
All Respiratory	72.9	77.6	81.6	73.0	49.8
Transport Accidents	10.0	12.2	10.6	14.2	12.7
CA Lung	73.6	63.9	62.8	57.4	66.0
CA Colon	14.7	17.7	15.4	14.7	11.5
CA Stomach	13.3	14.3	14.9	9.9	9.4
CA Rectum	5.3	6.6	5.5	6.9	6.4
Ischaemic heart disease	18.0	14.4	23.5	26.4	22.1

*(Registrar General (NISRA) Mortality Statistics and Home Population Estimates. Rates are per 100,000 population and all rates are standardised to the revised 2001 Home mid year estimate)*

**Table 11: Standardised Death Rates for Women aged 15-74 years within the Eastern Health and Social Services Board for a selected number of causes of death**

Condition	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
All Causes	395	370	396	396	341
Ischaemic heart disease	72.6	64.8	61.9	57.9	50.8
Cardio vascular disease	32.8	27.1	30.8	29.5	23.7
All Respiratory	49.5	49.1	59.2	59.5	34.5
Transport Accidents	2.9	2.2	2.9	2.5	4.1
CA Lung	32.1	35.6	30.4	40.3	28.0
CA Colon	25.0	25.7	28.3	32.1	32.5
CA Stomach	10.1	7.7	9.3	11.5	5.4
CA Rectum	3.2	7.2	4.5	5.1	5.8
Ischaemic heart disease	4.8	5.3	2.6	2.6	3.3
Suicide and self inflicted injuries	6.0	5.9	2.2	8.2	4.2

*(Registrar General (NISRA))*

## Cancer Registry

**Table 12: Incidence of *All Cancers* (ICD-10 C00-C96) in Electoral Wards (Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portaferry, Portavogie) combined, compared with (a)NI, (b)EHSSB, (c)Ards District Council.**

Standardised Incidence Ratios (SIRs) by Gender for 1993-2001 (with associated 95% confidence limits)

Standard population	4 Electoral Wards combined	
	Females	Males
NI as standard	<b>85 (75-95)</b> significantly lower	<b>81 (72-91)</b> significantly lower
EHSSB as standard	<b>86 (76-96)</b> significantly lower	<b>83 (74-93)</b> significantly lower
Ards District Council as standard	91 (81-102) not significantly different	90 (80-101) not significantly different

*(Northern Ireland Cancer Registry, 2004)*

For both men and women, the numbers of cancers diagnosed (1993-2001) in the electoral wards of Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portaferry and Portavogie combined were *significantly lower* than expected for Northern Ireland as a whole. The same was true when EHSSB was used as the reference/standard population - cancer incidence was still *significantly lower* than expected in these 4 electoral wards of interest. Finally, numbers of cancers diagnosed in the 4 wards were *not significantly different* from those occurring in the District Council area over the same period.

*(N.B. Within the above table, significant results are highlighted in bold. A Standardised Incidence Ratio (SIR) of 100 indicates that observed = expected. A ratio of greater than 100 indicates that the observed number is higher than expected. In general, values of the SIR above or below 100 indicate respectively an excess or deficit over what would be expected if the 4 ward areas experienced the same level of incidence as the comparison area. The confidence intervals presented here with each SIR provide measures of whether the incidence ratio is statistically significant. The 95% confidence interval gives the range within which it is 95% certain that the value of each SIR lies. If this interval includes the value 100, then the result is not significant).*

### Dental Health

In 2001 between 37-51% of children aged 3-5 were registered with a dentist – Portaferry had the lowest percentage – all 4 areas were lower than the Northern Ireland average of 61% (Census, 2001). Within the 4 ward areas there is one full-time dentist in Kircubbin and a part-time dentist in Greyabbey (*Community Steering Group*).

**Table 13: Percentage of Children aged 3-5 years Registered with a Dentist**

Ward Area	Percentage
Northern Ireland	61%
Ballywalter	51%
Kircubbin	51%
Portaferry	37%
Portavogie	49%

*(NISRA, Census, 2001)*

### Dental Screening

Screening for dental health in children is often recorded as ‘dmf’ rates, referring to the number of decayed, missing and filled teeth. The Ulster Community Hospital Trust is contracted to screen children in primary school at year 1, 2 and 7, however in a number of small schools the dentist will screen the whole school. This explains why in some schools listed in Table 14, the total number of children screened in the school is much higher than those screened at P1, 2, and P7. *‘Dmf’ rates are calculated as a class average if not all children are present on the day the dentist visits the school.*

Based on the following table, Greyabbey and Kirkistown primary schools would appear to have a higher number of children recorded with either decayed or filled teeth versus to the total number screened in the school, compared to Portaferry Intermediate school and St Marys school in Portaferry. St Marys Portaferry, Ballywalter and Ballygalget primary schools have a higher record of children with decayed teeth at P1 compared to the other schools listed. Generally, the incidence of decayed teeth is higher in the lower Ards Peninsula compared to other areas within the Eastern Health and Social Services Board Area (*Ulster Community Hospital Trust, 2004*).

**Table 14: Figures showing Dental Screening Records of School Children in First, Second and Seventh form in Primary Schools taken as a class average 2002/03**

<b>Location/school</b>	<b>P1</b>	<b>P2</b>	<b>P7</b>	<b>Total school</b>
<b>Ballywalter</b>	No. in Class 30 No. screened 24 Caries Free 9 Decayed 42 Missing 0 Filled 4	No. in Class 29 No. screened 27 Caries Free 8 Decayed 55 Missing 12 Filled 12	No. in Class 26 No. screened 19 Caries Free 2 Decayed 28 Missing 21 Filled 14	Total School Screened 148 Caries Free 34 Decayed 264 Missing 142 Filled 114
<b>Greyabbey P</b>	No. in Class 9 Screened 5 Caries free 2 Decayed 5 Missing 5 Filled 3	No. in class 11 screened 7 caries free 2 Decayed 15 Missing 7 Filled 5	No. in class 8 screened 6 caries free 1 Decayed 0 Missing 0 Filled 24	Total school screened 55 caries free 18 Decayed 62 Missing 39 Filled 99
<b>Kirkistown</b>	No. in class 9 screened 9 caries free 7 Decayed 4 Missing 0 Filled 4	No. in class 8 screened 8 caries free 4 Decayed 10 Missing 4 Filled 2	No. in class 8 screened 8 caries free 4 Decayed 0 Missing 0 Filled 25	Total school screened 61 caries free 20 Decayed 60 Missing 35 Filled 99
<b>Portavogie</b>	No. in class 14 screened 11 caries free 5 Decayed 15 Missing 4 Filled 0	No. in class 21 screened 19 caries free 5 Decayed 52 Missing 2 Filled 11	No. in class 15 screened 7 caries free 1 Decayed 4 Missing 0 Filled 8	Total school screened 79 caries free 16 Decayed 71 Missing 6 Filled 19
<b>Ballygalget</b>	No. in class 13 screened 11 caries free 4 Decayed 30 Missing 0 Filled 1	No. in class 15 screened 12 caries free 6 Decayed 20 Missing 11 Filled 0	No. in class 19 screened 17 caries free 5 Decayed 8 Missing 0 Filled 27	total school screened 93 caries free 26 Decayed 58 Missing 11 Filled 28
<b>St Marys, Portaferry</b>	No. in class 31 screened 23 caries free 9 Decayed 46 Missing 14 Filled 6	No. in class 36 screened 31 caries free 6 Decayed 53 Missing 64 Filled 5	No. in class 36 screened 14 caries free 5 Decayed 10 Missing 5 Filled 6	total school screened 172 caries free 45 Decayed 131 Missing 83 Filled 17
<b>Portaferry Int</b>	No. in class 12 screened 12 caries free 4 Decayed 15 Missing 15 Filled 2	No. in class 10 screened 9 caries free 3 Decayed 12 Missing 13 Filled 1	No. in class 13 screened 13 caries free 2 Decayed 9 Missing 4 Filled 5	total school screened 76 caries free 14 Decayed 40 Missing 32 Filled 13

*(Dental Department, Ulster Community Hospital Trust, 2004)*

## Immunisation

Figures comparing primary uptake rates (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio) of children at their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday between 1999 and 2002 showed an increase in uptake rates in Kircubbin and Portavogie (uptake of 100%), within Portaferry and Ballywalter ward areas the uptake reduced slightly (between 1-3%) (*Child Health System, 2003*). These figures compare favourably to the overall Eastern Health and Social Services Board Area uptake of 95.56% recorded in 2001 (*Early Years Planning Information Report, 2001*) and 95.7% for 2002. The collection of figures on uptake rates of Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio is used as a proxy for all primary vaccinations which also includes Pertussis, Hib, and Meningitis C vaccines (*EHHSB, 2003*).

**Table 15: Comparisons in Primary Uptake Rates by 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio used as a Proxy for all Primary Vaccinations)**

Ward Areas	2 Year Old Primary Uptake Rates 1999		2 Year Old Primary Uptake Rates 2002	
	No	% of total	No	% of total
EHSSB	8350	95.6	7501	95.7
Portaferry	47	97.92	32	94.1
Ballywalter	51	98.08	41	97.6
Kircubbin	47	95.92	41	100.0
Portavogie	45	97.83	48	100.0

(*Child Health System, 2003*).

Uptake rates of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination reduced in all 4 wards, and as much as 13% in one area (Portaferry) from 1999 to 2002 (*Child Health System, 2003*).

Overall however MMR uptake in the Ulster Community Hospital Trust (which these four wards fit under) was higher than uptake in the other three Health and Social Service Trust areas within the Eastern Board Area recorded in 2001 (*Early Years Planning Information Report, 2001*).

**Table 16: Comparisons in Uptake of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccination by 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday**

Ward Areas	MMR uptake rates 1999		MMR uptake rates 2002	
	No	% of total	No	% of total
EHSSB	7741	88.6	6739	86
Portaferry	46	95.83	28	82.4
Ballywalter	50	96.15	39	92.9
Kircubbin	47	95.92	37	90.2
Portavogie	43	93.48	44	91.7

(*Child Health System, 2003*).

## Births

Only 1 child (2.6%) in 2002 was recorded as being of low birth weight within the 4 ward areas (*Child Health System, 2003*). Low birth weight is defined as a birth weight of less than 2500



grams in a single baby born 36 weeks + gestation. This is comparable with the overall Eastern Health and Social Services Board percentage of 1.9% recorded in 2001 (*EHSSB, 2003*).

**Table 17: Comparisons in Low Birth Weight Incidence in Singleton Term Births**

Ward Areas	Low Birth Weights 1999		Low Birth Weights 2002	
	No	% of total	No	% of total
EHSSB	164	2.1	133	1.9
Portaferry	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ballywalter	0	0.00	1	2.6
Kircubbin	0	0.00	0	0.00
Portavogie	0	0.00	0	0.00

(*Child Health System, 2003*)

7 births to teenage mothers were recorded within the 4 ward areas in 2002 compared to 10 in 1999 (*Child Health System, 2003*). Figures recorded in 2001 show that overall the Ulster Community Hospital Trust had the lowest percentage of births to teenage mothers compared to the other three trust areas within the EHSSB area (*Early Years Planning Information Report, 2001*). Teenage pregnancy is defined as births to mothers aged less than 20 years.

### Breast Feeding

In relation to breast feeding rates at discharge from hospital (comparing 1999 and 2002), figures show a small rise in percentage figures within Kircubbin and Portavogie, and a small fall in percentages within Portaferry and Ballywalter for live-births, living at day 28 (*Child Health System, 2003*). At present figures on breast feeding at 7 months are not adequately collected at ward level to give an accurate comparison of rates at discharge and at 7 months (*EHSSB, 2003*).

**Table 18: Breastfeeding Rates on Discharge from Hospital**

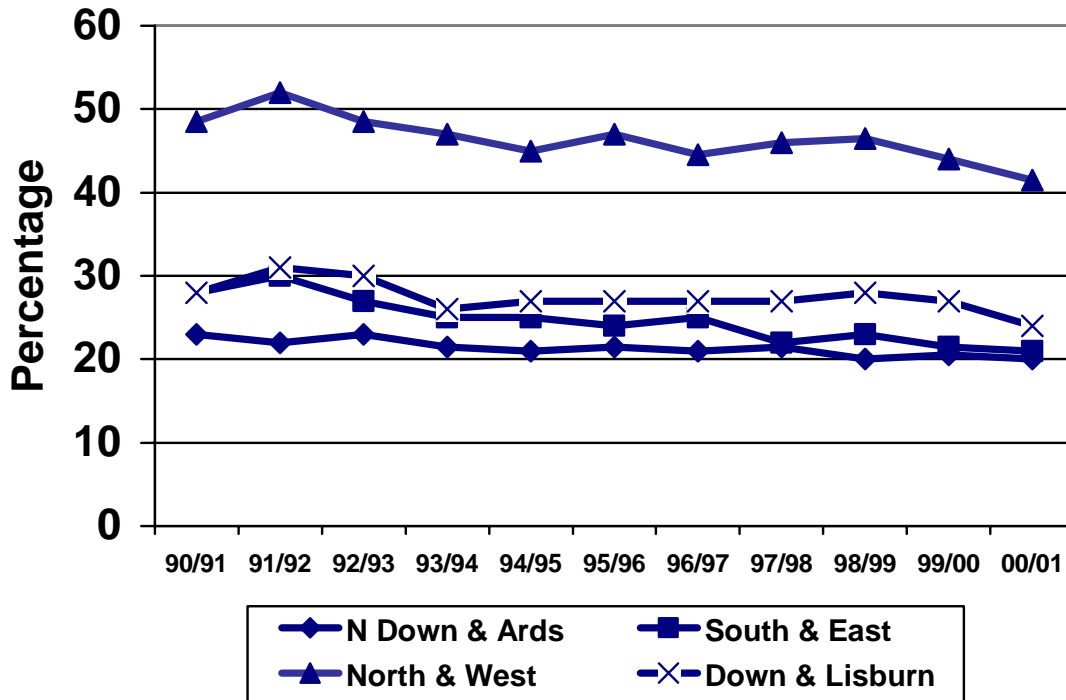
Ward Areas	Breastfeeding rates 1999		Breastfeeding rates 2002	
	No	% of total	No	% of total
EHSSB	3203	37.3	3110	40.5
Portaferry	20	46.51	26	45.6
Ballywalter	18	39.13	15	36.6
Kircubbin	19	43.18	19	50.0
Portavogie	17	34.69	21	40.4

(*Child Health System, 2003*)

### Smoking

Smoking during pregnancy is a particular concern for the health of unborn children. Figures comparing the percentage of mothers who smoked during pregnancy between 1990/91 and 2000/01 showed an overall decline in smoking. On comparison between the 4 Health and Social Service Trust areas within the Eastern Health and Social Services Board (EHSSB), North Down and Ards Health and Social Services Trust area had the lowest percentage of mothers who smoked during pregnancy (*Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, EHSSB, 2001*).

**Table 19: Percentage of Mothers who Smoked during Pregnancy by Residence  
EHSSB 1990/91 – 2000/01**



(EHSSB, 2003)

**Mental Health**

Statistics at ward level are not available in relation to mental health. However the mental health of an individual can be affected by factors such as social isolation which are in turn influenced by how accessible services are, as well as leisure activities and proximity to family members (more specific information on access issues relevant to the 4 ward areas is covered in the transport section).

There is some evidence that the overall suicide rate in rural areas is growing, perhaps in response to the devastating impact on farming life as a result of both the BSE crisis and the Foot and Mouth Outbreak (*A population Needs Assessment, EHSSB, 2002*).

## Relevant current provision

**Breast-feeding Support Group** In keeping with government targets of increasing the number of women breast-feeding and the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust Baby Friendly Initiative, a breast-feeding support group was set up in the Peninsula area in Loughview Medical Centre in Kircubbin. The group ran for approximately 6 months however uptake was poor resulting in the cessation of the group. Assessment by health visiting identified a need expressed by many new mothers for a group to meet other mothers. Bumps and Babies commenced in December 2003, which was well attended. Evaluation of the group highlighted a high level of satisfaction by all who attended. It is hoped that antenatal and postnatal parents will attend in the future. It is further hoped to influence breast-feeding rates by providing support and information on breast-feeding from other breast-feeding mothers and a health visitor. The group meets every Tuesday (10.30-12.00) in the Herron Hall, Kircubbin (*Health visitor Department, Ulster Community Hospital Trust*).

### **Smoking Cessation Project (Youth)**

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board, in conjunction with Peninsula Healthy Living, have funded the Ulster Cancer Foundation to employ a coordinator for an eight month pilot project, initiating and implementing a smoking cessation programme for young people in the North Down and Ards Health and Social Services Trust area. This will include establishing links with and organising training for teachers, school nurses, youth and community workers and health and social services staff in the district. When trained they will be able to encourage and help any young people who wish to give up smoking and support them if they do.

**Free Fruit in Primary Schools:** This pilot project is one of a number of projects developed by Peninsula Healthy Living to meet some of the health needs identified by the local community. It began in November 2003 in 11 schools, and will continue for the next 3 years (funded by the New Opportunities Fund, under their Coronary Heart Disease, Stroke and Cancer Programme in conjunction with the Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust Health Promotion Department). The aim is to improve the nutrition of young people. The fruit will be prepared, chopped and served to children in bite-size pieces, colour and presentation will be key to encouraging the children to try new flavours and perhaps taste fruits for the first time. A part-time dietician was appointed in January 2004 to work alongside the project. Schools will be actively involved in deciding how they can improve the health and well-being of the children. The project is already proving very popular, and considerable interest has been shown by schools not included in this pilot project. (*Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership Annual Report 2003, Project co-ordinator, 2003*).

**Physical Activity Development Officer:** Through Peninsula Healthy Living a Physical Activity Development Officer was appointed in June 2003 to promote physical activity in all age groups. The Physical Activity Development Officer works with Community Groups, Schools, Health and Social Services, Youth Clubs and Colleges of Further Education, and offer a range of activities from hill walking to Tai-Chi. (*Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership Annual Report 2003, Project co-ordinator, 2003*).

**Women in Sport and Physical Activity (WISPA):** This multi agency initiative has offered training and support to the community to provide walk leaders who organize walking trips and exercise within the community. They also organize other activities such as armchair aerobics and in conjunction with Peninsula Community Transport (PACT) they organize trips to the Leisure Centre in Ards (*Ards Borough Council, 2003*).

**Healthy Eating:** The “Cook it “ programme is supported by the Health Promotion Agency, and has been implemented by the Ulster Hospitals and Community Trust. This is a 6 week programme which gives information on how to eat healthily on a budget, and also offers some training in basic cooking skills. Following funding granted by the New Opportunities Fund, the proposed programme will be implemented through-out the Eastern Board area, beginning in late 2003 and will run for 3 years (UCHT Health Promotion Department).

**Links to Active Participation in Sport (LAPS):** This is a multi agency Disability Sport Forum which gives relevant organisations from the public, voluntary, and community sectors the opportunity to work in partnership to improve the delivery of their services. It is developing physical activity, recreation, and sporting opportunities which will integrate people with a disability into their communities, and improve their health. The forum has appointed a disability sport development officer to deliver programmes. Links to Active Participation in Sport (LAPS).

**Primary Schools Fitness Testing Programme** to measure the fitness levels of primary school age children and to deliver a multi sport physical activity intervention programme to raise the levels of fitness and improve health (*Ards Borough Council, 2003*).

## **Policies and strategies**

### **Investing for Health**

*Investing for Health*, the current public health strategy for Northern Ireland, was launched in 2002 and will guide policy until 2010. It has two main overarching targets: to improve the health of all people in Northern Ireland, and to reduce inequalities in health. The strategy also aims to reduce poverty in families with children, support young people to achieve their full potential, and promote mental health. To achieve these objectives, *Investing for Health* set a series of actions in areas from mental health and health promotion to education and childcare, employment and the environment.

*Investing for Health* is largely intended to be delivered through partnerships, and new local partnerships have been formed to deliver targets. There is also a dedicated Investing for Health officer in each Health and Social Services Trust, whose task is to co-ordinate local work relating to the strategy. A website, Wellnet ([www.wellnet-ni.com](http://www.wellnet-ni.com)) has been developed to improve communication between partnerships, and also to allow local organisations to present their activities across Northern Ireland. (*Investing for Health, March 2002, DHSSPS*).

Under *Investing for Health*, Health and Social Services Boards are required to draw up Health Improvement Plans for their local areas. The Eastern Health and Social Services Board has drawn up a special locality plan for North Down and Ards area, which outlines current health trends and current activities in the area. It also sets out action planned for 2003-2004 and through to 2008, which includes developing communities of interest theme groups and to consult with the community on health and well-being needs to name but a few (*Health Improvement Plan, North Down and Ards Area 2003-2008, EHSSB*).

In addition, there is also a range of strategies focusing on specific target areas. These strategies include their own objectives and action plans.

**Teenage Pregnancy Strategy 2002-2007:** The overarching aim of this strategy is to reduce the number of unplanned births to teenage mothers, and minimise any negative consequences of those births to teenage parents and their children. It also sets a target that 75 % of teenagers should not have had sexual intercourse before the age of 16. Actions planned under the strategy include improved education in schools, personal development courses for young people, courses aimed to improve communication between children and parents and improved services for teenage mothers. For instance, South Eastern Education and Library Board, in partnership with the Department of Education, the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and the Health Promotion Agency will develop guidelines on relationship and sexual education. (*Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, DHSSPS 2002*).

The government is also preparing a sexual health strategy, which will outline actions required to reduce the incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and improve access to and information on contraception and family planning. (*Towards a Sexual Health Strategy, DHSSPS 2003*).

**Tobacco Action Plan 2003-2008:** Preventing people from taking up smoking, helping smokers to quit and protecting non-smokers from tobacco smoke are the main aims of the new Tobacco Action Plan. Measures to achieve these aims include information campaigns on the effects of smoke on non-smokers, improved cessation support services for smokers, wide introduction of smoking bans in workplaces and legislation banning advertising. (*Tobacco Action Plan 2003-2008, DHSSPS 2003*).

**Promoting Mental Health Strategy & Action Plan 2003-2008:** This strategy aims to prevent or reduce the incidence of mental distress, illness and suicide, by addressing factors which affect mental health. The Eastern Health and Social Services Board will be required to develop new programmes to promote mental health, while the Board and Trust in partnership with the Education and Library Board and the voluntary and community sectors will ensure that local information and support is available for those who need it. Planned actions also include improving training for professionals, and creating suicide awareness programmes for the public as well as professionals. (*Promoting Mental Health Strategy & Action Plan 2003-2008, DHSSPS 2003*).

**Strategy for Reducing Alcohol Related Harm:** Adopted in 2000, this strategy aims to encourage responsible drinking and reduce the harm caused by excessive alcohol use. Actions taken include public information campaigns, provision of safe drinking guidelines, improved treatment services and development of strategies to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour resulting from alcohol use (*Strategy for Reducing Alcohol Related Harm, DHSSPS 2000*).

## **Local Views**

Kircubbin and District Community Association recently completed a survey of 263 young people in relation to their hobbies and activities, and issues such as smoking, alcohol, drugs, and sex.

The age of respondents varied, 71% were aged between 14-15 years, 18% were aged between 16-17 years and the remaining 11% were aged between 18-19 years. 70% of respondents came from within the 4 ward areas and therefore the information is particularly relevant to this profile.

The results are as follows:

### *Smoking*

87 (32%) of respondents said they smoked – with a high percentage of them smoking between 10-20 cigarettes per day. The age at which respondents began to smoke varied between 7 years and 15 years - 43% of these started before the age of 12 years.

### *Alcohol*

73% of respondents said they drink alcohol. WKD and Vodka were named as the top two favourite drinks. Reports of children starting to drink at an age as young as 8 was highlighted, with the majority starting to drink at 13 or 14 years. Respondents indicated that in the majority of cases alcohol was obtained from a friend (123) or a public house (58), with a reasonably high number getting alcohol from a family member such as a parent (34), brother/sister (32) or aunt/uncle (19). A low number obtained alcohol from an off licence (7).

### *Drugs*

Respondents were asked if they had ever been offered illegal drugs. The highest percentage of young people (46%) had been offered cannabis, 35% offered solvents, and 29% poppers. Other drugs which had been offered included: ecstasy, speed, magic mushrooms, cocaine, LSD, heroin and Temazepam. Drugs were often offered during parties, at a friends house or arcade. 21 (8%) indicated they were offered drugs at church.

### *Information on Sex and Drugs*

The top 4 sources of information for young people on sex and drugs were: school, friends, television, and magazines. 91% of respondents were aware of the consequences of unprotected sex and many named sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy as examples. The study also highlighted that the majority of respondents were most likely to talk to their friend, mother or boyfriend/girlfriend if they had a problem.

### *Activities*

Respondents were asked about what they did during a typical weekend. On a Friday night the most popular responses were: going out with friends, going out to drink, going to work, going out to a club and playing football. On a Saturday morning spending time with friends was the fifth most popular choice coming after working, shopping, playing football and sleeping. A similar picture to the activities listed for Friday night was repeated on Saturday night. On Sunday mornings activities were more relaxed with the most popular response being sleeping or relaxing. Respondents were asked what activities they would like in a drop in centre, the most popular responses included: football, pool tables, a place to relax with friends and badminton. (*Kircubbin and District Community Association Survey, November, 2003*).

Anecdotal information suggests that there is a problem with anti-social behaviour and under-age drinking within the 4 ward areas. The BBC recently reported on these activities in Portaferry on the evening news (8 January 2004).

*Specific information and figures on overall smoking rates, physical activity, diet and sexual health for the population on the whole is not available at ward level, only a Northern Ireland level, and therefore have not been included in this profile.*





# Housing

“It is now recognised that good quality housing and associated services can contribute significantly to the general health of individuals and communities...There are strong links between housing and mental and physical health”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety* 2002

Portavogie is within the top 30% of wards in Northern Ireland most deprived in terms of housing. Housing deprivation includes, housing in disrepair; housing without central heating, and housing lacking insulation. Poor housing is an important correlate of poor health and is therefore a fair indicator of Social Disadvantage (*Noble, 2001*). Kircubbin on the other hand is within the top 25% of wards assessed as having good housing (*Noble Indicator score, 2001*).

**Table 21: Housing Stress by Ward Rank**

(There are 20 wards within the Ards area and 566 within Northern Ireland. 1 describes the most deprived and 566 the least deprived)

Ward Name	Housing	
	Ards	NI
Ballywalter	12	324
Kircubbin	18	427
Portaferry	14	341
Portavogie	2	159

(*Noble Deprivation Indicators, 2001*)

## Holiday Homes

257 (5%) of all household space within the 4 ward areas has been purchased as a second residence or holiday accommodation (NISRA, Census, 2001). It is felt within the area that this reduces the amount of property available for local young people to purchase who wish to remain in the area they grew up in (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

**Table 22: Household Space including Holiday Accommodation**

	All household spaces:			
	All household spaces	With residents	With no residents	
			Vacant	Second residence/ holiday accommodation
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>658426</b>	<b>626718</b>	<b>26716</b>	<b>4992</b>
Ballywalter	1477	1391	41	45
Kircubbin	1149	1061	45	43
Portaferry	1282	1155	55	72
Portavogie	1499	1320	82	97

(*NISRA, Census, 2001*)

## Tenure

Of the 4 ward areas, Portavogie has the highest proportion of owner occupied housing (80%). Portaferry has the lowest proportion of owner occupied housing (66%), and also has the highest proportion of households living in Housing Executive rented accommodation (21% - which is higher than the Northern Ireland average of 18.6%).

An average of 6% of households within the 4 areas rent property from private landlords or letting agencies – the figures are highest in Kircubbin and lowest in Ballywalter.

**Table 23: Households by Tenure**

	All households	Households which are:						
		Owner occupied:			Households rented from <sup>2</sup> :			
		Owns outright	Owns with a mortgage or loan	Shared ownership <sup>1</sup>	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Housing Association, Housing Co-operative or Charitable Trust	Private landlord or letting agency	Other <sup>3</sup>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>626718</b>	<b>184090</b>	<b>247182</b>	<b>4945</b>	<b>116477</b>	<b>16454</b>	<b>41676</b>	<b>15894</b>
Ballywalter	1391	485	518	16	249	27	52	44
Kircubbin	1061	376	406	4	164	4	77	30
Portaferry	1155	304	454	8	248	24	80	37
Portavogie	1321	508	545	7	132	3	76	50

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

## Accommodation Type

In relation to accommodation type, the majority of houses in Ballywalter, Kircubbin and Portavogie are detached houses or bungalows, whereas in Portaferry terrace houses are more prevalent (Census, 2001).

**Table 24: Accommodation Type**

	Accommodation type:						
	Detached house or bungalow	Semi-detached house or bungalow	Terraced (including end-terraced) house or bungalow	Purpose built block of flats or tenement	Part of a converted or shared house (includes bed-sits)	In commercial Building <sup>1</sup>	Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>240137</b>	<b>179903</b>	<b>180316</b>	<b>47215</b>	<b>6727</b>	<b>2257</b>	<b>1871</b>
Ballywalter	689	283	474	14	6	11	-
Kircubbin	581	233	316	8	-	3	10
Portaferry	440	243	518	66	3	11	-
Portavogie	769	375	317	32	3	-	4

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

## Fuel Poverty

A household is defined as being in fuel poverty when it needs to use more than 10% of its income to achieve an acceptable level of heating in the house. Fuel poverty is particularly prevalent among older people, who often live on low incomes on their own, and often tend to live in older properties than the rest of the population.

Households without some form of central heating may be vulnerable to fuel poverty. In all 4 ward areas the percentage of households with central heating is lower than the Northern Ireland average.

**Table 25: Percentage of Households with/without Central Heating**

	All house-holds	With central heating	Without central heating
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>626718</b>	<b>94.67</b>	<b>4.61</b>
Ballywalter	1391	93.53	5.75
Kircubbin	1061	90.01	8.77
Portaferry	1155	93.42	6.06
Portavogie	1320	91.52	7.50

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

## Ards District Housing Plan, 2002/03:

### Homelessness

In 2003 within Newtownards District, a total of 679 persons presented as homeless, of which 425 (63%) were awarded 'full duty status' (statutorily homeless). Examining the figures for the last 6 years, the number of homeless people peaked in 1998 (689) and was at its lowest in 2000 (533). However the number of people confirmed with homeless status is now at its highest (425 out of 679 presenting in 2003) (*Ards District Housing Plan. 2003/04*). According to the District Housing Plan (2003/04) the major reason for people presenting as homeless in Newtownards District emanated from relationship breakdown (24 %), the breakdown of sharing (20 %) and unreasonable accommodation (17 %).

The relocation of people who are homeless is an issue of concern in the area, as a lack of suitable local housing means that people can be re-housed as far away as Newcastle, Armagh, Lurgan or Ballymena. Some people feel that there is no point applying for housing in the lower Ards Peninsula due to the small amount of NIHE stock and a very low turnover. Since people are aware of this situation, they often make their own arrangements. This compounds the situation as the resulting low numbers on waiting lists contributes (along with other factors such as a severe shortage of suitable sites to develop and a lack of land) to the low level of new build in the area. (*NIHE, 2004*).

## Private House Prices

The average house prices for all private properties in the Ards Borough Council area during 2002/03 was £106,171 compared with a Northern Ireland average of £82,698. According to the Northern Ireland Housing Bulletin, the average selling price of NHBC registered new private sector houses in the Borough during the year ending December 2002 was £110,650 compared to £99,275 for Northern Ireland as a whole. The Ards Borough Council area is one of the areas in Northern Ireland more likely to be experiencing affordability issues due to higher than average house prices (*Ards District Housing Plan. 2003/04*).

## Social Housing

Social new build programmes are planned within Portaferry (4 units), Ballyhalbert (5 units), and Greyabbey (6 units) within 2003/04 – 2005/06. Ards District Housing Plan indicates that difficulty is encountered in gaining access to available land to allow building to commence as they are in sharp competition with private contractors (*Ards District Housing Plan. 2003/04*). The private sector built 442 new properties during 2002 in the Ards Borough Council area, unfortunately the exact location of these was not outlined in the Ards District Housing Plan (*NIHE, 2003/04*).

## Specific Housing Executive Issues for each area include:

- In **Ballywalter** 39 applicants were on the waiting list for housing at December 2002, 21 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were 9 allocations in the year (see glossary for a definition of housing stress). Over the past year the waiting list for Ballywalter local housing has increased mainly due to a rise in the number of small families registering for social housing. New build has not been programmed for the area but housing need will continue to be monitored. Housing Executive property has reduced by 52% in the area, through the sale of its properties.
- In **Kircubbin** 28 applicants were on the waiting list at December 2002, 11 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were 10 allocations in the year. The sale of NIHE property in the area has caused stock levels to decrease by 60%.

An assessment of the area by the Housing Executive (latent demand test) indicated there was not a need for further housing development at present. In Kircubbin/Greyabbey area an improvement and maintenance scheme was carried out during 2001 which resulted in 188 (out of 201 existing dwellings) being modified. Work involved fitting smoke alarms, interior/exterior refurbishments and heating replacements.

- In **Portaferry** 62 applicants were on the waiting list at December 2002, 22 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were 21 allocations in the year (all of which were relets as no new build schemes have completed during this period). Housing Executive property has reduced by 64% in the area, through the sale of its properties.
- In **Portavogie** 17 applicants were on the waiting list at December 2002, 3 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were 5 allocations in the year. There are no new build

schemes programmed for the area. Additional social housing is not planned within the next 3 years.

- In **Greyabbey** 19 applicants were on the waiting list at December 2002, 13 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were 2 allocations in the year. Housing Executive property has reduced by 60% in the area, through the sale of its properties. There is also a lack of Housing Association accommodation in the area. Housing need in Greyabbey has continued to increase and 6 units are planned in 2005/06 to ease this problem and negotiations with local landowners are progressing with regard to a small development in the centre of the village.
- In **Ballyhalbert** 6 applicants were on the waiting list at December 2002, 4 of which were deemed to be in housing stress - there were no allocations in the year. At April 2003, the lettable stock had been reduced by 63% through the sale of properties. A small new build scheme is programmed in 2004/05 for 5 units at Moat Road, Ballyhalbert (*Ards District Housing Plan. 2003/04*).

In total within the 4 ward areas, Northern Ireland Housing Executive owns 710 properties and 60 properties are owned by the two Housing Associations. Since the mid 1970's when the law changed to allow tenants to buy social housing property, 1071 Housing Executive properties have been sold (*Ards District Housing Plan. 2003/04*). It may be of interest to note that the number of Housing Executive properties in the public domain have decreased whilst the number of people reporting as homeless has increased.

The Housing Executive emphasise that if a tenant who has over two years of tenancy applies to purchase their home then the Housing Executive cannot refuse this application.

From 1 September 2002 Housing Executive tenants with two years' completed tenancy are allowed a discount of 32% with an increase of 1% discount for each additional completed year's tenancy up to a maximum of 60%, subject to a Discount Ceiling of £34,000 (*NIHE, 2004*).

**Table 26: Housing Executive Stock (April 2003)** (Figures in brackets denote sold properties)

Area	Bungalow	House	Cottage	Flat	Maisonette	Split Level	Total
<b>Ballyhalbert</b>	8 (13)	4 (7)	4 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	16 (27)
<b>Ballywalter</b>	50 (19)	64 (126)	24 (11)	6 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	144 (156)
<b>Cloughey</b>	12 (18)	1 (14)	11 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	24 (40)
<b>Greyabbey</b>	36 (43)	30 (76)	19 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	85 (127)
<b>Kircubbin</b>	54 (56)	61 (113)	20 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	135 (202)
<b>Portaferry</b>	111 (78)	82 (242)	13 (66)	8 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	214 (386)
<b>Portavogie</b>	52 (71)	17 (54)	15 (8)	8 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	92 (133)

(*Ards District Housing Plan, 2003/04*)

**Table 27: Housing Association Stock (April 2003)** (Figures in brackets denote sold properties)

Area (Housing Association)	General Needs	Sheltered	Supported	Total
Ballywalter (Corinthian)	0	20	0	20
Portaferry (Ark)	14	26	0	40

*(Ards District Housing Plan, 2003/04)*

### **Improving Housing Executive Stock**

The Housing Executive carries out work on their houses through an Improvement and Planned Maintenance programme. Planned Maintenance involves maintenance work or replacement of external or internal elements of the house which have reached the end of their expected useful life such as kitchens, heating appliances, smoke alarms. Work is planned within 2003/04 in Greyabbey and Kircubbin on 42 units, and in Portavogie, Cloughey, and Ballywalter on 34 units in relation specifically replacing kitchens in these units. External maintenance work is planned within 214 units in Portaferry and 252 units in Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter, Portavogie and Cloughey. Heating replacement is planned within 81 units within Kircubbin, Donaghadee and Carrowdore. Multi-element improvement, which includes improvement of living/dining room space, refurbishment of kitchens/bathrooms, rewiring and the installation of central heating, is planned in 16 units within Ballywalter (*Ards District Housing Plan, 2003/04*).

### **Housing Associations**

There are 2 housing associations within the area – Ark Housing association which is located on the Shore Rd and Burn Brae in Portaferry; and Corinthian Housing Association located on Stump Rd Ballywalter. Both of the Housing Associations in the area are registered and regulated by the Department for Social Development. Public funding is made available for them to help them build new homes, renovate existing houses and let them to people in housing need. Housing Associations can also attract private money. Permission to build new homes must be obtained through the Housing Executive’s Planning Department (*NIHE, 2004*).

### **Current provision**

**Mediation Services** The Northern Ireland Housing Executive offer mediation services in all areas of Northern Ireland, which aim to help neighbours involved in a dispute reach an agreement that satisfies everyone. It is a free confidential service. A mediator from the Housing Executive will visit those involved in the dispute, listen to the problems people are experiencing, and decide whether or not mediation might help. They will help both sides work together to identify key issues and find solutions (*NIHE, 2004*).

## Other Relevant Information

**Green Belt:** Within the *Ards and Down Area Plan 2015* part of the central area of the Peninsula, previously designated 'rural remainder' has been designated a Green Belt area. The Plan is presently in draft form. Development of single dwellings will, however, continue to be controlled on the basis of planning and environmental considerations. The building of single houses will be regulated in terms of the capacity of the landscape setting to absorb further development, their visual impact, siting and design, pollution and other environmental consequences (*Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland*).

### *Possible implications*

Arguably, the Green Belt policy only allows development in the countryside where a need can be shown: i.e. a farmer needing to live close to his fields. It may no longer be possible for farmers to sell off sites for one-off development (single dwelling).

The Green Belt policy might mitigate against re-use of redundant agricultural buildings for purposes such as light industrial/commercial units or holiday letting accommodation (*Greyabbey Residents Association Website*).

Guidelines on planning which restrict building in the Peninsula, it could be argued, limit the available housing stock. This has led to a significant rise in house prices, and it appears that first time buyers find it difficult to enter the market. This has the potential to impact on the demography of the area, possibly decreasing the numbers of young people if they cannot find/afford suitable housing in the area (*Ards Community Steering Group*).

**House Building:** The limit for new build activity permitted in the Ards Borough has been set at 7,750 new housing units until 2015. The zoning for land for this is in 2 phases, phase 1 ending in 2008 and phase 2 ending in 2015. In towns the allocation in phase 1 must be completely utilized before the land zoned under phase 2 can be released.

### *Possible implications*

It is anticipated that the Peninsula will see considerable new build activity, possibly up to 1000 homes in the next 12 years. *Greyabbey Residents Association* has voiced concerns regarding investment in appropriate infrastructure to support this increase in housing units on the Peninsula.

**New Settlement:** Under the proposed plans for the development of the Ards Peninsula one new settlement has been identified in the Ards Borough. The proposed area is Ballygalget, located 7 km north east of Portaferry and 3 km south west of Cloughey, just off the main Cloughey/Portaferry road (*Ards and Down Area Plan 2015*).

At present this area has a small number of housing units, a church, and a recreational club. If this proposal is implemented the area will experience a significant growth in housing units. A mix of

social and private units are recommended, including units which are “affordable” i.e. smaller moderately priced units, which would facilitate diversity within this development (*Ards and Down Area Plan 2015*).

## **Local Views**

Opinions were gathered from local community representatives at a training day in January 2004, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities as part of the Community Health Impact Assessment process. Two priority issues highlighted in relation to housing were:

- A lack of affordable housing especially for first time buyers in the area. This problem is felt to be exacerbated by planning permission restrictions which at present do not always allow family members to build on parental land.
- A lack of affordable housing has led to migration from the Peninsula. This was considered to have a negative impact on health as family support and social networks are reduced. There is also concern that the demography of the area will change as young couples and families experience difficulties in affording housing.



# Transport

“Cycling, walking and the use of public transport instead of cars all promote health by increasing physical activity and social contact”

Health 21: An introduction, World Health Organisation 1998

## Car Ownership

The number of households who do not have access to a car or van in the 4 ward areas ranges from 15% in Portavogie to 26% in Portaferry, the latter being the same as the Northern Ireland average (26%). However it is important to remember that this is a rural area with recognised transport and access problems therefore not having a car has a much greater impact on access than people living in urban areas.

Between 44 – 47% of households have access to one car or van (compared with an average of 44% for NI) and between 22-29% have access to 2 cars or vans (compared to 24% for NI).

**Table 28: Percentage of Car Ownership by Household**

	All households	Percentage of households with:					All cars or vans in the area <sup>2</sup>
		No cars or vans	One car or van	Two cars or vans	Three cars or vans	Four or more cars or vans	
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>626718</b>	<b>26.32</b>	<b>44.45</b>	<b>23.60</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>691662</b>
Ballywalter	1391	20.56	46.15	26.60	4.74	1.94	1691
Kircubbin	1061	18.85	43.73	29.31	5.28	2.83	1387
Portaferry	1155	25.71	47.10	21.73	3.98	1.47	1264
Portavogie	1320	15.15	46.97	28.26	6.97	2.65	1792

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

Having 2 cars in a rural area is often seen as a necessity rather than a luxury. If the main earner in the household has taken the car to get to work then without a second car access to shops/GP/school is very limited.

## Travel to Work

Travel to work by car, either as a driver, passenger or car pooling, is higher than average figures for NI. In contrast a low percentage of people travel to work by train, bus, taxi or bicycle – this in part is probably due to limited or non existent services in the area. For instance the nearest train station is Bangor (approximately 30 kilometres from Portaferry) and bus services are limited within the 4 ward areas.

It is also interesting to note that the percentage of persons in employment who work mainly at or from home is higher than the NI average (ranging from 10-14% compared to 8.8% for NI).

**Table 29: Mode of Transport to Work**

	All persons aged 16-74 in employment	Percentage of persons aged 16-74 in employment who work mainly at or from home	Percentage of persons aged 16-74 in employment who usually travel to work by:									
			Train	Bus, minibus or coach	Motorcycle, scooter or moped	Driving a car or van	Passenger in a car or van	Car or van pool	Taxi	Bicycle	On foot	Other method <sup>1</sup>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>686644</b>	<b>8.80</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>6.01</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>55.88</b>	<b>8.98</b>	<b>5.73</b>	<b>1.58</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>0.75</b>
Ballywalter	1428	12.75	0.21	4.55	1.75	59.52	9.31	5.46	0.21	0.35	5.04	0.84
Kircubbin	1227	14.18	-	3.18	0.90	57.54	10.84	8.07	-	-	4.48	0.81
Portaferry	1313	10.43	0.30	4.27	0.53	49.28	15.69	7.39	0.23	0.23	10.97	0.69
Portavogie	1519	10.07	0.26	2.76	0.66	61.36	7.50	5.40	0.20	0.59	9.61	1.58

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

### Access to Services

Both Portaferry and Portavogie are both within the top 10% of areas most deprived in terms of access to key services. Key services are defined by Noble (2001) as including: a post office; GP surgery; A&E hospitals; dentist; optician; pharmacist; library; museum and social security office. Poor accessibility reduces the chances of individuals making use of basic services.

**Table 30: Geographical Access to Services**

(There are 20 wards within the Ards area and 566 within Northern Ireland. 1 describes the most deprived and 566 the least deprived)

Ward Name	Access	
	Ards	NI
Ballywalter	5	154
Kircubbin	4	128
Portaferry	1	24
Portavogie	2	55

(Noble Deprivation Score, 2001)

### Key Services available (as defined by Noble) in the 4 Ward Areas include:

- Post office: Portaferry, Cloughey, Kircubbin, Ballywalter, Ballyhalbert and Greyabbey all have sub-post offices
- GP surgery: GP surgeries and outreach consulting rooms can be found in Portavogie, Kircubbin, Greyabbey, Ballywalter and Portaferry. Out of Hours doctors are based in Bangor which is over 30 kilometres from Portaferry.

- A+E hospital: the nearest A+E hospital is Dundonald which is approx. 30 kilometres from Portaferry. There is a minor injuries department at Ards Hospital, Newtownards.
- Dentist: there is one full-time dentist based in Kircubbin and a part-time dentist based in Greyabbey covering the 4 ward areas.
- Optician: two opticians are available in the area, one based in Kircubbin, and the other in Portaferry.
- Pharmacist: these can be found in Portaferry, Kircubbin, Ballywalter, and Greyabbey. There is no pharmacist in Cloughey or Ballyhalbert.
- Library: there is one library in Portaferry which is open part-time, and two mobile libraries covering the 4 ward areas.
- Museum: none in the area.
- Social security office: none in the area.

### **Community Transport**

Peninsula community transport (PACT) was developed in 1998 and launched in 2000. It aims to provide affordable and accessible transport services for individuals and groups who find it difficult to access conventional modes of transport. Peninsula community transport covers 6 wards on the Ards Peninsula (Loughries, Millisle, Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portavogie and Portaferry). It was set up as a result of a needs assessment in the area which highlighted that access to transport (and consequently services and amenities) was considered to be poor or non-existent in some parts of the Peninsula.

Peninsula Community Transport provides transport for all, but also targets certain groups such as older people; mothers and pre-school children; young people; unemployed; community associations; sport clubs and playgroups. It is based in Kircubbin and consists of 3 mini-buses and 7 staff members (5 of these are part-time drivers). A social car scheme (volunteers transport passengers in their own car) and a brokerage scheme have also been introduced in 2002. All passengers using the service must be Peninsula community transport members and the cost of transport is agreed with passengers at the time of booking. Older people cannot use their travel free pass on these buses. Advertising for the service as present is through direct mailings.

Figures relating to usage include:

Door to door passenger trips – 1543 in 2001/02 (there are a high number of women and elderly using this service).

Group hire passenger trips – 7381 in 2001/02 (mostly hired as self-drive).

Peninsula community transport works with South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) and Ulster Community Hospital Trust (UCHT) in the development of new routes to take people to the library, doctors, pre-school clubs etc.

(Information sourced from: PACT 5-year business plan 2002-07, and Peninsula Community Transport company secretary).

## Private Transport

McDermott coach hire company, a private company, based in Portaferry has recently started a bus run from Portaferry to Belfast, to facilitate transport of people working in the city. The bus leaves Portaferry at 6.55am and stops at Kircubbin and Greyabbey, with its final stop at the Waterfront Hall in Belfast. In the evening, the bus leaves the Waterfront at 5.35pm. A weekly ticket costs £25 (10 journeys) and a single journey costs £3. Since the service is still very new the number of passengers is still quite low. However McDermott Coach Hire's view is that the service will pick up once it has been properly advertised. This service is subsidised by the Department for Regional Development.

## Public Transport

The main bus line which services the 4 ward areas is the 9A10 service. This route starts in Portaferry and stops in towns/villages in the following order: Portaferry- Cloughey- Portavogie- Ballyhalbert- Ballywalter- Kircubbin- Greyabbey- Newtownards- Belfast.

**Table 31: Translink services covering the 4 wards**

Service	From	to	No. journeys	Times
9/9A/10	Portaferry	Cloughey	9	First bus 6.25am, last bus 19.10pm
		Portavogie	9	First bus 6.25am, last bus 19.10pm
		Ballyhalbert	6	First bus not to 8.50am, last bus 19.10pm
		Ballywalter	6	First bus not to 8.50am, last bus 19.10pm
		Kircubbin	13	First bus 6.25am, last bus 22.25pm
		Greyabbey	18	First bus 6.25am, last bus 22.25pm
		Newtownards	16	First bus 6.25am, last bus 19.10pm
		Belfast	8	First bus 0716am, last bus 18.10pm

*(Translink timetable, Dec 02 to Nov 03)*

A second service (number 7) runs from Ballywalter to Belfast via Newtownards. This services runs 7 times during the day starting at 6.55am going as far as Newtownards and 7.45am going to Belfast.

### *Numbers of passengers*

Over a period of 7 months during 2003, 73,437 journeys were recorded with passengers travelling to either Belfast or Newtownards from towns/villages within the 4 ward areas (Translink, 2003).

There is a limited service between Portaferry and Ballyhalbert/ Ballywalter. The most frequent service is between Portaferry and Greyabbey.

In relation to the Ballywalter – Belfast service, the first bus to Belfast would not be suitable for employees starting work at 9am as the bus from Ballywalter does not arrive in Belfast until 9.10am. The service to Newtownards however is suitable for employees travelling to work by bus as people have a choice of 2 buses both getting them into Newtownards before 9am.

## Ferry Services

For almost four centuries a ferry service has been provided between Portaferry and Strangford. Roads Service (Department for Regional Development) currently operate the service. It acts as a transport link for cars, commercial vehicles and foot passengers. Message signs have been erected in 6 locations: Portaferry slipway in Portaferry village; ferry terminal building in Strangford village; Portaferry Rd, Newtownards; route A2 within Cloughey village; route A25 at the junction with Mearne Rd and Quoile Rd; and A20 just south of Kircubbin Village. The purpose of the message sign is to inform the public of service suspensions, delays and so forth.

The service runs every day except Christmas day. Sailings from Portaferry depart at quarter past and quarter to the hour and from Strangford depart on the hour and on the half hour.

**Table 32 : Sailing times from Portaferry and Strangford**

	<b>Portaferry first sailing</b>	<b>Portaferry last sailing</b>	<b>Strangford first sailing</b>	<b>Strangford last sailing</b>
<b>Weekdays</b>	7.45am	10.45pm	7.30am	10.30pm
<b>Saturday</b>	8.15am	11.15pm	8.00am	11.00pm
<b>Sunday</b>	9.45am	10.45pm	9.30am	10.30pm

Fares range from £1 for a foot passenger (single journey) to £1.60 for a return ticket (same day). A book of 20 tickets can be purchased for £10. Drivers of cars (size 6 metres and below) can expect to pay £7.70 for a same day return ticket or £41 for a book containing 20 tickets. Larger vehicles (between 6-8 metres) pay £8.40 for a return ticket (same day). Senior citizens carrying a concessionary fare pass will go free as a foot passenger, there is no reduction in cost however if they wish to bring their car across on the ferry. There is also a reduced fee for disabled drivers and children (children under 5 years go free) (*Department of Regional Development website, 2003*).

Often people using the ferry service use it as a means of travelling on to Downpatrick. The cost comparison for persons living in Portaferry and working in Downpatrick using either the bus or ferry and bus are as follows:

<b>Transport by Bus and Ferry</b>	<b>Transport by bus only</b>
Portaferry to Strangford by ferry (foot passenger, return ticket) = £1.60 (day), £32 (20 days, 4 working weeks) Strangford to Downpatrick by bus = £5.20 (day return), £104 (20 days) (The cost is reduced if weekly or monthly tickets are purchased)	Portaferry to Belfast = £8.50 (day return), £170 (20 days) Belfast to Downpatrick = £7.40 (day return), £148 (20 days)  (Passengers need to go via Belfast and change buses to get to Downpatrick. Also the cost of journeys is reduced if a freedom bus fare was purchased, at a cost of £12 per day. This freedom bus fare permits travel anywhere within Northern Ireland)
<b>Total Cost = £6.80 (day), £136 (20 days)</b>	<b>Total cost = £15.90 (day return), £318 (20 days)</b> <b>If the passenger purchased a freedom bus pass the cost = £12 (day), £240 (for 20 days)</b>

(*Translink and Strangford Ferry Service, December 2003*)

Weekly or monthly tickets for ferry services can be obtained by either purchasing tickets at Strangford Ferry terminal or alternatively tickets can be purchased over the phone using a credit card and will be available on the ferry.

## **Policies and strategies**

### **Walking Northern Ireland – An Action Plan, Department for Regional Development**

All recent Government programmes related to transport have included a focus on encouraging cycling and walking. This strategy aims to implement priorities set in the Regional Transport Strategy, and sets out a set of actions aimed to encourage people to walk, and make it easier to choose walking. Actions included are installing more controlled pedestrian crossings, improving maintenance of footways, improving sighting of bus stops and ensuring adequate street lighting. The plan also aims to improve opportunities for leisure walking, by enhancing and creating new walkways, and raising public awareness. All of these actions are to be implemented across Northern Ireland. (*Walking Northern Ireland – An Action Plan, December 2003, DRD*).

### **Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy, Department for Regional Development**

The Cycling Strategy aims to improve conditions for cyclists, and encourage more people to cycle. It outlines a range of actions, such as developing more cycle routes, providing traffic calming zones with special measures for cyclists, providing secure cycle parking and improving possibilities to transport bikes on public transport. In addition, the strategy encourages schools and workplaces to develop travel plans, and aims to arrange events to create interest in cycling. (*Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy, June 2000, DRD*).

## **Local Views**

For people who rely heavily on both ferry/bus transport to get to work in Downpatrick the cost of travel nearly doubles if the person has to use the bus for the whole journey due to the ferry service being cancelled for whatever reason on a particular day. The journey time will also more than double in time, posing difficulties in getting to work on time.

Often people who have a car find that it is cheaper to drive from Portaferry to Strangford than to take the ferry across (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

There is real concern over the issue of overcrowding on buses especially school buses, as many children have to stand for the whole duration of a journey to school which can be up to 30 minutes. This is seen as being quite dangerous especially whilst travelling on narrow country roads. The Community Steering Group feel there is a need for the community to lobby the Education and Library Board and Translink to deal with this concern (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

Local opinions were gathered from local community representatives at a training day in January 2004, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities as part of the Community Health Impact Assessment process. Two priority issues highlighted in relation to transport were:

- The perceived unreliability and cost of public transport. It is felt that people in the community who rely heavily on public transport, may be less inclined to go out resulting in increased social isolation and limited opportunity for social networking.
- There was also concern about the lack of proper cycle lanes and footpaths outside of the towns as well as a lack of sheltered bus stops. These were seen as safety issues on these rural roads which it was felt discouraged walking or cycling.

## Proposals

**Proposal to link A20 and Blair Mayne Road** The *Ards and Down Area Plan 2003*, outlines the need to relieve traffic congestion in Newtownards. A number of proposals have been made, of particular interest is the proposal to link the A20 (Newtownards/Portaferry road) and the Blair Mayne Road (main transportation corridor to Belfast). It has also been proposed that the former Scrabo School site could provide a site for car parking, which would facilitate commuters wishing to use the E-way should it be extended to Newtownards.

**Cycling Routes** Sustrans is a transport charity which has been established for 25 years. It has been involved in the construction of traffic free cycle routes. It is currently looking at opportunities for establishing a County Down Cycle Network which would be linked to the existing National Cycle Network. It is envisaged that by 2005 the Co Down network cycle network would provide a 220 mile circular tour of County Down and the Ards Peninsula would be an integral element of the network. It would complement the Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy and the Ards Borough Countryside Recreation Strategy (*Ards Borough Council, 2004*).

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board recommend an Ards Peninsula Cycling Tour which incorporates both coasts of the Peninsula. An "Information Guide to Cycling" produced by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board refers to the cycling conditions, informing cyclists that the A20 experiences heavy traffic conditions at weekends, and that the A2 generally experiences light traffic conditions beyond Donaghadee. It gives this cycle route a terrain rating of 1 on a scale of 1-4 where 4 is the most strenuous.



# Employment

People who are unemployed are almost twice as likely to show signs of a possible mental health problem as those in employment”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety 2002*

“Both the quantity and quality of work have a strong influence on many health-related factors in adulthood, including income, social networks and self esteem”

Health 21: An Introduction, *World Health Organisationb 1998*

At the 2001 census, of the 9314 persons aged 16-74 within the 4 ward areas, 5815 (62%) were economically active (this is defined as being in employment or actively seeking employment).

Census data also shows a high rate of self-employed persons living within the 4 ward areas compared with the NI average, 16% are self-employed in Kircubbin compared to the Northern Ireland figure of 8%.

**Table 33: Economic Activity**

	All persons aged 16-74	Economically active (percentage aged 16-74)				
		Employees		Self-employed	Unemployed	Full-time student
		Full-time <sup>1</sup>	Part-time <sup>1</sup>			
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1187079</b>	<b>37.55</b>	<b>9.94</b>	<b>8.28</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>2.36</b>
Ballywalter	2425	35.59	11.55	10.76	3.09	1.11
Kircubbin	2087	33.16	8.34	16.29	3.31	1.44
Portaferry	2260	34.34	9.20	13.67	4.16	1.06
Portavogie	2542	33.71	10.39	14.44	2.87	1.26

(NISRA, *Census, 2001*)

## Employment by Household

Of the 258 lone parent households with dependent children, 38 (15%) are male, and 220 (85%) are female. It is interesting to note that of the male lone parents 45% are in full-time employment and 13% in part-time employment, whereas in the case of female lone parents 24% are in full-time employment with 23% in part-time employment.

## **Unemployment**

During 2001, 311 persons within the 4 ward areas (5%) were unemployed – at the time this was lower than the NI average of 7%. In all wards, unemployment was significantly higher among men than women. This is partly due to a general trend among women not to register as unemployed. On one hand, they may not be seen in statistics, as their partner may claim the benefit on behalf of the couple, at a couple rate. On the other hand, their partner may be working full time, in which case they are not entitled to income-based Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) or Income Support. They may be entitled to contribution-based JSA for six months, if they have paid full National Insurance contributions for two years before becoming unemployed. This system, which also works for men whose partners are working, in effect means a number of unemployed people are obscured in statistics (*Social Security Agency, 2003*).

Recent unemployment figures at ward level are not readily available, however details are available of persons claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) which is paid to unemployed persons. A person may qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance if they are unemployed, have paid enough National Insurance Contributions and are available for and actively seeking work (see glossary for full details on entitlement). A comparison of figures between February 2002 and 2003 shows a decrease in the numbers claiming JSA (193 persons in Feb 2002, 154 persons in Feb. 2003) within the 4 ward areas. Figures also show that a higher number of persons aged 16-34 years claim JSA compared to any other age group. Comparisons in claimants between the 4 ward areas show that Portaferry has over double the number of claimants of JSA compared to the other 3 wards (*Social Security Agency website, 2003*).

## **Provision for Young Unemployed People**

Peninsula Healthy Living has appointed a youth worker to target unemployed young people and those aged 14-25. This work will involve particularly outreach/detached work and will be supported by other workers and agencies in the area (*Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership Annual Report 2003*).

## **Economic Inactivity**

During 2001, 3499 persons (38%) aged 16-74 years, were classed as being economically inactive (categories included: retired, student, looking after the home/family, permanently sick/disabled, or other). Within this category a significantly higher number of women were economically inactive compared to men. The majority of women are economically inactive as a result of 'looking after the home/family' (686 women compared to 65 men), or being retired (645 women compared to 478 men). In 2001, the percentage of women looking after the home/family in the 4 ward areas was slightly higher than the overall percentage for all of Northern Ireland (15% compared to 13% overall NI percentage). Out of the 4 ward areas, Ballywalter appeared to have the highest number of persons economically inactive due to retirement.

The most common reason for either gender being economically inactive within the 4 ward areas was retirement, the second being permanently sick or disabled. This is a similar pattern within the rest of Northern Ireland.

**Table 34: Economic Inactivity for Men and Women aged 16-74 years**

Ward	Male Economic Inactivity					Female Economic Inactivity				
	Retired	Student	Looking after home/family	Permanently sick/disabled	Other	Retired	Student	Looking after home/family	Permanently sick/disabled	Other
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>53408</b>	<b>30894</b>	<b>8398</b>	<b>56421</b>	<b>20076</b>	<b>76905</b>	<b>36729</b>	<b>79809</b>	<b>54366</b>	<b>30939</b>
Ballywalter	168	36	18	98	26	222	33	168	103	47
Kircubbin	92	51	17	110	26	128	67	158	90	43
Portaferry	94	55	13	134	27	140	59	152	105	70
Portavogie	124	54	17	144	34	155	44	208	108	61

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

Comparable economic activity/inactivity figures are not available from the 1991 census as the coding system changed between the 1991 and 2001 census (Census Department, NISRA, 2004).

### Deprivation Scores

Ballywalter is within the top 30% of wards within Northern Ireland in terms of having a good income (Noble indicators, 2001). The score is constructed using counts of adults in families in receipt of means tested benefits.

**Table 35: Deprivation Score by Income**

(There are 20 wards within the Ards area and 566 within Northern Ireland. 1 describes the most deprived and 566 the least deprived)

Ward Name	Income	
	Ards	NI
Ballywalter	11	403
Kircubbin	9	369
Portaferry	4	276
Portavogie	8	367

(Noble, Multiple Deprivation Indicators, 2001)

### Areas of Employment

Industries which dominate in the 4 ward areas and employ most people include: mining, quarrying and construction; wholesales and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles; health and social work; manufacturing, and public administration and defence (these have been placed in order of the highest numbers employed per industry, ranging from 892 to 568 persons). The mining, quarrying and construction industry is particularly prevalent within Kircubbin and Portaferry, and the manufacturing industry within Ballywalter and Portavogie.

Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing is most prevalent within Portavogie. (Census. 2001). Of the nine occupation groups listed in the census, the highest numbers of persons employed in the four ward areas were found to be in the 'skilled trades occupations' group (25%) and 'administrative and secretarial occupations' group (16%).

### **Fishing Village Taskforce findings**

Fish catching, and fish processing accounts for around one in ten jobs in Portavogie. Portavogie depends on catching fish rather than processing to a greater extent than either Ardglass or Kilkeel, which are the other main fishing villages/towns in Northern Ireland. Between 1992 and 2002 there was a 28% fall in the number of fishermen in Portavogie (*OFMDFM, Taskforce for South Down, 2003*).

## **Current Provision**

### **Job Centre**

The following activities are offered by the Job Centre in Newtownards:

- School Work - Provision of information to schools, and interview pupils as required. A trace is kept on the destination of all year 12 pupils.
- Review of Unemployed - Review of those unemployed on an on going basis and offering appropriate opportunities for employment.
- Job skills – Makes contact with trainees in the first 8 weeks of their Job Skills training.
- Adult Guidance - Interviews are available and a needs assessment by questionnaire can be provided.
- Networking - Maintains strong links with prospective employers through one to one visits, and attendance at events such as job fairs.
- Job Clubs – Provides a range of clubs aimed at giving tailored advice and guidance on issues relating to employment.
- Training for work - Provision of vocational training in conjunction with Enterprise Ulster.
- Worktrack - Provides a mechanism to guide people to employment at the earliest possible opportunity. Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership and Peninsula Community Transport offer training opportunities for local people who qualify under the terms and conditions of Worktrack. Placements for up to 26 weeks paid work can be offered in the fields of administration; passenger escort/assistant; driver with caring duties; or fundraising assistant. For further details on the criteria for this Government scheme, contact the local Job Centre (028 91818653) or the Programme Manager North Down and Ards Institute (028 91276600).
- Bridge to employment - Offers support particularly to the long term unemployed, providing training on skills required to enter the employment market. Offered in conjunction with DEL.

- Travel to interview - Provides assistance to those who require help to travel to interviews outside the normal daily travelling distance.
- New Deal - Provides a range of programmes aimed at various sectors of the community, and aims to give practical support and guidance to enable individuals to gain employment.
- Positive steps to employment – This involves a flexible programme of skills building and training which offers support to those who wish to return to employment. The programme is offered in conjunction with North Down and Ards Institute.
- Community Outreach –
  - The Job Centre has strong links with the Peninsula Healthy Living partnership and is considered a useful forum for the exchange of information on issues relating to employment.
  - Close links have been developed with the Local Strategic Partnership, Councillors and community leaders.
  - The Job Centre advertise their services and job vacancies through libraries, Post Offices and Community Groups in the area. They are actively involved in Portavogie offering support to those affected by the downturn in the fishing industry. They are involved on an ongoing basis with Outreach Days in various towns on the Peninsula, and have already held events in Ballywalter and Kircubbin.

## **Other Relevant Information**

**Land allocated for industrial use** - *The Ards and Down Area Plan 2015* allocates a limited amount of land for industrial use in the Peninsula. The area is a small area of land at the builder's merchants on the Greyabbey road in Ballywalter.

## **Local Views**

Opinions were gathered from local community representatives at a training day in January 2004, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities as part of the Community Health Impact Assessment process. Two priority issues highlighted in relation to employment were:

- The decline in both the farming and fishing industry over the last number of years as a result of BSE and European Union Directives. Fishermen often have to adjust to a very different lifestyle and farmers often have to take on a second job and work longer hours due to financial pressures. In some cases farmers have diversified into other areas of farming which has been more successful but this is felt to be the exception rather than the norm.
- Travel is considered to have a significant impact on employment on the Peninsula. Issues raised by the representatives included, long distances to travel to get to work and the time factor involved in this, as well as financial worries over the high cost of travel. People who rely on ferry services to get to work encounter problems when the ferry service is cancelled due to bad weather. The amount of time spent travelling to work was felt to reduce time spent with families and contribute to poor mental health.

## Proposals

### Fishing Villages Taskforce

This Government report outlines the potential socio-economic implications on local fishing communities of the EU Agriculture and Fishing decisions to reduce fishing quotas. The report makes recommendations regarding the support that the south Down fishing villages will require. A number of recommendations came out of the public consultation. These focused primarily on future development of the locality in an attempt to encourage tourism. The development of a centre of excellence which would include training and laboratory provision was also recommended. Also, that a Seafood Cookery School and "fishing village" package holidays could be developed to promote the fishing industry and tourism.

The task force recommended the following action points:

- More support for fishermen following decommissioning of boats, and retirement from the industry
- Portavogie should be assisted to develop as an attractive tourist destination, i.e. improved facilities and attractions, such as water sports
- Appropriate training is needed both for those in the industry and those wishing to diversify into other areas, training should focus on young people to encourage them to join the fishing industry
- Ian Pearson, Minister with responsibility for issues relating to the Taskforce for south Down, confirmed that support will be available over the next 2 years towards the proposals contained in the action plan. Also that a full time appointment will be made to take forward the action points in this report

*(Taskforce report on the potential socio-economic implications of the fishing villages of south Down 2003).*

# Environment

“A healthy environment is an important determinant of health and wellbeing. The physical environmental factors which can affect health directly and indirectly include air quality, water quality, environments which contribute to the risk of accident, injury or death”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety 2002*

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The 4 wards cover an area of 12,580 hectares. In relation to population density (number of persons per hectare) Kircubbin appears to be the least densely populated and well below the average for Northern Ireland (0.74 compared with 1.19) with Portavogie being the most densely populated of the four ward areas (see table under demography) (*NISRA, Census, 2001*).

## Environmental Health

### Air Quality

Within the 4 wards under review none have any particular problems with keeping below air quality standards set. This has been supported by a review carried out by Ards Borough Council in 1999/2000 under the National Air Quality Strategy.

There are two air quality monitoring sites in Ards, air quality referring to ambient pollutants such as smoke, and Sulphur Dioxide. There are six ‘Diffusion tube sites’ which monitor Nitrogen Dioxide. There are therefore in total 8 sites where pollution is monitored, but only two of them are air quality monitoring stations (Ards Borough Council, 2004).

### Radiation

#### a) Ionising

In Northern Ireland the Environment and Heritage Service's Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate (within the Department of Environment) monitors the impact of Sellafield discharges on the Northern Ireland coastal environment. The Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate arranges for samples of seaweed, sediment, fish, nephros, and winkles to be collected quarterly and forwarded to the CEFAS Research Laboratory at Lowerstoft. The seaweeds are collected in Portaferry (within the Ards Peninsula) and marine life samples (fish and shellfish) are collected in Portavogie (DOE website, 2003).

Ards Borough Council also carries out regular surveillance of radioactivity in sediments, seaweeds and food, and carries out 24hr continuous monitoring of the air for ionising radiation because of the relative proximity of Sellafield. There have been no particular breaches of any set standards, but levels of radiation are higher than areas which are not as close to Cumbria as the

lower Ards. Levels have been falling continually over the last 8 years or so (Ards Borough Council, 2003).

Radiation monitors are installed at ten locations throughout NI including one in Portavogie.

#### b) Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas formed as a result of the radioactive decay of uranium, which is present to some extent in all rocks and soils, but amounts vary from place to place. Radon rises from the soil into the air, outdoors, radon is diluted into the air and the risk it poses is negligible. Where it enters buildings the levels can vary from property to property and even between neighbouring dwellings. Radon can build up in homes and, at high concentrations, leads to an increased risk of lung cancer. Smokers who are in a radon affected house are at an increased risk. Radon dominates the radioactive dose to the population contributing about 50% of dose at the average level in houses. Radioactivity is measured in Becquerels. The Government has established an Action Level for radon in homes of 200 Becquerels per cubic metre (Bq/m<sup>3</sup>), based on advice from the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) (DOE website, 2003).

The area around Portaferry is a high level Radon Area, (over 80 Bq per Cubic Metre), as is most of the South East Corner of NI. The other three wards would be classified as medium (40 -60 Bq). The consequence of this is that radon can build up in enclosed spaces as it emanates from the ground and must be ventilated off or prevented from entering buildings (Ards Borough Council, 2003).

#### c) Non Ionising

The extent of Cell phone base stations is not significantly different from other rural areas in Northern Ireland (*Ards Borough Council, 2003*).

### **River Quality**

Based on results of 'General Quality Assessment' of 8 secondary or minor rivers in the North Down area, in 2002 all 8 rivers were described as being of fair or poor quality. This is similar to findings recorded in 1999 (*DOE, 2003*).

The list of 8 rivers where recordings were taken are as follows: Crawfordsburn river at Crawfordsburn country park; Cunningburn at Ballyewry; Blackstaff river at Blackstaff bridge; Smeltmill Bay stream at linear park; Ballyholme Bay stream; Cotton river at Cotton bridge; Millburn at Millisle and Comber Tributary at Camp Hill.

### **Bathing Water Quality**

Bathing water quality is tested on 20 occasions between June to mid September (the bathing season in Northern Ireland). A total of 27 sites are monitored in Northern Ireland by the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) against bathing water directive standards. Water is tested for coliform and streptococcal groups of bacteria, salmonella and enteroviruses, and algal



blooms. Bathing water quality is categorised as of excellent water quality, good water quality or poor water quality (see glossary for more details on bathing water quality standards).

Within the 4 ward areas Ballywalter and Ballyhalbert beaches are monitored for water quality. Results of water quality in Ballyhalbert between 1998 and 2002 showed excellent water quality for all of the 5 years. Ballywalter had excellent water quality recorded between 1999 and 2001 and good water quality recorded in 1998 and 2002 (*Environment Heritage Service, 2004*).

## Noise

Noise complaints have been rising dramatically as a whole over the last 5 years. 10.5% of all noise complaints received by Ards Borough Council were from the 4 wards in question.

**Table 35: Number of Noise Complaints**

Year	Ballywalter	Kircubbin	Portaferry	Portavogie
98/99	2	2	3	1
99/00	1	1	3	2
00/01	5	4	4	1
01/02	6	2	5	6
02/03	9	5	6	6
Total	23	14	21	16

(*Ards Borough Council, 2003*)

## Current Provision

- The council provide advice and information on: consumer safety; countryside recreation; dog control/licensing services; entertainment licences; environmental education programme; environmental health (e.g. air pollution, noise complaints, public health e.g. infectious disease control, food control/safety, water sampling); events/festivals (which the council host); health promotion and education; health and safety at work; litter; markets; pest control; recycling; sports development; street cleansing and litter control, and finally tourism.
- Civic amenity sites are located in Kircubbin (Parsonage Rd) and Portaferry (Coach Rd). At these sites a full range of recycling banks are available for: glass, cans, plastic bottles, paper, textiles, waste oil, scrap metal and garden waste. All houses in the 4 wards have been offered a second bin for waste paper recycling, and in 2004 all households will be offered a third bin for recycling kitchen and garden waste.
- Recycling points (for recycling glass and metal) are located in Ballywalter (Harbour Car Park); Cloughey (Main Rd car park), Greyabbey (Village Hall car park), Kircubbin and Portaferry.

The Community Association in Ballywalter are currently lobbying for the recycling point in Ballywalter to be moved as it is very close to housing and has encouraged vandalism around the site. Also there have been reports of a problem with rats around the area (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

- General waste is collected weekly and a bulky waste collection service is provided on request for large household items such as furniture, appliances etc (collections are provided within a week of request and have a £10 charge for this service). Towns and villages in the 4 wards receive a scheduled sweep every 3 weeks with town and village centres being swept 3 times a week. A street orderly is also employed in Portaferry to carry out litter picking and sweeping around the town centre on a daily basis.
- Ards Borough Council have cemeteries located in Greyabbey, Ballywalter, Cloughey (2), Kircubbin, and Portaferry (2).
- Public toilets can be found in: Ballywalter (Main St, and beside the tennis court); Ballyhalbert (Harbour Rd); Portavogie (Springvale Rd); Cloughey (Main Rd); Portaferry (Castle Park); Kircubbin (Shore Rd, not suitable for wheelchair access), and Greyabbey (Main St).

*Unless otherwise stated, the above information has come from the Ards Borough Council website or from key personnel within Ards Borough Council.*

**Environmental Education:** Ards Borough Council are one of the first Boroughs to recognize the value of environmental education as a means of conserving the Boroughs natural amenities and resources and of raising awareness of current local and global environmental issues amongst its residents. 90% of the projects activity is based in schools. In an attempt to complement the curriculum, classes and fields trips deal with issues such as pollution and recycling. Clean ups and field studies are an integral part of the programme (*Ards Borough Council website 2003*).

**Environmental Awareness:** The Woodlands Trust have been working in conjunction with local artists to provide a range of attractive wood sculptures at Corrog Wood, which is the Trusts new plantation just outside Portaferry. Local school children have been involved in the development of this plantation, which has acted as a vehicle for educating local children issues relating to the local environment, sustainability, and has encouraged children to participate in exercise by making the plantation an exciting and interesting place to walk.

## **Other relevant information**

The draft Ards and Down District Plan 2015 has identified new areas to be designated Local Landscape Policy Areas. This means that planning permission would not be granted to development proposals which would be liable to adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of these areas. Local Landscape Policy Areas have been designated in and adjoining a number of settlements, including the following: Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter, Cloughey, Greyabbey, Kircubbin, Portaferry, and Portavogie.

## **Local Views**

*The Community Steering Group (2004) provided the following information:*

- Cloughey residents are currently lobbying for traffic calming measures outside the local school.
- There are quite a number of vacant industrial sites in the area which are unused land at present. Portaferry has a number of industrial units for small businesses – it is perceived however that this is lacking in other areas.

- The public perceive there is a problem with the management of the level of sewage within the area, which has negative implications on the beaches in the area which smell - local people cited the shore at Portaferry and the beach at Ballywalter. Recognition was given to the work undertaken by the relevant government departments in the last couple of years to deal with this problem but some people feel it is still an issue.
- Dog fouling and litter is considered as being a particularly big problem in Ballywalter.
- The Community Steering Group highlighted that the community as a whole were very positive about the benefits of the paper recycling bin which the Council offer to residents. However this bin does not allow for cardboard, envelopes, wrapping paper, telephone directories etc. Also although there is a glass recycling facility at the local amenity site, it is not used by the local bars because of the large volume of glass bottles used.
- The Community Steering Group believe that there may be plans to close the public toilets in the Main street in Ballywalter due to vandalism. The toilets in Kircubbin are free standing and require a payment of ten pence to use them, and as a result community residents often use the toilets within the community centre instead as they are free. There is a concern about the cleanliness of public toilets in general in all the areas.

## Proposals

### Water Reform

Over 99% of the population of Northern Ireland are connected to the public water supply. Around 83% of households are served by the public sewerage system. To maintain and develop this service £3 billion must be invested in Northern Ireland's infrastructure over the next 20 years. It is therefore the intention that the Northern Ireland Water Service should become fully self financing before the end of the decade. At present, water and sewerage services are paid for using a share of public funds and charges to business customers. The situation is different in other parts of the United Kingdom, where households pay a Council Tax bill and water/sewerage charges per household which is on average £1,032. In contrast, the average household rates bill in Northern Ireland is currently £445. To increase the level of self-financing, the Northern Ireland Office plans to introduce water charges on a rolling basis by 2010. Three options were outlined in the original consultation in 2003.

#### 1) Flat charge applied to all households

This option would introduce a single charge for all households. It has been criticised as it does not take into account the ability to pay, nor provide any incentives to reduce consumption. It was also rejected by respondents to the consultation on water charging, and has since been ruled out by the Northern Ireland Office.

## 2) Charges based on value of property

Under this option, charges would be based either on capital or rental value of a property. It would, therefore, use the same calculation basis as the new system for household rates, which would provide advantages in billing and administration. It does not, however, take into account that a large proportion of the cost of providing water and sewerage services is fixed, and is not necessarily higher for larger or higher valued properties.

## 3) Combination of fixed and variable charge

This option involves a fixed element which would be the same for all households, and a variable element, which would be related to the value of property. Following review of consultation responses, it is likely that charges will be based on the value of property in some format.

Responses to the consultation showed that a majority rejected charging, but saw metering as the fairest option. It is therefore still included as a possible option, but only for certain groups who are likely to pay either too much or too little for their consumption. Universal metering has been ruled out as too costly and time consuming to implement at this point. A definite proposal outlining the planned charging system will be issued for consultation during spring 2004. Charges will be phased in before 2010.

(The Reform of Water and Sewerage Services in Northern Ireland – a consultation document, March 2003, Northern Ireland Office; DRD, personal communication)

It can be argued that all of the water charging options are potentially placing an undue burden on those least able to pay. None of the systems proposed are without risk of negative impact, on the most disadvantaged in society. (Briefing paper on the proposal to introduce water charges in Northern Ireland, NICVA 2003) Ards Borough Council have responded to the Consultation document in May 2003 reiterating their total opposition to any privatization of the water service and oppose extra charges for water. (*Ards Borough Council website 2003*).

## **EU Freshwater Fish Directive (FFD) Nov 2003**

This EU directive is proposing to extend the protection of lakes, rivers and canals in Northern Ireland, and aims to improve water quality so that freshwater fish can thrive in the waterways. Under the directive, a Pollution Reduction Plan will be developed for each designated waterway, setting out required water quality standards and monitoring requirements.

This directive extends protection to smaller lakes and rivers, as major waterways have been included under previous directives and other protection measures, so that all waters which potentially can support freshwater fish are included. It has been rural proofed for impact on rural communities, and it has been concluded it will bring benefits, such as potential for increased tourism and improved opportunities for recreational use of waterways (*Freshwater Fish Directive, DoE, 2003*).

### **Proposed Marina at Strangford Lough**

The shore of Strangford Lough at Killyleagh has been identified as the potential base for a new 142 berth marina. The project has been refused planning permission, and a decision by the Minister responsible for the environment on whether or not to overturn the decision was still pending in March 2004. Views of the project, which includes provision of a nursing home, are mixed, with potential benefits including regeneration of the area and a boost to the local economy, and the potential negative impacts including harm to marine life, archaeological artefacts and the built heritage. (*Down Recorder 7 January 2004, Page 2, and Newtownards Chronicle, 15 January 2004, Page 6*)



# Essential Services

“Financial deprivation leads to prejudice and social exclusion, with increased rates of violence and crime”

Health 21: An Introduction, *World Health Organisation 1998*

“It is recognised that crime and the fear of crime in our society can have a severely detrimental effect on physical and mental wellbeing”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety 2002*

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## Crime, Violence and Policing

### Policing in Ards

Ards District Command Unit encompasses totally the District Council area and is comprised of three sectors: Newtownards sector, Comber sector and Peninsula sector. The Peninsula sector comprises of three station areas: Donaghadee, Portaferry, and Greyabbey (PSNI website, January 2004). Although Greyabbey police station is still owned by the police and crime statistics are still collected at this station level, the station itself has not been operational for the last couple of years (*Ards District Command Unit, 2004*).

Portaferry police station is open to the public from 7pm to 8pm Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and from 1pm to 2pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

During the year 2002-03 Ards District Command Unit (DCU) dealt with 17,870 incidents, attended 902 road traffic collisions of which 37 involved fatal or serious injury, and recorded 4969 crimes. On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 they had 130 regular police officers, 46 full-time reserve officers, 80 part-time reserve officers and 47 support staff (*Ards District Command Unit, Policing Plan 2003/04*).

There are believed to be 2 patrol cars available for the Peninsula area (*Community Steering Group*).

### Policing in Partnership with the Community

An example of partnership with the community highlighted in Ards DCU Policing Plan (2003/04) includes the placement of an officer from the Ards Borough Council's Borough Inspectors Office with the Community Policing Unit in Ards Station. This Borough Inspector performs joint patrols with police officers from all over the DCU and has resulted in many detections and prosecutions for matters affecting quality of life and other types of offences such as anti-social behaviour. There are plans to employ a further two Borough Inspectors to enhance this work. The community can communicate their views of how the district is policed through Community Safety Forums, Community and Police Liaison Committees and other community meetings which officers attend.

Reports of anti-social behaviour within the 4 wards areas are highest within Portaferry and Ballywalter and low within Portavogie and Cloughey. It should be noted that not all incidents of anti-social behaviour are reported to the police.

Anti-social behaviour incorporates a variety of behaviours including youths causing annoyance, drinking, noise, abandoned cars, off-road vehicles, minor damage to property, fire works, graffiti, litter, dumping, and dog fouling. The most frequent reports of anti-social behaviour in the 4 ward areas involves youths causing annoyance. Complications arise when trying to deal with anti-social behaviour and under-age drinking when this is performed on private land or property. An example of this is within private forest land within Portaferry (Borough Inspector, 2004).

A Community Policing Unit has recently been established within Portaferry police station from January 2004 and is manned by two police officers who will patrol the area and be a key point of contact for the community.

## Crime Statistics

### Domestic Violence

Within the Ards area between April 2002 and March 2003, 212 incidents of domestic violence were attended by the PSNI, this was out of a total of 444 domestic incidents attended. It should be noted that not all incidents of domestic violence are reported to the police.

The table below highlights the type of offences that took place out of the 212 incidents of domestic violence reported.

**Table 36: List of Offences of Domestic Violence for Ards, April 2002 to March 2003**

Offences	Numbers
Attempted murder	2
Aggravated or actual bodily harm (AOABH)	15
Threats to kill	3
Common assault	128
Criminal damage	21
Breach of orders	19
Harassment	6
Other offences	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>

(PSNI, 2003)

83% of offences took place against women and 17% were against men (PSNI, 2003).

Womens Aid have refuge centres all around Northern Ireland for women experiencing domestic violence. One refuge centre is located within North Down and Ards (the address of which is confidential for safety reasons), and during 2003, 63 women and 60 children used this refuge centre (Women's Aid, 2004).



## General Crime Statistics

There are 5 police stations within the Ards District Command Unit from which crime statistics are collected – Newtownards, Comber, Donaghadee, Greyabbey (no longer manned) and Portaferry. Both Greyabbey and Portaferry station areas cover the 4 ward areas which are the focus of this publication.

Within both these police station areas, the total number of recorded offences fell slightly between 2001/02 to 2002/03, however there was a rise in burglaries. A consistent pattern was seen throughout the Ards area. Criminal damage and theft were the two highest notifiable offences within the 4 ward areas and Ards overall (PSNI, 2004).

The term 'Cleared' as outlined in the following tables refers to offences which have in some way been disposed of, e.g. charge or summons, caution, juvenile advice & warning, complainant declined to prosecute, and other disposal types. Ward level data is not available for crime clearances (PSNI, 2004). It would appear that the percentage of offences which were cleared was greater in 2002/03 compared to figures for 2001/02. Also both Portaferry and Greyabbey station areas had a slightly higher rate of success with the number of offences cleared compared to figures for the whole of the Ards area (i.e. Ards District Command Unit). It should be noted that not all offences are reported to the police.

**Table 37: Notifiable Offences Recorded and Cleared – Ards District Command Unit**

	Recorded 2001/02	Cleared 2001/02	% Cleared 2001/02	Recorded 2002/03	Cleared 2002/03	% Cleared 2002/03
<b>Offences against the Person</b>	901	579	64.30%	941	619	65.80%
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	67	28	41.80%	63	39	61.90%
<b>Burglary</b>	630	52	8.30%	749	63	8.40%
<b>Domestic Burglary</b>	300	26	8.70%	352	41	11.60%
<b>Robbery</b>	50	11	22.00%	90	11	12.20%
<b>Theft</b>	1553	267	17.20%	1497	214	14.30%
<b>Frauds &amp; Forgery</b>	273	73	26.70%	260	67	25.80%
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	1581	187	11.80%	1267	206	16.30%
<b>Offences against the State</b>	22	8	36.40%	30	17	56.70%
<b>Other Notifiable Offences</b>	35	27	77.10%	72	51	70.80%
<b>Drug Offences</b>	14	11	78.60%	49	33	67.30%
<b>TOTAL ALL CLASSES</b>	5112	1232	24.10%	4969	1287	25.90%

(Police Service Northern Ireland, 2004)

**Table 38: Notifiable Offences Recorded and Cleared – Greyabbey Police Station**

	Recorded 2001/02	Cleared 2001/02	% Cleared 2001/02	Recorded 2002/03	Cleared 2002/03	% Cleared 2002/03
<b>Offences against the Person</b>	85	58	68.20%	65	48	73.80%
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	0	0	/0	7	3	42.90%
<b>Burglary</b>	53	4	7.50%	71	8	11.30%
<b>Domestic Burglary</b>	22	0	0.00%	37	7	18.90%
<b>Robbery</b>	5	0	0.00%	7	0	0.00%
<b>Theft</b>	135	15	11.10%	83	9	10.80%
<b>Frauds &amp; Forgery</b>	12	1	8.30%	12	8	66.70%
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	111	14	12.60%	93	17	18.30%
<b>Offences against the State</b>	1	0	0.00%	4	1	25.00%
<b>Other Notifiable Offences</b>	4	4	100.00%	3	1	33.30%
<b>Drug Offences</b>	2	2	100.00%	3	1	33.30%
<b>TOTAL ALL CLASSES</b>	406	96	23.60%	345	95	27.50%

*(Police Service Northern Ireland, 2004)*

**Table 39: Notifiable Offences Recorded and Cleared – Portaferry Police Station**

	Recorded 2001/02	Cleared 2001/02	% Cleared 2001/02	Recorded 2002/03	Cleared 2002/03	% Cleared 2002/03
<b>Offences against the Person</b>	66	47	71.20%	79	53	67.10%
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	2	2	100.00%	2	2	100.00%
<b>Burglary</b>	41	0	0.00%	51	4	7.80%
<b>Domestic Burglary</b>	17	0	0.00%	20	1	5.00%
<b>Robbery</b>	3	0	0.00%	4	1	25.00%
<b>Theft</b>	76	8	10.50%	51	6	11.80%
<b>Frauds &amp; Forgery</b>	9	3	33.30%	5	2	40.00%
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	130	10	7.70%	92	9	9.80%
<b>Offences against the State</b>	1	0	0.00%	0	0	/0
<b>Other Notifiable Offences</b>	3	3	100.00%	3	1	33.30%
<b>Drug Offences</b>	1	1	100.00%	2	0	0.00%
<b>TOTAL ALL CLASSES</b>	331	73	22.10%	287	78	27.20%

*(Police Service Northern Ireland, 2004)*

### **Offences Recorded per Ward Area**

The following table shows that Portaferry has the highest number of recorded offences (183) out of the 4 ward areas and this is more significant given the fact that 2 of the other wards have a higher population. The most notable offences were 'criminal damage' and 'offences against the

person' within the 4 wards. The incidence of burglary was higher in Portavogie than in the other areas (see Glossary for a definition of burglary, theft and robbery). Overall when comparing the 4 ward areas against other wards in the Ards Peninsula which have a similar population size, the incidence of recorded offences is similar or lower depending on which wards you compare them against. For instance recorded offences are much higher in Bradshaws Brae, Central Ards, Donaghadee, and Millisle than in the 4 ward areas.

**Table 40: Notifiable Offences Recorded by the Police per Ward Area in Ards 2003**

Ward (within Ards)	Offences V The person	Sexual Offences	Burglary	Robbery	Theft	Fraud + forgery	Criminal damage	Offences V The state	Other offences	Total	Population 2001 census
Ballygowan	15	1	46	1	23	6	24	1	1	118	3401
Ballyrainey	48	4	44	7	52	4	46	3	6	214	2486
Ballywalter	26	4	23	3	32	2	51	1	0	142	3350
Bradshaws brae	58	3	30	10	252	82	53	3	3	494	2953
Carrowdore	29	1	23	3	40	3	24	0	3	126	2960
Central Ards	199	12	54	18	231	47	193	9	19	782	2635
Comber East	35	5	44	5	82	13	70	1	2	257	2853
Comber North	17	6	15	1	33	2	13	0	0	87	2831
Comber west	17	0	27	0	48	3	20	0	2	117	2945
Donaghadee north	48	1	75	6	107	13	90	4	6	350	3142
Donaghadee south	26	1	18	0	30	0	43	1	4	123	3242
Glen	44	3	27	3	68	7	73	0	4	229	2797
Gregstown	40	2	14	3	43	2	34	0	1	139	4412
Killinchy	19	1	54	0	52	2	60	1	0	189	2802
Kircubbin	25	4	22	3	26	6	26	1	1	114	2931
Lisbane	8	0	39	1	41	10	19	0	0	118	2916
Loughries	34	4	18	4	43	3	64	0	1	171	3597
Millisle	57	2	41	5	64	6	82	1	6	264	3285
Movilla	29	1	10	4	55	25	47	0	3	174	4883
Portaferry	48	1	23	2	33	2	72	0	2	183	3286
Portavogie	32	0	34	3	26	5	26	1	1	128	3504
Scrabo	61	4	27	3	48	6	87	2	4	242	2820
Whitespots	13	1	19	2	59	9	32	0	3	138	3213
TOTAL	928	61	727	87	1488	258	1249	29	72	4899	73244

(PSNI, 2004)

## **Road Traffic Fatalities**

In 2001/02 a total of 14 people died due to road traffic collisions within the Ards District Command Unit area, this compares to 5 people in 2002/03. The age category with the highest number of fatalities was between 25-44 years. Figures are not available at ward level (PSNI, 2004).

## **District Policing Partnership Survey**

The District Policing Partnership commissioned a survey within the Ards District Council Area in 2003. This survey consisted of 21 questions and were analysed by age, gender, religion, and town land (Comber, Donaghadee, Newtownards and other). One of the questions people were asked related to what they felt were the biggest problems in their district council area (Ards) – results showed that in the 61+ age group they felt the biggest problems were attacks on the elderly and domestic violence (27% and 24% respectively), the younger age group (25-40 years) agreed that domestic violence was a problem (16%) but rated ‘young people causing a nuisance’ as being a bigger problem (19%).

When asked about which activities people thought the PSNI in their area should concentrate most resources on, the responses within all the age groupings were in agreement that out of a choice of 12 activities, foot patrol and prompt response to emergencies were the top 2 highest priorities (overall total of between 55-69% of responses).

Further questions highlighted people’s dissatisfaction with current levels of foot patrol in the area. The survey also found that out of a total of 889 people asked, 20% had been a victim of crime in the last year. Analysis showed very little difference in numbers between male and females however analysis by age showed greater numbers of victims within the 16-24 age group with the second highest percentage found in the 25-40 age group. When asked if they reported the crime to the police only 78% said they had reported it. Further analysis showed that males were less likely to report a crime than females, and people aged 41-60 years were less likely than all other age groups to report a crime (*NISRA, 2003*).

## **Community Safety Partnerships**

The Ards Community Safety Committee was established in October 1999 to examine a range of issues prevalent in the Ards Borough area and to come forward with initiatives to address those underlying problems which were causing concern. In doing this the committee sought to introduce programmes that would enhance peoples lives by reducing the incidence of crime the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Ards Borough Area.

Currently within the four ward areas the community safety partnership runs a ‘good neighbour’ pilot scheme in the Cloughy and Portaferry areas (*Community Safety Partnership website, 2004*). This pilot has been running since March 2003 and is currently being evaluated before consideration is given whether to expand the project in other areas (*Community Safety Co-ordinator, 2004*).

## **Ambulance Services**

Ambulance cover for the lower Ards is provided initially by Newtownards Ambulance station. During the week there are generally 4 ambulances operational between 9am and 5 pm, 3 ambulances until 8pm, and 2 ambulances covered by the night shift. This cover is supplemented by an additional 2 vehicles which operate from Bangor Station.

All Emergency and most General Practitioner (GP) referrals are taken to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald (UHD). There may be occasions when GPs refer patients to hospitals other than UHD, and there are other occasions when a divert system may result in patients being taken to hospitals elsewhere in Belfast.

Ambulance Response times are set against Orcon Standards and are collated per station area rather than per ward. Orcon standards suggest that ambulances should respond to 50% of all 999 calls within 8 minutes and to respond to 95% of all 999 calls within 18 minutes (urban) and 21 minutes (rural). The further down the Peninsula the ambulance has to travel, the longer the response time. The length of time that it takes to respond to a call in Portaferry is approximately 30 minutes (*Northern Ireland Ambulance, 2004*). It would appear that this is outside Orcon standards.

In response to this, St John Ambulance in Newtownards is currently considering the feasibility of providing an ambulance which could be based in the Lower Ards Peninsula. Its availability would be subject to funding. (*St John Ambulance, Newtownards*).

## **Fire Brigade Services**

There are two fire stations which provide fire cover for the 4 wards – Portaferry and Ballywalter. One pumping appliance is also present at both locations.

During 2003 Ballywalter fire station attended to incidents in Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Portavogie, Greyabbey, Ballyhalbert which are within the 4 ward areas, as well as Ganaway, Dunover, Carrowdore and Rubane. During 2003 Portaferry fire station attended to incidents in Portaferry, Kircubbin, Portavogie, Cloughey which are within the 4 ward areas, as well as Ardkeen.

As can be seen from the table below, Ballywalter fire station attended more incidents (136) than Portaferry station (84). October was a particularly busy period for both fire stations. The majority of the incidents attended by both stations were for secondary fires (e.g. hedge, grass, rubbish fires). Quite a high number of incidents were false alarms (45), the majority of which were due to alarms being activated by cooking fumes. 3 false alarms were malicious.

**Table 41: Number of Incidents attended by Portaferry and Ballywalter Fire Stations (Jan-Dec 2003)**

Month	Portaferry Fire Station (No. of incidences)	Ballywalter Fire Station (No. of incidences)
January	1	7
February	5	12
March	2	5
April	11	9
May	3	5
June	11	3
July	6	12
August	10	15
September	9	17
October	14	36
November	3	5
December	9	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>136</b>

*(Northern Ireland Fire Brigade, 2004)*

**Table 42: Type of Incidences attended by Portaferry and Ballywalter Fire Stations (Jan – Dec 2003)**

Type of Incident	No. for Portaferry Station	No. for Ballywalter Station
False alarm (good intent, and due to apparatus)	20	25
False alarm (malicious)	1	2
Chimney fire	5	12
Secondary fire (e.g. hedge, grass, rubbish)	36	65
Secondary fire (vehicles, other)	5	7
Major (primary) fire (vehicles)	5	10
Major (primary) fire (property)	7	8
Special service call (e.g. flooding, rescue, other)	3	6
Test	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>136</b>

*(Northern Ireland Fire Brigade, 2004)*

## **Fire Authority Statistics for Northern Ireland**

A number of statistics have been selected from the Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan and Action Plan for 2004/05, to give a picture of fire incidents throughout Northern Ireland (*Fire Authority for Northern Ireland, 2003*).

- Fire death rates in Northern Ireland have fallen below the United Kingdom average since 2000 and in 2001 Northern Ireland had the lowest non-fatal casualty rate in the UK
- Between 1997 and 2002 in Northern Ireland there was a general increase in the number of primary and secondary fires and a decrease in the number of accidental dwelling fires.
- Between 2000 and 2002 arson was the main cause of fire related incidents in Northern Ireland, and accounted for 21% of all calls the Brigade responded to in 2002
- Smoking materials have been the main cause of fatal fires. Alcohol has also been noted to be a contributory factor in 36% of fire deaths. The majority of people who died in fires did not have an operating smoke alarm
- Northern Ireland Fire Brigade compares favourably with other Brigades in the UK, measuring 11.4 injuries per 100,000 population in 2001/02
- Over the past four years the number of hoax calls increased from 1.2 to 1.5 per 1,000 population
- Nationally, approximately 93 % of callouts arrive at the location within the set response time, which is 5-8 minutes in large cities and towns and their suburbs.

## **Withdrawal of services**

**Wessex Helicopters/Air Sea Rescue:** Since the 1970's Northern Ireland has had a helicopter search and rescue service based at Aldergrove, and it has used Wessex Helicopters. However, due to the ageing fleet of helicopters the service was withdrawn in 2001. This service is now provided from Prestwick in Scotland. A debate was held in the Northern Ireland Assembly on 26 March 2001, in which it was highlighted that on occasion the air sea rescue service from Prestwick have refused to respond to calls for support from N. Ireland as they feel that it would take too long to travel to the scene of the incident. Councillors for the Ards Peninsula, Mr Shannon, Mrs Robinson and Mr Hamilton all expressed their concern regarding the impact that the withdrawal of this service would have both on the fishing and tourist industries in the peninsula. Following the debate no further action/discussion took place in relation to the provision of a local air sea rescue service (*Assembly minutes 2001, Democratic Unionist Party – Newtownards office (discussion) 2003*).

## **Local Views**

Local people have raised concern over the roads, especially the A20 (from Portaferry to Newtownards) in terms of the number of accidents. There are few places to overtake and therefore it is felt that drivers take risks whilst passing slow vehicles. Traffic calming measures have been placed in Greyabbey, Kircubbin and Cloughey, however there are none in Portaferry and speeding was seen as an issue in this town. Although the idea of traffic calming measures

was seen as a good idea, the community steering group highlighted that they have created problems in terms of reducing parking space within the towns they have been placed in and older people are experiencing greater difficulties with access to shops.

In an emergency it was suggested that people often take their relatives to hospital by car rather than call an ambulance as the wait is too long for an ambulance (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

## **Proposals**

### **Measures to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in Northern Ireland – A Consultation Document**

The Northern Ireland Office recently published a consultation document to seek views on a package of proposed measure to tackle anti-social behaviour in Northern Ireland. The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act in England and Wales describes anti-social behaviour as “behaviour which causes alarm, distress or harassment to one or more people not in the same household as the individual causing it”.

The measures outlined in the consultation document take account of legislation which has been introduced in England and Wales to deal with anti-social behaviour to see if is appropriate for Northern Ireland also bearing in mind the differing local government structures in Northern Ireland. The proposed package consists of three specific measures:

- The development of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs). ABCs are a non-statutory intervention and may be a sufficient warning to people involved in anti-social behaviour (including young people and their parents). They may also be a precursor to enforceable action.
- Introduction of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) which are civil rather than criminal orders, as an option available to a court where there is a conviction for a related criminal offence.
- Introduction of ASBO's without an associated criminal conviction and on the basis of a partnership arrangement between the police and, in the first instance, District Councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Northern Ireland Office, 2004).

The Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive is documented as saying that “he believes that Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's) could assist the Housing Executive in addressing anti-social behaviour as they will contain restrictions on the actions and behaviour of an individual to protect the public from behaviour which causes harassment, alarm and distress” (*Newtownards Chronicle, 15 January, 2004*).



# Leisure and Recreation Services

“Active citizenship promotes social inclusion and leads to greater levels of involvement in the community. All else being equal, a community whose citizens are socially active and engaged, will have higher levels of health and wellbeing”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety 2002*

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## Leisure and Recreation Services

The following community centres and halls are located in the 4 ward areas and are available to the public for events, classes and meetings: Ballywalter Village Hall, Kircubbin Community Centre, Portaferry Market House, St Patricks Community Centre in Portaferry, Village Hall in Greyabbey, and Portavogie Community Centre. On request the council will provide an outline of the cost involved in hiring these premises.

Leisure centres are found in Newtownards, Comber and Kiltonga.

A grant aid scheme is available for local community groups to support community development work. The Community services officer within the council can provide further information. Grant aid is also available for groups who aim to promote cross community relations projects in the area. The Community relations officer in the council can provide further information (*Ards Borough Council website*).

### **Specific Leisure and Recreation Facilities** (Source: *Ards Borough Council, 2003*)

#### **Kircubbin**

- Kircubbin Community Centre – attached to the Health Centre.
- Soccer pitch & changing facilities
- Playground at Church Grove and the promenade
- New Community Nursery is planned
- Open space at promenade
- Play area at Rubane, Parsonage Rd and Boyd Avenue
- Community Arts – location for sculpture

### **Ballywalter**

- Ballywalter Village Hall. The Council has just agreed to give the local youth group a licence for the hall for a period of time. This has allowed the group to access funding to upgrade it.
- Football pitch (a second pitch is being currently being prepared and will be in use in 2005)
- 2 Playgrounds (however one is not useable)
- Coastal walkway at south promenade
- Tennis courts at south promenade
- Play areas at south promenade, Windy Ridge and Springvale Road
- Open space at south and north promenade and the harbour area
- Coastal walkway at north promenade
- Paddling pools at harbour area (these have not been in use however for 2 years)

### **Greyabbey**

- Football pitch & changing rooms
- Playground
- Tennis courts x 2
- Open space
- Greyabbey Village Hall (non Council facility)
- Open space at North Street
- Play area at Islandview and North Street

### **Portaferry**

- Football pitch at Cloughey Road
- Gaelic pitch at Cloughey Road
- Play area at Cloughey Road, Steel Dickson, Laurelbank, and Castle Park
- Open space at Cloughey Road, Castle Park and Coach Road
- Football pitch & changing rooms at Coach Road
- Outdoor bowling green at Castle Park
- Woodland walkway at Castle Park (this area has been taken over by anti-social drinking in the evening (*Community Steering Group, 2004*))
- Jetty at Cook Street
- Slipway at Cook Street
- Dingy park at Cook Street – there are also plans to extend and upgrade the existing boat park
- St Patrick's Community Centre

### **Portavogie**

- Portavogie Community Centre
- Open space at Lawson Park and Anchor car park
- Play area at Lawson Park and Harbour Rd
- Football Pitch
- Coastal Walkway at Anchor car park

### **Cloughey**

- Tennis Courts x 2
- Play area at Main Road
- Open space
- Outdoor Synthetic Bowling Green
- Football Pitch
- Single storey pavilion

### **Ballyhalbert**

- Soccer pitch
- Coastal walkway at Shorefront / Harbour area
- White Church Coastal verge - Picnic area
- White Church – picnic site
- Play area at Main St
- Village House

### **Summer Scheme Activities**

A range of summer activity schemes take place within the four ward areas. These are run through the Council, the South Eastern Education and Library Board, local youth clubs and church organisations. During 2003 Peninsula Healthy Living ran schemes in Portavogie and Kircubbin.

### **General Sporting Facilities/Activities**

Sports facilities organised by private or community groups include:

- Soccer clubs in Portaferry, Portavogie, Cloughey and Kircubbin and Ballywalter,
- Camogie and Hurling as well as other leisure and social events, are organised by the following Clubs: St Patrick's Gaelic Athletic Club, Portaferry which have their facilities at St Patrick's Parks and Clubhouse; Ballycran Gaelic Athletic Club which have their facilities at

McKenna Park and Clubhouse; and Ballygalget Gaelic Athletic Club which have their facilities at Mitchell Park and Clubhouse,

- Irish Dancing in Portaferry and Kircubbin,
- Badminton in Kircubbin, Portaferry and Portavogie,
- Motor racing at Cloughey,
- Sailing clubs in Kircubbin and Portaferry,
- Diving group in Portaferry,
- Bowling in Cloughey and Ballywalter,
- Yoga and aerobics in Portaferry,
- Bridge, bowls, yoga and needlework in St Patricks Community Centre, Portaferry,
- Golf clubs in Cloughey and Ardminnan.

Other:

- Amateur dramatics in Portaferry,
- Caravan sites throughout the Peninsula and cinemas in Newtownards and Bangor (Peninsula Community Transport Action Plan, 1999).

## **Tourism**

The tourism business in the Ards Peninsula makes a substantial contribution in terms of its economic value to Ards Borough Council. Among other things, the high number of caravan sites located along the east coast of the Ards Peninsula attracts significant numbers of tourists and visitors. Domestic and out-of-state tourism combined (out of state tourism refers to tourist traffic from outside Northern Ireland) accounts for 94,000 overnight trips and contributes £14.4m to the local economy.

Ards Borough is a member of the Kingdoms of Down Regional Tourism Organisation which concentrates on out of state marketing. In addition, Ards Borough Council promotes the area to the domestic market under the banner of Ards Tourism.

### **Tourist Attractions in and around the Lower Ards Peninsula**

Within the Ards Peninsula there are a number of (inter)nationally known tourist attractions which rank highly in terms of visitor numbers. Most notable amongst these are Mount Stewart (near Greyabbey), Castle Espie (near Comber) and Exploris Aquarium and Seal Sanctuary (Portaferry). A variety of activity opportunities are also available including walking, cycling, golf, diving, sailing, horse riding and birdwatching. There is also outstanding scenery, ancient monuments, heritage sites, beaches and Strangford Lough. A Management Plan now exists for Strangford Lough, reflecting the importance of the various designations which it now holds. The eastern shores of the Peninsula have been proposed for designation as an Area of Special Scientific Interest. Strangford Lough is also renowned for the Brent geese which visit its shores.

Opportunities exist for further development of recreational and access opportunities, and additional accommodation. Visitor research, carried out over the last number of years by NFO (a regional tourism marketing organisation) consistently illustrates that the quality of scenery, sightseeing/touring was the main reason for visitors coming to the area. The 'green environment' is also a key motivation for visiting the area.

*Exploris Aquarium and Seal Sanctuary* (based in Portaferry) is the leading aquarium on the island of Ireland. It is known internationally within the aquarium sector and is one of the top ten visitor attractions in Northern Ireland, and the most popular tourism attraction within Ards Borough.

In 2002 *Mount Stewart* had 90,946 visitors and had the largest visitor population of any National Trust (NT) property in Northern Ireland. The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) Castle Espie site (Comber), which is also within the Ards Borough Council area (but not within the 4 ward areas), attracted 66,000 visitors in 2002. Both sites are some way behind Exploris which had a total of 131,300 visitors in 2002.

Other tourist attractions in the area include Ballywalter Park, Rosemount (Greyabbey), Grey Abbey, Ballycopeland Windmill, Drumawhey, Nendrum Monastery, Sketrick Castle, as well as a property in Portaferry that regularly opens as part of the Ulster Gardens scheme.

### **Events Attracting Tourists**

*Kirkistown Race Circuit* is one of the key motor sports centres within Northern Ireland and brings a range of important and prestigious motor sports events to the Ards Peninsula on an annual basis. Such events generate significant visitor numbers in terms of competitors, supporters and spectators.

*Early Christian Ireland* - A wealth of 'early Christian' sites exist within the Ards Borough with Grey Abbey being the most significant within the Ards Peninsula creating a tourist attraction.

The Game and Country Fair held in Ballywalter, the 'Galway Hookers' event in Portaferry and the Festival of the Peninsula and the Creative Peninsula events both held annually since 2002 attracts a number of visitors.

### **Activities Attracting Tourists**

Sailing as well as windsurfing/board-sailing is popular on Strangford Lough. Power boating and jet skiing attract a large number of participants, but are not popular with the conservation lobby bodies, and are perceived as a potential nuisance and danger to other water sports activities. Diving, while on offer on the Peninsula, does not make a significant contribution to tourism.

Golf - Kirkistown (18 hole, near Portavogie) is one of four golf clubs within the Ards Borough Council area. Ardminnan, a private golf course developed alongside an existing caravan site on the east coast of the Peninsula beyond Cloughey, serves to support the local area and the caravan site customers on a 'pay and play' basis.

Within the Council's *Countryside Recreation Strategy* a range of projects and programmes have been identified for the Ards Borough including the development of facilities/routes for walking, cycling and horse riding within the Borough. A marina has also been developed at Portaferry.

## Arts

**Ards Arts** *Ards Arts* is the arts development service of Ards Borough Council. It has as its aim 'to bring art to life in the Ards'. During 2002-2003 it programmed a variety of events, including classical, jazz and traditional concerts, and exhibitions in photography, painting and craft. Ards Arts was also involved in the Special Olympics in 2003.

2003 also saw the final phase of the Ards Sculpture Trail initiative, with communities in Portavogie, Portaferry, Kircubbin, Greyabbey and Millisle commissioning their artworks.

The Ards Arts Committee also offers classes and workshops, for children and adults. The Committee helped Peninsula Healthy Living to set up a pilot scheme of photography workshops in Portavogie and Kircubbin during July and August 2003, which could be built upon in future if resources allow.

There is also a community art development programme which actively brings art out beyond the Arts Centre building to communities, especially to target groups including young people, women, people with disabilities, older people and people living in isolated rural areas. (*Ards Arts Committee Annual Report 2002/2003*)

## Sports

Sports Development Programmes for Ards Borough Council include:

**Sports Fun Weeks:** Young people participate in week long coaching activities in a range of sports, particularly football, at Easter and over the summer, where the emphasis is on fun, being physically active, and learning new skills. These activities then are linked to local sports clubs, so participants can continue to be physically active throughout their lives.

**Physical Activity, Sport and Health Survey** of every year 9 pupil throughout the Borough (particularly the Ards Peninsula) to gather information on attitudes, trends, and levels of activity in sport and physical activity.

**Junior Club Development Programme** which supports the development of quality junior sports clubs throughout the Ards Peninsula that will provide suitable, safe, and quality sport and recreation opportunities for young people from the ages of six to eighteen.

A sport specific and generic **training programme** aimed at sports club coaches, youth leaders, teachers and members of the public to improve their knowledge and skills to raise the quality of provision of activities. There are a wide range of courses delivered throughout the year.

**Funding Information Service** to help local groups to access funding from a wide range of sources, to enable them to deliver improved services and improve the quality of sporting and recreational facilities (*Ards Borough Council, 2003*).

## Policies and Strategies

### **The Ards Borough Council Countryside Recreation Strategy (2001-2006)**

This strategy outlines some of the difficulties which presently exist on the Peninsula in relation to recreational and leisure provision. It outlines issues such as limited access to walk around the Strangford Lough, limited amount of off-road paths and tracks, limited promotion and signage, the general low profile and lack of intersectoral working to promote countryside recreation. These combined with increasing road traffic and vandalism cause concern for recreational use on the Peninsula. This strategy recommends, amongst other things, the development of a vision for the Peninsula and the establishment of a countryside forum, and a management group for the Lough to take the vision forward. Both the vision and actions taken by these groups will have significant influence upon recreational use in the Peninsula. Local representation will be vital to ensure the needs of the community are balanced with the needs of those who use the Peninsula for recreational purposes. (*Ards Borough Council Countryside Recreation Strategy 2001*).

### **Proposals**

**Ulster Way:** The Ulster Way is a long distance footpath (approx 570 miles in length) which traverses through the six counties of Northern Ireland. Over the years various sections of the route have for various reason fallen out of use or into disrepair. A review of the Ulster Way was commissioned by the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Sport Council for Northern Ireland. In the report of the Review of the Ulster Way one of the recommendations was that the Environment and Heritage Service should take on responsibility for the strategic co-ordination of the Ulster Way long distance footpath. An Advisory Committee has also been established to assist the Environment and Heritage Service in this role. This work is now under way. The Committee are now considering various options for the future route of the Ulster Way. Previously the section of the route through the Ards Borough has followed the western side of Strangford Lough. Various proposals have been put forward as to how the Ulster Way should be developed and managed in the future. It is intended that the route will continue to include the Ards Borough and there are strong arguments that the route should include the Ards Peninsula as the scenery on the eastern side of the Peninsula is particularly beautiful and it would be possible to create an off road route (*Ards Borough Council, 2004*).





# Education

“Education impacts strongly on a person’s self-esteem, lifelong training and employment opportunities, sense of purpose and income...One important way of tackling inequalities in health is to improve educational opportunities for the most disadvantaged young people.”

Investing for Health, *Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety 2002*

The average percentage of persons aged 16-74 with no qualifications within the 4 ward areas is 44.5%. All 4 ward areas rate slightly higher than the Northern Ireland average of 42% meaning that less people leave school with no qualifications whatsoever compared with overall figures for Northern Ireland.

On average 16% of persons aged 16-74 years have 5 or more GCSE's, however when comparisons are made between qualification attainments at level 4/5, overall Northern Ireland averages are higher than those found within the 4 areas. For instance the average percentage of persons attaining a level 4 qualification (i.e. degree level) in the 4 areas is 8% compared to 11% for Northern Ireland – Portavogie rates are the poorest for this area with only 6.7% of persons attaining a level 4 qualification. (*NISRA, Census 2001*)

**Table 43: Population by Range of Qualifications**

	All persons aged 16-74	Percentage of persons aged 16-74 with:					
		No qualifications	Highest qualification attained: Level 1 <sup>1</sup>	Highest qualification attained: Level 2 <sup>2</sup>	Highest qualification attained: Level 3 <sup>3</sup>	Highest qualification attained: Level 4 <sup>4</sup>	Highest qualification attained: Level 5 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1187079</b>	<b>41.64</b>	<b>17.23</b>	<b>16.36</b>	<b>8.98</b>	<b>10.93</b>	<b>4.87</b>
Ballywalter	2425	44.16	19.46	15.92	7.46	9.40	3.59
Kircubbin	2087	45.09	18.35	17.54	7.24	8.29	3.50
Portaferry	2260	42.61	21.15	15.09	8.45	8.89	3.81
Portavogie	2542	46.11	20.85	15.50	8.50	6.77	2.28

(*NISRA, Census, 2001*)

**Table 44: Destination of school leavers within the 4 ward areas**

Ward Name	Institution of Higher Education	Institution of Further Education	Training	Employment	Unemployment or Unknown	Total Number of Leavers
Ballywalter	11	15	*	5	*	35
Kircubbin	12	18	*	*	*	39
Portaferry	22	21	8	*	*	56
Portavogie	10	12	8+	12	*	47

(DENI, 2001/02)

### School Meals

Comparing the 4 wards areas – Portaferry has the highest uptake of free school meals (22% compared to 12% in Ballywalter). 12% is the average within the whole of the Ards area. Entitlement to school meals is an indicator of low family income (NISRA, Census, 2001).

### Early Years Planning Information Report, (Sep, 2001):

Kircubbin is among the top ten wards in the EHSSB area with the highest rate of children leaving school with no examinations.

Within the Ulster Community Hospital Trust area Portaferry is within the top ten wards with the highest uptake of free school meals.

### Current Provision

Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership operates two out of school hours childcare projects in Kircubbin and Cloughey which operate two afternoons per week (Monday and Thursday). These projects are supported by South East Education and Library Board Youth Services.

There are 2 Institutes of Further and Higher Education - East Down in Downpatrick (which also has an out-centre in Kircubbin), and North Down in Newtownards.

Courses currently being delivered by East Down Institutes of Further and Higher Education (EDIFHE) include: ICT for Beginners; Intermediate and Advance Care NVQ level 2, Early Years Care and Education NVQ level 2 & 3; GCSE Maths and English; A/S level Psychology; Foundation Social Science NEB Occupational Safety and Health; and Sign Language. Hobby classes in yoga, aerobics, golf, and wine appreciation are also provided, along with a senior citizens club, a parent and toddler group, a Sure start link class, a Peninsula history project, and Learn direct. The number of students from the 4 ward areas availing of courses in 2002 included: Kircubbin - 47 full time, 167 part time; Portaferry - 72 full time, 192 part time; Portavogie - 46 full time, 176 part time; Ballywalter - 30 full time, 145 part time (EDIFHE, 2003).

There is a controlled nursery unit in Portavogie and nursery provision in Portaferry (attached to a primary school). Controlled Primary Schools are found in Ballywalter, Greyabbey, Kircubbin and Portaferry (both of which are Integrated Schools), Cloughey, Portavogie, and Ballyhalbert. Maintained primary schools are found in Kircubbin, and Portaferry. There is a Controlled

Secondary School in Ballyhalbert, and a Maintained Secondary School in Portaferry. A Special Primary Unit can be found in Kircubbin. Youth services in the area include the Glastry College youth wing in Ballyhalbert (*SEELB, 2003*).

**Table 45: Application and Admission figures for the 2 Secondary Schools within the Area**

School	Application			Admission		
	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
Glastry College, Ballyhalbert (Controlled Secondary School)	173	155	155	173	155	155
St Columba's College, Portaferry (Maintained Secondary School)	49	56	59	49	56	59

*(South Eastern Education and Library Board, 2004)*

### Children with Special Needs

A number of children with special needs receive additional support either in their own school or in a Special School. Assessment of special need (called statementing) is only provided after assessment by an educational psychologist and with parental consent. A child with a 'statement' is entitled to extra help from the Education and Library Board, either in a Special School or if possible in a mainstream school. The statementing process can take quite a long time depending on need, availability of services and the number of children on the educational psychologist's list.

Once a child has been identified by the school and Education and Library Board as having a special need which requires specific provision, the school begins to move the child through the five stages of a Code of Practice. Stages 1 and 2 are when the child receives help within the school either in his/her own class or during withdrawal from the class situation. This may be sufficient to support the child. He/she may not need to go on to stage 3 when the school seeks external support from the Board, i.e. a psychologist's assessment. It is only when the stage 3 referral takes place that the child may go on to 'have a statement'. Many children remain at stage 2 when they receive special help in their own school. These children are not included in the official figures of statements from the Education and Library Board.

**Table 46: Number of Children Statemented compared to Enrolment**

Area/schools	Number Statemented	Enrolment per school
Ballywalter	1	172
Greyabbey	5	73
Kircubbin	2	110
Portaferry	9	83
Portavogie	9	140
Victoria	1	122
St Mary's Kircubbin	3	159
St Mary's Portaferry	3	244
St Patricks Ballygalget	4	102
Glastry (Ballyhalbert)	14	583
St Columba's (Portaferry)	17	301

*(South Eastern Education and Library Board, (SEELB) 2004)*

It is not really appropriate to compare figures between schools in other areas as this can give an inaccurate picture of the areas. Figures vary from year to year, and a school may have only one statemented child but a large number on a waiting list or receiving special help within their school (*SEELB, 2004*).

## **Training**

The Womens Research and Development Agency, East Down Rural Community Network, and Community Change organisations ran a Community Facilitators Course during 2003 for 11 local women on health issues. There are no plans at present to re-run this programme.

The Citizens Advice Bureau are targeting 10 people in the Peninsula area during 2003/04 to train them on providing advice for the area (East Down Rural Community Network).

The Sea Fishing Industry Training Association (NI) Ltd (SFITA), are currently offering courses at NVQ Levels 2 and 3, and will shortly be in a position to deliver Modern Apprenticeship training.

Seniors – Social Therapy Course: A weekly class is being run in the Kircubbin campus of the East Down Institute of Further Education, where the syllabus is varied and tailored to suit older students. Peninsula Community Transport provides door to door travel and is available for visits to local educational venues (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).

## **Library Services**

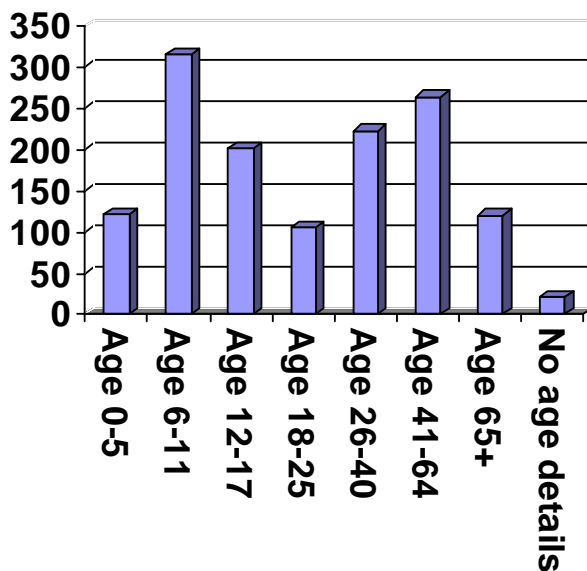
There is a library in Portaferry and a mobile library available for the area. The mobile library makes a weekly visit to Cloughey and every fortnight to Kircubbin. At the library there is a weekly Storytime for children under 5 which is well attended.

Outside groups using the library include: local primary schools for class visits and storytimes; Wildfowlers Club for meetings and 'Northern Ireland Children with Cancer' for meetings.

The library is also involved in cultural events such as the Portaferry Gala, and hosts events and exhibitions. The 'Beyond Words' Festival events are held in the Library.

The library is used by a wide range of age groups, with the highest number of borrowers aged between 6-11 years. There is also a considerable number of borrowers aged 41-65 years using the library. A total of 1370 borrowers are currently registered at Portaferry Library (*SEELB Headquarters, Ballynahinch, 2003*).

**Table 47: Borrowers Registered at Portaferry Library January 2004 (including Mobile Service Users)**



*(South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) Headquarters, Ballynahinch, 2003)*

### **Additional Provision**

A scheme called Bookstart operates in the area. A free book pack containing 2 books and a library card is distributed to all children in the area at 7 months. The objectives are to encourage reading and qualitative play sessions between parent and child. They are delivered by Health visitors. The scheme works in partnership with SEELB, the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust and Portaferry library.

Another similar scheme is run by SureStart called Bookstart+. This service is built upon the service offered by SEELB, costing approx £4000 per annum and is coordinated by the Youth Librarian and 4 health visitors. Providing an additional large story telling book, packs are delivered at 18 and 30 months.

A Moderate Learning Unit (MLU) unit was opened in St Mary's for Key Stage 2 pupils in September 2002. It is funded by South East Education and Library Board and is based on a needs assessment i.e. that children from the Peninsula who had special needs were required to travel to North Down/Downpatrick area for teaching.

The aim of the unit is to provide a secure, happy and consistent environment in which all children, using individual educational programmes, can master basis skills to the best of their ability, and can develop emotionally to the extent that they can function academically and socially in the mainstream educational system. Children are encouraged to join mainstream classes for other areas of the curriculum on a regular basis.

## **Activities Run by Lifestart**

### *Breakfast Club*

Children who need to leave home early in the morning can enjoy a hot breakfast, book club, games and television every day.

### *Healthy Break*

P1, P2 and P3 school children enjoy the benefits of a healthy break daily, consisting of toast, fresh fruit provided by Peninsula Healthy Eating, with digestive biscuits and milk or water. Staff are looking forward to extending this provision throughout the other classes in the near future.

### *After Schools Club*

This is organised by the school's P.T.A. and provides children with a variety of enjoyable and educational activities delivered by tutors from a wide scope e.g. sport, dance, art/design etc.

### *Golden Time*

This is organised every Friday afternoon for Key Stage 2 children as a reward for children who have worked hard and to promote positive behaviour within the school. During this time children take part in activities of their own choice e.g. sport, cookery, art, technology, knitting, music etc. It is thoroughly enjoyed and looked forward to by all the children, and is having a positive impact on the school.

## **Local Views**

Opinions were gathered from local community representatives at a training day in January 2004, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities as part of the Community Health Impact Assessment process. Two priority issues highlighted in relation to education were:

- Equality – It was highlighted that because there are only 3 secondary schools in the area a number of children have to travel to schools in Newtownards, Downpatrick or Belfast. Also there are no Grammar Schools in the area and only one Catholic school, adding to the need or desire of children to travel to schools in Newtownards, Downpatrick or Belfast. A number of teenagers feel they need to travel to further education colleges in Bangor or Downpatrick to get a better choice of courses and A-level subjects. Because these teenagers have chosen not to attend the nearest college of further education they are not always entitled to free travel and therefore they or their parents sometimes have to meet the cost of travel.
- Access issues including a lack of adequate transport and distance to travel for education was seen as a problem. This was compounded by overcrowding on buses, especially school buses where children are expected to stand during journeys to school if all the seats were taken (*Local community representatives and the Community Steering Group, 2004*).

## Proposals

**Review of public library services in Northern Ireland:** *Tomorrow's Libraries* promises a shake up in the way the service is currently provided. Although there are more than 7 million visits to the library service each year less is spent per head of population than any other country in the UK, with a 31% drop in expenditure on this service over the last 6 years. The report makes a number of recommendations beginning with a consultation process, and profiling of service use across Northern Ireland. Particularly, the review recommends a policy for the provision of services in rural areas, and that funding should be earmarked for the replacement of mobile libraries. This should include exploration of other services featured on mobiles. Also that mobile library routes should be regularly reviewed so that they continue to meet needs (*Tomorrow's Libraries: A review of the Library Service in Northern Ireland, DCAL 2002*).





# Health and Social Services Provision

“The funding of health care should ensure equity and sustainability”

Health 21: An Introduction *World Health Organisation 1998*

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There are 44 wards within the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust Area, and 167 wards in total in the EHSSB area. The 4 ward areas are covered by Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust and Ards District Partnership Board.

## Hospitals

There are 2 hospitals within the Ards Peninsula area. The Ards Hospital (Newtownards) offers services covering outpatients, general practitioner managed inpatient beds (maximum stay of 28 days), day procedure, X-ray department, mental health inpatient unit, and various therapies such as occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language clinics.

The hospital also has a minor injuries clinic which is manned by a nurse practitioner who has a telemedicine link to Accident and Emergency in the Ulster Hospital facilitating expert advice to be shared in relation to X-ray results and so on.

The Ulster Hospital (Dundonald) which has a full range of acute general hospital inpatient, outpatient and accident and emergency services (*Ards LHSCG, Primary Care Investment Plan, 2003/04*).

In terms of hospital usage by the 4 ward areas in 2002 Ballywalter had 1107 hospital episodes (ratio of 1:33 episodes versus population); Kircubbin 706 (ratio of 1:24); Portaferry 1124 (ratio of 1:34), and Portavogie had 923 hospital episodes (ratio 1:26) (*NISRA, 2003*). The overall ratio of hospital episodes versus population for the whole of the Ards area is 1:31. Unfortunately the figures given do not indicate which hospital residents attended.

## Other Services

A wide spectrum of community services is available in the Ards area, organised on a programme of care basis which includes: primary care and health promotion; older people; mental health; learning disability; physical disability and sensory impairment and family, child health and child care.

Services are either provided directly by the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust or are commissioned by the Trust from the voluntary sector and some private organisations, for

example Women's Aid who work in General Practice and in schools dealing with domestic violence and relationship building (*Ards LHSCG, Primary Care Investment Plan, 2003/04*).

A new post is being developed (January 2004) – Community Disability Coordinator, who will work with people with head injuries, this person will be based in Ards Community Network.

### **Domiciliary Care**

283 people are receiving some form of domiciliary care service in the area. This ranges from personal care, such as bathing, toileting etc, to domestic tasks such as shopping, cleaning and so on. Overall 2000 hours of care per week are provided, as is a total of 330 'cook chill' meals (*UCHT, 2003*).

### **General Practitioners**

There are four general practitioner practices in the area – The first GP practice is based in Kircubbin (consisting of 2 GPs) with 1 session per week also being held in Greyabbey, Portavogie and Ballywalter. A second GP practice is based in Ballywalter (consists of 2 GPs). A third practice (2 GPs) can be found in Portaferry with 3 sessions per week also held in Portavogie. The fourth practice (3 GPs) is also based in Portaferry with 1 session per week held in Portavogie (*Central Services Agency, 2003*).

### **Out of Hours General Practitioner Services**

North Down and Ards Doctor on Call (NDADOC) covers all 4 ward areas. NDADOC is based in Balloo Training and Resource Centre, Newtownards Road, Bangor, and they make use of this accommodation when the day centre staff have left to make full use of the asset. They operate two high profile mobile vehicles to cover home visits where appropriate. All contacts are prioritised on their clinical condition rather than geographical location.

The majority of contacts to the Out of Hours service are for minor self limiting illness rather than emergencies and can be handled by telephone advice (63-66%). 19%-23% of all consultations are at the Out of Hours centre and according to NDADOC the majority of patients are happy to travel and will be seen as quickly as possible on arrival. The maximum wait on normal sessions is 20 minutes but this increases at periods of peak demand. Home visits are carried out where required and although they have not set a specific standard, the majority of emergency visits are within 30 minutes depending on day of the week, traffic, holiday period or major events. In some cases it may be more appropriate to dispatch an ambulance if transport to hospital is required. NDADOC frequently attends life threatening calls.

NDADOC operate the same home visiting guidelines as all Northern Irish GP Co-operatives which give priority to the terminally ill and truly bed bound. The majority of self-limiting illnesses can be treated at an Out of Hours centre or by telephone advice. Patients are encouraged to travel to the Out of Hours centre and to pick up medication if no chemist is open and the product is in stock, although all mitigating circumstances are taken into consideration.

Out of Hours care is for conditions which cannot wait until the next working day and is not a 24 hour open access surgery. NDADOC suggest the main reason for their urgent response times is because calls are prioritised on clinical condition. However patients believe this is an open access service and should provide the full range of services normally available in their own

surgery but this is not the case. The UK Out of Hours Accreditation Standards (set by the Royal College of General Practitioners) set a six hour waiting time on non emergency home visits but NDADOC are confident that all calls regardless of the time of year receive a service quicker than this.

Changes to 'Out of Hours' services may take place as a result of the new general practitioner contract, which took effect from April 2004. This contract enables GP's to opt out of Out of Hours services if they so wish, however alternative arrangements will be put in place by the Health Board. The extent of the changes that will occur within the lower Ards has not yet been established. (*North Down and Ards Doctors on Call Centre, 2004*)

## **Mental Health**

The Mental Health Programme within the Ulster Community Hospital Trust provides a wide range of services in both the community and hospital. The Programme also works in partnership with several voluntary agencies as having close links with other Programmes and Directorates within the Trust and relevant organisations such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Police, Department of Health, Social Security and Public Safety and Citizens Advice Bureau.

### **Mental Health Services**

#### *Hospital services – Ards hospital:*

- Mental health inpatient unit
- Mental health day hospital
- Mental health outpatients centre

#### *Hospital services – Downshire hospital:*

- Acute admission (10 beds)
- Continuing care
- Intensive care (5-6 beds)

#### *Community services:*

- Acute care team
- Continued support team
- Community addictions team
- Child and adolescent mental health team
- Psychology services
- Psychological therapies

*Voluntary sector services:*

- Northern Ireland Association for mental health drop-in
- Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH) – Enterprise court
- PRAXIS (Voluntary Organisation) Residential schemes
- Action Mental Health – New Horizons
- ACCEPT - Employment Scheme (part of the Action Mental Health Voluntary Agency)
- RETHINK Advocacy service
- Carer and User Support Enterprise (Cause) helpline

*Services provided – mental health services for older people*

*Hospital services – Ards hospital:*

- Mental health inpatient unit (Functional)

*Hospital services – Downshire hospital*

- Dementia beds

*Community services*

- Psychiatry of old age team
- Care management
- New Croft Lodge

*Voluntary sector services:*

- Fold

**Health Visiting Service in Lower Ards Peninsula**

The health visiting service is a universal service available to all preschool children and every GP practice has a health visitor (HV). The health visitor works with individuals, families and community groups to identify health needs and to promote health and well-being. The health visiting service to children begins in the antenatal period when health visitors participate in Parentcraft, antenatal clinics, and where possible / required provide home visits.

Babies are monitored for growth and development and advice and support given on early feeding difficulties. The health visitor facilitates baby clinics and gives information on vaccinations. The HV carries out routine reviews of the child's developmental progress at various times until school entry. Guidance and support is offered to parents in relation to child development, minor illnesses, behaviour management, nutrition, safety and dental care. The health visitor facilitates group sessions, for example infant massage, parenting groups and breast-feeding groups.

Health visitors can identify families in need and refer to other professionals and agencies to ensure that children and their families receive the additional support services that they require. The health visitor has a key role in the giving of support and identifying resources which can alleviate a situation moving into a crisis with regards to the protection of children. HV have a key role to play in the protection of children and work closely with social workers (*Health Visiting Department, Ulster Community Hospital Trust, 2004*).

### **The Role of the District Nurse**

District Nurses provide a professional up-to-date service for house bound patients. In patients' homes they carry out the following tasks:

- Clinical investigations for housebound patients
- Assessment for nursing equipment
- Chronic Disease Management – blood pressure measurement, wound care and control of diabetes
- Complex Nursing Procedures – Intra Venous cannulation and catheterisation
- Continence assessments and management
- Nursing care for the terminally ill
- Nurses have a vital educational role

*(Personal hygiene needs, getting up and putting to bed are not regarded as nursing care)*

Patients are discharged from District Nursing Services in the following circumstances:

- If they are able to provide self-care
- When their present clinical condition improves
- When objectives of a patient's care plan are achieved
- If they are able to attend the Health Centre

Patients that are visited at the weekends and statutory holidays include:

- Patients with insulin dependent diabetes
- Post-operative patients with heavily exudating wounds or needing injections
- Terminally ill patients
- Patients requiring complex nursing procedures

*(Health Visiting Department, Ulster Community Hospital Trust, 2004).*

## **School Nursing Service**

The School Nursing service covers 2 post-primary and 10 primary schools in the Lower Ards Peninsula area. Currently 5 School Nurses cover these schools. The post-primary schools are visited annually by the school nurses, to complete vaccinations on year 9 and year 11 pupils. The primary schools also receive an annual visit when P.1 children are screened for hearing, vision, height and weight. Vision screening is also completed in P4 and P7.

Each school is offered health education talks. All primary schools have the puberty talk for girls with only a few taking the boys talk. In Glastry College year 9 pupils receive a puberty talk and year 10 pupils take part in a sexual health talk. The school nurse is also involved in a module on sexual health for General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) pupils.

St. Columbas College do not have the school nurse involved in any health promotion talks.

Currently 2 schools run the DELTA programme for parents and the School Nurses take part in one session of this 4 week programme talking to the parents about healthy lifestyles.

School Nurses are involved in child protection and attend case conferences as the need arises on any of the pupils attending these schools.

Each year 9 pupil receives a health appraisal form in which the parent notes any health concern. These are followed up by the School Nurses who may give advice and support or refer onwards as necessary.

All the schools are involved in the Free Fruit for Schools programme and the school nurses will assist the schools to form School Nutrition Action Groups (SNAGS) within the next year. This is part of the Health Promoting Schools initiative, which all schools will eventually be involved with (*Health Visiting Department, Ulster Community Hospital Trust, 2004*).

## **Breast Screening Services**

Breast screening services are offered to women between the ages of 50-64 years. Invitations to the screening programme are sent to women, inviting them to attend the mobile breast screening unit or the static unit (Linenhall Street, Belfast).

In order to achieve an increase in uptake rates the Trust works in collaboration with voluntary agencies and community groups such as Action Cancer and Ulster Cancer Foundation. The Trust also collaborates closely with other statutory agencies in targeting the client group. Past figures have shown an uptake rate of 68%, but the most up to date figures will not be available until an ongoing round of screening is completed.

The breast screening mobile unit is presently based at Bangor Community Hospital, but will in the near future the mobile unit be based at Ards Community Hospital. These two sites accommodate the women of the 4 wards.

## **Ards Health and Social Care Group (HSCG)**

The role of Ards HSCG is to develop Primary Care and Community Health and Social Services to reflect local needs and priorities. Underpinning this is the need to involve local communities in

identifying their needs and priorities, along side local General Practitioners and other Primary Health and Social Care Professionals.

*Ards Health and Social Care Group has been mandated to:*

- Identify local health and social care needs
- Assess and develop plans for improving health and well-being of the Ards Borough Council Area
- Maximise opportunities for individuals, families and communities to protect and improve their own health
- Develop local services in response to need and engage local communities in the planning and commissioning of services
- Take steps to reduce inequalities in health and social care in access to services consistent with the 'New Targeting Social Need' policy
- Produce investment plans taking account of Local, Regional and National priorities
- Work across health and social service boundaries and in partnerships with other organisations to meet the community's health and social needs. (Circular one HSS (PCD) 15/2001)

#### *Investment in Children and Parents*

Over the last eighteen months Ards Health and Social Care Group has invested its resources in a number of schemes in support of Children and Parents. This has ranged from the:

- Provision of stair gates and fire guards for the Home Safety Aid Scheme
- Training for Nursery/Play Group staff in language development
- Safety Counselling Session for Children
- Promoting Parenting schemes
- Establishment of a Young Parents Group
- Funding Life Education Centre which provides health and well-being message to primary school children
- Promoting healthy life styles preventing obesity through the investment in activity programmes delivered by Nursery/Play/After school groups.

**One-Stop Assessment Centre:** The review of Community Care suggests that elderly patients make up the majority of emergency admissions, and that many of these admissions may be avoided if the patient has been assessed promptly. This service can assess 3-4 patients per day, is consultant led and has immediate access to laboratories, ECG and the pharmacy. It is focused on older patients for whom a hospital admission may be imminent within the following 48 – 72 hours (*Review of Community Care: First Report, DHSSPS 2002*).

**Specialist Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Nurse:** This project aims to offer support in the community to patients with specialist chronic obstructive pulmonary conditions through a proactive approach to prevent deterioration, which often leads to hospital admission. The patient can be tested at home and can advise on interventions, the service aims to prevent hospital admissions and improve patient-centred care (*Review of Community Care: First Report, DHSSPS 2002*).

**Tissue Viability Project:** Leg ulcers in older patients can deteriorate quickly if not managed appropriately and this can lead to a hospital admission, which can often be lengthy. By ensuring early access to local treatment (Ards and Bangor Community Hospitals) its overall aim is to prevent hospital admissions. The treatment nurse is supported by a dermatologist and vascular surgeon to ensure the highest quality of treatment (*Review of Community Care: First Report, DHSSPS 2002*).

**Discharge Co-ordination Team:** This team which has 5 full time staff serves as a single contact point for referrals for patients with Health and Social Care needs, and aims to provide an efficient and effective discharge process. The service aims to improve channels of communication between the hospital and community to decrease waiting times for discharge and promote the use of community rehabilitation options (*Review of Community Care: First Report, DHSSPS 2002*).

## Local Views

There have been concerns raised by the patients in these ward areas concerning the length of travel to the Out of Hours Centre, (which can be as much as 30 kilometres for those living in Portaferry), and NDADOC have met with local representatives, Ards Borough Council and the Eastern Health and Social Services Council to discuss these issues. Ultimately the doctors are responsible for the quality and safety of the service and NDADOC are satisfied they meet all the required standards for their patients within these areas (*North Down and Ards Doctors on Call Centre, 2004*).

This is however is not the view of some members of the Community Steering Group who suggest that the communities in the 4 ward areas are not happy with the extent of the expected travel time to visit a doctor Out of Hours (*Community Steering Group 2004*).

Local opinions were gathered from local community representatives at a training day in January 2004, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities as part of the Community Health Impact Assessment process. Two priority issues highlighted in relation to healthcare were:

- Concern over hospital service provision, specifically concern over the distance to travel to get access to A+E and patients sometimes having to wait long periods of time on trolleys before getting a bed on a ward. Concern was also raised over the length of waiting lists and over the lack of adequate car parking on hospital grounds and the cost associated with parking.
- Primary care services. Concern was raised over the distance to travel to get Out of Hours GP services (over 30 minutes in some cases as it is based in Bangor) and the transport problems for some people getting to a doctor. There was concern over ambulance services and emergency response times due to ambulance control being based in Newtownards, which for people living in Portaferry is estimated to be at least a 30 minute drive away.



## Proposals

### **New General Medical Services Contract:**

A new General Medical Services (GMS) contract for GPs came into force on 1 April 2004. This contract regulates all GP practices in the National Health Service (NHS), and also sets out the services they are required to provide. The major change is that GPs will have greater flexibility to choose which services they provide, for instance by opting in or out of Out of Hours care and some additional services, such as immunisation services. GPs will also have the option of increasing the provision of services they provide, and will receive additional resources for this. In the situation where GPs choose to end some of their services, it will be the responsibility of the Health Board to provide these services, for example the provision of Out of Hours services. In some cases this may result in users travelling either to another GP practice, or another service centre, or the hospital to receive care. Rural practices will receive an additional payment to account for their location, as often rural practices provide more emergency care outside their surgery, than practices in urban areas. Practices will be required to follow new quality standards, which focus on clinical services for certain diseases such as cancer, asthma, diabetes and coronary heart disease; improved organisation in practices; patients' experience of care and additional services. These standards are intended to encourage them to provide an overall better service, and practices will be monitored and evaluated against these standards. Nurses will also be able to provide more primary care, where their skills permit. For patients, another major change is that from April 2004 they will register with the practice, rather than an individual GP. They will, however, still have the choice to see a specific doctor, and all patients will still be allocated GP regardless of whether local lists are closed. The contract includes additional funding of £8 billion over the next three years distributed to all GP practices in the NHS (*New General Medical Services Contract, 2003, Department of Health*).

Within the Eastern Health and Social Services Board area approximately 98% of GP's have indicated a desire to opt out of Out of Hours services. The EHSSB is currently developing a plan to ensure provision of these services and at present foresee a continuation of existing services which will be run by the Board. This plan will be open for consultation during the summer 2004, and suitable alternative arrangements for out-of-hour services will be put in place by January 2005 (*GP Unit, EHSSB, February 2004*).

**Review of Public Administration:** The Review of Public Administration was launched in 2002, and is tasked with finding an agreeable model for reforming public administration in Northern Ireland. Criticism against the current system has stated that it is overly bureaucratic, and involves central instead of local government in issues such as planning, roads and water. Meanwhile, local councils have relatively little influence, compared to the public administration elsewhere in the UK. During late 2003 and early 2004, a consultation on how public administration should be reformed was held. The responses are to inform another consultation, due by autumn 2004. It is currently not clear when a new model would be phased in.

The consultation set out five alternative models for the future:

1. **Status Quo** - The current system with a mix of public bodies (such as NIHE or Education and Library Boards) and Departments responsible for services, while local councils have a civic leadership role and limited responsibilities such as waste management and leisure service provision.

2. **Centralised** - A system where government Departments would deliver services through regional and sub regional offices. Under this system, many public bodies would disappear, and central government would have overall control. The role of local councils would not change drastically.

3. **Regional and Sub-Regional Public Bodies** - A system where services would be delivered through public bodies. Functions currently carried out by Departments, such as planning and roads, would be transferred to public bodies directed by Ministers, councillors or a wider stakeholder group. Local councils would be responsible for local services only.

4. **Reformed Status Quo with Enhanced Local Government** - A variation of the current system in which local councils get a bigger role. Public bodies would remain, and Departments would still have an input, but local councils would take on a planning role and be members of all bodies related to services they provide. Some responsibilities could also be transferred over to councils.

5. **Strong Local Government** - A system where local councils would be responsible for delivering most services. This system would involve the biggest changes, as local councils would take on responsibility for almost all services, including education and planning. It is likely the number of councils would be reduced, and the new authorities would have new governance structures.

The Review is not concerned with health and social services, as there is a separate consultation for this which will resume when initial results from this Review are known.

The Review will have impacts on all citizens, as it is likely to substantially change the way services are provided. For instance, education may no longer be the responsibility of the South Eastern Education and Library Board, while housing may become managed locally. (Review of Public Administration consultation document, October 2003, Review of Public Administration Team)

It could also be argued that if a number of bodies and agencies disappear, it is also likely some jobs in public administration will be lost.

# Voluntary, Community, Private Provision

“ All sectors of society should assume responsibility for the reduction of social and gender inequalities, and the alleviation of their consequences on health”

Health for All: An Introduction *World Health Organisation 1998*

## Carers

Census data shows that 1518 (12%) of persons in the 4 ward areas provide unpaid health care.

**Table 48: Provision of Unpaid Care**

	All persons	Persons who provide unpaid care <sup>4</sup> :			
		All persons who provide unpaid care	1-19 hours a week	20-49 hours a week	50+ hours a week
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>185066</b>	<b>110407</b>	<b>28000</b>	<b>46659</b>
Ballywalter	3350	429	249	76	104
Kircubbin	2931	323	182	43	98
Portaferry	3286	345	198	49	98
Portavogie	3504	421	216	69	136

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

## Residential Care

In 2001 53 people resided within either a nursing home or residential care home within the Portaferry/ Portavogie area.

## Nursing and Residential Home Provision

There is 1 nursing home in Portaferry with 10 places. There are currently no vacancies in this home, and this would be the usual pattern. There are 4 residential homes in the area (2 in Portaferry, 1 in Ballyhalbert and 1 in Portavogie). There are 4 vacancies currently out of an overall capacity of 55. Again this would be the usual pattern (UCHT, 2003).

## Lone Parents/Employment

Census data (2001) shows that there are 449 lone parent households (9% of all households) within the 4 ward areas – 58% have dependent children. This has obvious implications for the need to have adequate childcare facilities/arrangements if the parent is in employment.

On average 5% of households with no adults in employment have dependent children (the highest percentage is found in the Portaferry area).

**Table 49: Lone Parents in Employment**

	All lone parent households with dependent children <sup>1</sup>	Male lone parent with dependent children <sup>1</sup>			Female lone parent with dependent children <sup>1</sup>		
		Total	In full-time <sup>2</sup> employment	In part-time <sup>2</sup> employment	Total	In full-time <sup>2</sup> employment	In part-time <sup>2</sup> employment
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>50641</b>	<b>3928</b>	<b>1777</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>46713</b>	<b>8170</b>	<b>9776</b>
Ballywalter	55	7	3	-	48	9	16
Kircubbin	70	9	-	5	61	17	11
Portaferry	75	14	11	-	61	17	15
Portavogie	58	8	3	-	50	10	9

(NISRA, Census, 2001)

## Childcare

There are no private day care facilities available within the lower Ards area and a low number of child minders. For example, figures collected during 2001 show that in Portaferry there were 818 children aged 0-14 however there were only 4 registered childminders in the area (0.49% childminder per child). This has huge implications for mothers wanting to return to work after having children.

**Table 50: Childminders versus Child Population**

Ward	Child Population (0-14 years)	No of Registered Childminders	% Childminders per Child
Ballywalter	664	9	1.36
Kircubbin	726	10	1.38
Portaferry	818	4	0.49
Portavogie	727	5	0.69

(Ulster Community Hospital Trust, Review of Early Years Services, 2001)

The Review of Early Years Services in North Down and Ards produced by UCHT (2001) highlighted Portaferry, Portavogie, Ballywalter and Kircubbin as priority ward areas requiring more registered Childminders.

**Table 51: Overall Pre-School Provision**

Ward	No of 4 year olds	No of nursery units	No of nursery places	No of playgroups	No of playgroup places	Net Provision
Ballywalter	37	0	0	3	72	35
Kircubbin	51	1	0	1	24	-27
Portaferry	49	0	0	1	24	-25
Portavogie	46	1	52	1	18	24

*(Ulster Community Hospital Trust, Review of Early Years Services, 2001)*

Parent and toddler groups are run in Portavogie, Portaferry, Kircubbin, Ballywalter, Greyabbey and Ballyhalbert (none in Cloughey). There is a youth club held in Ballywalter.

**Out of Hours Childcare Service**

Two Out of Hours childcare centres were established by the Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership within Portaferry and Cloughey in April 2002. Each site offers 24 registered after school and holiday care places. Cost is £5 per session (morning or afternoon), £10 whole day (concessionary rates for siblings). They are available term-time Monday – Friday, 2pm – 6pm, and school holidays between 8am and 6pm. Information is provided to prospective users on how to apply to the Family Tax Credit Scheme which can offset childcare costs by up to 70%. The project is aimed particularly at working parents/carers, or those wanting to join the labour market. Work is being planned to introduce a further site in Carrowdore by Spring 2004. *(Project Co-ordinator, Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership, 2004).*

**Provision for Older People**

**Housing:** The ARK housing association provide supported housing for the elderly within Portaferry.

**Day Care:** Age Concern have one day centre located in Portaferry, which is contracted by the trust to take 20 clients a day. The day centre operates on a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and would have approximately 66 clients over the 3-day period. Referrals are mainly via the social worker, district nurse or GP and they operate a waiting list. A co-ordinator and two day care workers work within the day centre and run activities such as, bingo, arts and crafts, reminiscence, quiz, story-telling and flower arranging. Age Concern provides their own transport and driver and ‘cook chill’ meals are delivered to the centre daily. In 2003 the centre gained funding from the Ards Arts Centre for a project which involved an artist working with a client group over a period of ten weeks. Pieces of complete artwork were transferred onto canvas and a fabric collage was created and displayed within the day centre.

## General Provision

**Community Health & Development Worker:** A Community Health and Development Worker has been employed part time (through Peninsula Healthy Living) to develop community and individual participation in health related areas. The project will respond to health needs across a broad range of issues from housing to social isolation. A health audit will be used to engage those in greatest need in the community. This audit will inform future community development in this area. The community health workers role will also include signposting and assisting existing and new groups back into a range of integrated programmes, including education and training provided within the area. (*Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership Annual Report 2003*).

**Fall Prevention Scheme:** This project is jointly supported by Ulster Community and Hospital Trust, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry, and Peninsula Healthy Living. A Fall Prevention Officer has been appointed who follows up on all falls or accidents reported through A&E and the Minor Injuries unit within the Trust. Home visits are offered to assess various aspects of risk which may lead to further falls or accidents.

**Capacity Building Project.** This project is funded by Ards Local Strategy Partnership under the Peace II Programme and is a Borough wide service. The project aims to support both groups and individuals through training programmes which focus on a range of issues which aim to build up skills, knowledge and capacity. The project targets both groups and areas which are most disadvantaged, and also promotes active participation and involvement in cross community initiatives.

**Community Sustainability Programme.** This project is funded by the Department for Social Development – Voluntary Community Unit under Building Sustainable Prosperity. It provides support to all Network groups and organisations through providing neutral venues for events, guidance with funding applications, information and advice and secretarial support. It aims to strengthen intersectoral alliances and interaction between voluntary, community and statutory agencies.

### **Sure Start (Lower Ards Peninsula)**

Sure Start (Lower Ards Peninsula) is a community based partnership project based in Portavogie whose remit covers all four wards. The partnership is comprised of Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust, South Eastern Education & Library Board, Lifestart Mid Ards, Home-Start Ards Peninsula & Comber, North Down & Ards Women's Aid, NSPCC, and Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership. The Project is funded through the Eastern Childcare Partnership from the DHSSPS to provide additional services for parents of young children under 4 years of age.

The aims of Sure Start are "To work with parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children to ensure they can flourish at home and when they get to school".

The key principles of Sure Start include co-ordinating, streamlining and adding value to existing services. They also include involving parents in a non-stigmatising and sensitive manner and promoting participation of all local families.

*Activities of the Project include:*

- Speech & Language preventative work, a home based Education Programme, Children's Library, Toy Library for children with special needs, free books through the Bookstart Project
- Practical and emotional home based support for pregnant women and new parents, free dental packs and children's dental books, home safety and smoke alarm supply, infant massage and breast feeding support
- One to one support by Women's Aid Outreach Worker
- Respite playgroup
- Group work for parents on a wide variety of topics including Positive Parenting, First Aid, IT and Learn Direct, Well Women, Arts & Crafts and Exercise, Self Esteem and Hanen (You Make The Difference) Course which aims to enhance Parent Child Interaction
- Provision of free crèche and transport for parents group work
- The Sure Start Team consists of: Speech and Language Therapist; Family Support Social Worker; Early Years Worker; Parents Support Workers; Team Administrator and a Project Co-ordinator.

### **Sure Start Partners also Provides the Following Services under Sure Start Funding:**

*UCHT Health visitors Service* – works with individuals, families and community groups to promote health. In Sure Start they work with the rest of the team to provide a variety of courses for parents including Infant Massage, Bumps and Babies Group, and Support for Breastfeeding Mothers. In addition they also provide Bookstart Packs and Dental Packs and advice.

*Bookstart (SEELB)* – Through the health visitors parents are provided with free book packs to promote the ability to learn and communication between parents and children. The packs are given at 7 months (through alternative funding) and at 18 months and 30 months. In the past year Sure Start have also included a children's book on going to the dentist.

*Home-Start Ards Peninsula & Comber* – is a voluntary organisation which offers support and practical help to young families under stress in their own homes. It aims to prevent family breakdown and is available to any family with one child under five. It also runs a respite playgroup for preschool children. Home-Start is based in Greyabbey

*North Down & Ards Women's Aid Outreach Worker* – offers one to one support sessions throughout the Peninsula and co-facilitates courses for parents.

*Midwifery Service* – provides care and support for expectant and postnatal parents.

*Parents Forum* - The Project has formed a Parents Forum with the eventual aim to involve parents in the management of the Project.

## **Lifestart Mid-Ards**

Lifestart Mid-Ards provides a free home-based child development programme to the parents of 0-5 year old children (starting from birth) in the Ards Peninsula.

Lifestart is based on the principles that:

- Parents are their child's first teacher
- Birth to five years are the most important years for physical, social, emotional, creative intellectual development
- The majority of children's development and learning takes place in the home
- Lifestart is community based and develops all sectors of the community and offers long term commitment

Lifestart Mid-Ards commenced in 1997 as a result of a request from the Ulster Community Hospitals Trust (UCHT). Currently the parents of 114 children receive the Lifestart programme. Lifestart works in partnership with Surestart who fund 30 of these children, the remaining 84 are funded through the EUSSB Peace II funding via the Childhood Fund.

Lifestart Mid-Ards have facilitated the development of a Young Parents Project and through this, the need for a group for parents Over 25 was identified and has recently formed. Both groups provide social events and training opportunities for parents, funded by Ards Local Health & Social Care group. The groups are being facilitated by Community facilitators with support from EDRCN.

## **Kircubbin Youth Group**

Kircubbin Youth Group is a voluntary organisation which aims to provide a programme of social, cultural, recreational, educational and physical activities while at all times focusing on the personal development of young people and providing positive and enriching experiences. It is registered and sponsored by the South Eastern Education and Library Board and is affiliated to Youth Action NI.

The staff consists of a part time youth worker and all other staff are volunteers who undertake training in working with children and young adults, staff development and child protection.

Activities include art, craft, music, physical activities ie basketball, football, badminton, table-tennis, community relation projects, exploring culture and identity, circus skills, drama, music, art, dance, travel and exchange health education, outdoor education, sport and recreation and citizenship.

The programme also offers training for young people in personal skills, personal development and trainee leadership.

The youth club operated one night a week on a Thursday evening: Junior members aged 8-11 from 7.15pm – 8.30pm and Senior members aged 11-18 from 8.30pm – 10.00pm.

Junior members: 84 with average attendance 60-70



Senior members: 30 with average attendance 20

The management committee of Kircubbin Youth Club also provides the service of an After Schools Club which operates 2 afternoons a week, Monday P4 and P5 and Tuesday P2 and P3. The ASC is staffed by 2 qualified workers who are paid employees, 1 Jobskills trainee and 1 voluntary staff. The ASC operates from 3.00pm to 4.30pm and has a membership of 25 children from both local primary schools. It offers a programme of activities such as physical games, art, craft, cookery, music and social events. It is currently taking part in a Community Relations project with Greyabbey exploring culture and identity through celebrating the Chinese New Year (*Kircubbin Youth Club, 2004*).

### **Other Support Services Available in Partnership through the Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership:**

- Northern Ireland Mothers and Baby Action (NIMBA)
- Parents Advice Centre
- RELATE (relationship counselling)
- Ulster Cancer Foundation training and development opportunities will also be made available for the general community to enhance skills and increase community empowerment. (*Case Studies, Belfast Healthy Cities, 2003*)

### **Other Organisations/Groups Working in the Area** (identified by members of the Community Steering Group)

- East Down Rural Community Network
- Kircubbin and District Nursery Committee
- Lifestart a child development programme for parents of children birth to 5 years of age
- Youth clubs in Kircubbin, Portavogie and Portaferry
- Portaferry Community Association
- Kircubbin Regeneration Committee
- Greyabbey International Fund for Ireland Group
- Cloughey and District Community Association
- Ballyhalbert and District Community Association
- Ballyhalbert Resident's Association
- Portaferry Women's Group
- Homestart which helps people through crisis and is based in Greyabbey
- Greyabbey Development Committee
- Peninsula Drama Society; Portavogie Health Promotion Group
- Women's Aid

- Ballywalter Young Farmers Club
- Portaferry Women's Institute
- Portaferry and District Community Safety Forum
- Community and Police Liaison Committee (in Greyabbey/Kircubbin)
- Women's Institute (Ballywalter)
- S.P.R.E.A.D. – a befriending group in Portaferry who provide spiritual and personal assistance to people with special needs.

Organisations/groups identified by the Housing Executive (*Ards District Housing Plan, 2002/03*) as working in the 4 areas include:

- Ballywalter Community Trust, Ballywalter
- Upper Ards (Portaferry) Community Association; Greyabbey and District Community Association
- Ards Local Strategy Partnership.

## Churches

The location of churches within the 4 ward areas are as follows:

**Presbyterian Churches** – Portaferry, Kircubbin, Portavogie, Ballywalter, Cloughey and Greyabbey. There is a non-subscribing Presbyterian church in Greyabbey and Ballyhalbert.

**Church of Ireland** – Ballyhalbert, Ardkeen, Portaferry and Ballywalter.

**Methodist** – Ballyhalbert and Portaferry.

**Free Presbyterian** – Portavogie.

**Catholic churches** – Portaferry, Kircubbin, Ballygalget, Lisbane and Ballycran – the latter two being within the Kircubbin ward.

There are also a number of smaller churches in the area including Brethren halls, Elm churches, and Gospel halls.

A survey of activities organised by the churches in the area was performed for the benefit of this profile. Out of the 15 churches contacted, 4 churches returned information on their activities, The information which could be documented in this profile is therefore limited.

A summary of the activities organised by the 4 churches included: youth clubs; children's clubs including Sunday school; girls and boys brigade; Bap brigade; scouts; junior and senior badminton; in-door bowls; keep fit classes; table tennis; dancing classes for the elderly; ladies groups including the Presbyterian Women's Association and the Mothers Union; flower arranging classes; parent and toddler group (Greyabbey) Bible study sessions and Sunday services; and a day centre (in Ballywalter) which is supported by the church and the community.

## Private Sector Provision

- Banks are located in Portaferry and Kircubbin and an ATM machine in Portaferry, Ballywalter and Kircubbin. Sub-post offices are located in Portavogie, Portaferry, Ballywalter, Kircubbin, Cloughey, Ballyhalbert and Greyabbey.
- Credit Unions can be found in Portaferry, Greyabbey and Kircubbin.
- Chemist shops are found in Portavogie, Ballywalter, Portaferry, and Greyabbey. It is interesting to note that a smoking cessation programme is run from the Medical Hall within McMullans chemist, Portaferry (*Community Steering Group, 2004*).
- There are three part-time solicitors based in Portaferry.
- There is one full-time dentist based in Kircubbin and a part-time dentist based in Greyabbey.
- Citizens Advice Bureau have a base in Newtownards with outreach services in Kircubbin (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of each month) and Portaferry (each Tues afternoon) (*Citizen Advice Bureau, Oct 2001*).

## Proposals

**Kircubbin Community Nursery School:** For several years there has been an aspiration to further develop the Community Nursery into an Early Years centre which would allow a wide range of service providers from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors to provide a holistic integrated approach to care and education. Planning permission has been obtained and it is hoped that the school will be opened in 2004. The community nursery will meet the needs of 26 children from Greyabbey and Kircubbin.

**Supervised Summer Play:** Supervised play opportunities for children over the summer holidays has been piloted by Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership in 2003 in Kircubbin and Portavogie, with a view to extending the project in 2004. This was done in partnership with Ulster Community Hospital Trust, Sure Start and Ards Borough Council (*Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership Annual Report 2003*). In 2003 a grant was obtained from Women in Caring Trust to help start this project. Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership's (PHL) physical activity officer ran the scheme, with support from temporary staff appointed through Ards Borough Council. The scheme was successful, but smaller numbers than anticipated attended mainly due to church activities running alongside the venture which PHL were unaware of beforehand. The decision to run this programme again will depend on the success of the Peninsula Summer Scheme Action Group, established in 2003 to oversee this scheme, sourcing the necessary funding (*Ards Borough Council, February 2004, and Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership coordinator*).

**Proposed new premises for the Sure Start project:** At present the Project is based in Portavogie Health Centre. This office accommodation is shared with other members of Primary Health Services and does not allow for the development of some additional Sure Start programmes such as a Nurture Group or Drop In facilities for parents. The Project is currently exploring options to be re-housed.



## **Appendix 1**

### **Community Steering Group Members**

Sheila Bailie	Coordinator, Peninsula Healthy Living
Una Gilmore	Lifestart
Carol Ann Hewitt	Board, Peninsula Healthy Living
Frances Hughes	Rural Housing Estates Programme
Lorraine Lindsay	Investing for Health Officer, Eastern Health and Social Services Board
Andy Mayhew	Community Care, Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust
Hugh McComb	Ballywalter Community Association
Mary Frances McManus	Health Visiting Dept, Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust
Elaine McVeigh	Portaferry + District Community Safety Forum
Rodney Morton	Ards Local Health & Social Care Group
Fedelmia O’Gorman	Sure Start, Lower Ards Peninsula
Valerie Richmond	Ards Borough Council
Jackie Robinson	East Down Rural Community Network
Vivienne Scott	South East Education and Library Board
Patricia Short	East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education
Jane Smith	Cloughey and District Community Association
Michael Taylor	Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Ards Division.
Brian Wilson	British Dyslexia Association
Cecil Worthington	Ulster Community Hospital Trust



## Appendix 2

# Glossary of Terms

### 1) Housing Stress

Applicants with 30 points or more excluding transfers, are defined as being in Housing Stress (*Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 2004*).

### 2) Qualifications – definition of level 1 to 5

**Level 1**= GCSE (grades D-G), CSE (grades 2-5), 1-4 CSEs (grade 1), 1-4 GCSEs (grades A-C), 1-4 'O' level passes, NVQ level 1, GNVQ Foundation or equivalents.

**Level 2**= 5+ CSEs (grade 1), 5+ GCSEs (grades A-C), 5+ 'O' level passes, Senior Certificate, 1 'A' level, 1-3 AS levels, Advanced Senior Certificate, NVQ level 2, GNVQ Intermediate or equivalents.

**Level 3**= 2+ 'A' levels, 4+ AS levels, NVQ level 3, GNVQ Advanced or equivalents.

**Level 4**= First degree, NVQ level 4, HNC, HND or equivalents.

**Level 5**= Higher degree, NVQ level 5 or equivalents. (*NISRA, Census 2001*)

### 3) Health and Wellbeing

The World Health Organisation defines health as 'a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being'. Our health is determined by a wide range of health determinants. These include age, sex and genetic factors; individual lifestyle factors (e.g. diet, smoking); social and community factor; living and working conditions (e.g. work environment, unemployment, housing, healthcare services, education, water and sanitation, agriculture); and lastly general socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions (*Benzeval, Judge and Whitehead, 1995*).

### 4) Greenbelt

Zone of farmland, parks, and open country surrounding a town or city: usually officially designated as such and preserved from urban development (*Collins English Dictionary*).

### 5) Homelessness

Homelessness does not just mean having nowhere to stay. It also means living in hostels; resorting to squatting; living in derelict houses; in institutions; in unfit homes; in guest houses; in fear of violence; on friend's sofas; on illegal unserviced travellers' sites; in overcrowded houses; in fear of evictions. In Northern Ireland, the Housing Executive has an obligation under the Housing (1988) Order to house people who are: homeless, or threatened with homelessness within 28 days; not deliberately homeless; and in priority need (e.g. if the person is pregnant, made homeless by a disaster such as fire or flood, or at risk of violence) (*Council for the Homeless, Northern Ireland, 2003*).

## **7) Zoned (land)**

To mark with or divide into zones (*Collins English Dictionary*)

## **8) New Settlement**

A collection of new dwellings forming a community (*Collins English Dictionary*).

## **9) Disability Discrimination Act Definitions of Disability:**

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

Impairment:

- Physical – affecting the senses as such as sight and hearing, heart disease, diabetes, epilepsy.
- Mental - impairments including learning disabilities and mental ill health (if it is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion)

Substantial:

- To be substantial it must be more than minor, e.g. inability to see moving traffic, to turn taps or knobs, inability to relay a simple message.

Long-term:

- Having lasted more than 12 months or is likely to last 12 months, or likely to last for the rest of the individuals life.

Day to day activities:

- Moving from place to place, ability to lift or carry, physical co-ordination, continence, speech, hearing, eyesight, memory.

## **10) Noble Indicators**

The Noble index (so called after the lead researcher Michael Noble of Oxford University) provides a way of determining overall social deprivation in a ward area. For the study, the researchers looked at seven different themes or domains including income, employment, health, education, access, social environment and housing. The index ranked all electoral wards in Northern Ireland on the basis of this score. The separate scores were then combined in an overall multiple deprivation measure, and wards were given an overall ranking. With the aid of the index, any ward in Northern Ireland can be compared with any other, and it also indicates areas where action might be needed. (*Noble Index of Multiple Deprivation 2001*).



## **11) Definition of Theft, Burglary and Robbery**

Theft involves the taking of someone else's property without authority, burglary is when there is an element of trespass involved, and robbery is when threat is used (*PSNI, 2004*).

## **12) Bathing Water Quality Standards**

Excellent water quality means the water sample meets the following EC Guideline standards:

- 500 total coliforms per 100ml of water and 100 faecal coliforms per 100ml of water
- annually 80% of samples taken must meet these standards
- 100 faecal streptococci per 100ml of water
- annually 90% of samples taken must meet this standard

Good water quality means weekly sample meets the following EC Mandatory standards:

- 10,000 total coliforms per 100ml of water and 2,000 faecal coliforms per 100ml of water
- annually 95% of samples taken must meet these standards

Poor water quality indicates the samples failed to meet the standard required for 'good quality waters' (*Environment and Heritage Service, 2004*)

## **13) Jobseeker's Allowance**

Jobseeker's Allowance is a benefit for unemployed people who are available for and actively seeking work. In addition, the claimant must enter into a Jobseeker's agreement, be capable of work, be under pension age, not be in education and not working more than 16 hours per week. It is payable in two formats, depending on the claimant's circumstances.

Persons may qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance (Contribution Based) if they are unemployed, have paid enough National Insurance Contributions and are available for and actively seeking work. It is payable for up to 182 days. No additional benefit is payable for dependants.

Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based) is income related. Persons may qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based) if they are unemployed, available for and actively seeking work but have not paid enough National Insurance Contributions to receive Jobseeker's Allowance (Contribution based). The rates payable depend on circumstances, but the benefit is paid for as long as the claimant's income is under a specified limit and he/she fulfils the entitlement criteria.

In most cases, couples where both partners are claiming the income based JSA, they are required to make a joint claim and receive a couple rate. This was introduced in 2001 in order to reduce the number of households where no one works, and to improve the prospects of those working part time.

## **14) Income Support**

Persons are entitled to Income Support if their income, from all sources, is below the minimum level set by Parliament. Those entitled must fall into one of the following categories:

- a Lone Parent with a child under 16 living with them;
- be incapable or treated as incapable of work because of sickness (subject to all work test and own occupation test);
- be caring for a severely disabled person or a member of their family who is temporarily ill;
- be a disabled person whose earnings are reduced because of their disability;
- be a student (who qualifies for Benefit);
- be pregnant within 11 weeks of the expected date of confinement;
- be single looking after a child placed with them by the Health and Social Services;
- be temporarily looking after another person (for four weeks only after which Carer's Allowance must be claimed);
- be in employment living in a care home;
- a disabled student;
- a deaf student;
- a blind person;
- certain persons in education;
- a person who on or before 06/10/96 was aged 50 or over and who has not been in remunerative work for 10 years and has not worked since;
- a refugee learning English;
- a person required to attend court;
- a member of a couple looking after children while the other member is temporarily abroad;
- a person appealing against a decision that they are not incapable of work; or
- a person who in addition to one of the above categories also satisfies the criteria for the Parental Leave Scheme.

Claimants must be between 16 and 60 and resident in Northern Ireland. Persons cannot receive Income Support if they work more than 16 hours per week, their partner works more than 24 hours per week or if they have savings over £8 000. Typically, 16-19 year olds are only entitled to Income Support if they are living on their own with no support from their parents and no means of supporting themselves.

## **15) Disability Living Allowance**

Persons are entitled to DLA if:

- Because of illness or disability the person has developed care and/or mobility needs before the age of 65 and claim before then;
- The person has needed help with personal care or getting around for the last three months, and the need is expected to exist for at least a further six months. If the person is terminally ill and is unlikely to live longer than 6 months (the person does not have to satisfy this qualifying period, this rule applies to all customers, including babies under 3 months old); or
- The person uses a kidney machine at home or in a self care unit two or more times per week (*Social Security Agency, 2003*).

To qualify for DLA the need for help must have existed for three months and be expected to last for at least a further six months.

Low, middle and high rate DLA payments are made depending on whether help is needed during some of the day (low rate) or both day and night (high rate). A high rate mobility component is

payable if the person:

- Cannot walk at all; or
- Is virtually unable to walk; or
- Has had both legs amputated at or above the ankle, or has been born without legs or feet; or
- Is both deaf and blind and needs someone in attendance when outdoors; or
- Is severely mentally impaired with severe behavioural problems and is receiving the highest rate of care component (*Social Security Agency, 2003*).



### Appendix 3

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## Appendix 4

### Sources of Information

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Adrienne Adair	Ballynahinch Library
Jonathan Alexander	NISRA, Census Office
Briege Arthurs	Ards Local Health & Social Care Group
Mark Armstrong	Balloo Out of Hours GP Services
Sheila Bailie	Peninsula Healthy Living / Peninsula Community Transport
Joanna Black	Dental Unit, UCHT
Mary Brennan	PSNI – Statistics Branch
Philip Brooks	St John Ambulance, Newtownards
Dr Denise Catney	Northern Ireland Cancer Registry
Stephen Cherry	PSNI – Ards District Command Unit
Kate Clarke	Kircubbin Youth Club
Charlene Craig	Women's Aid
Helen Croft	PSNI Statistical Dept Head Quarters
Stephen Donnelly	Equality Research Branch OFMDFM
Dr Colin Fitzpatrick	GP Unit, EHSSB
Ciara Gill	DOE – Planning Office
Kevin Gillespie	Ards Borough Council – Planning Office
Eamon Hagan	DOE – Water Management Unit
Carol Ann Hewitt	Peninsula Healthy Living
Frances Hughes	Rural Housing Estates Programme
Edgar Jardine	Fishing Villages Taskforce – OFMDFM
Colin Griffiths	Ballyhalbert Park Homes
Lorraine Lindsay	EHSSB, Investing for Health Officer
Nick Mack	Rural Development Council
Andy Mayhew	Ulster Community Hospital Trust
Johanna McCaughey	Dept of Education for Northern Ireland
Hugh McComb	Ballywalter Community Association
Norah McCorry	Equality Research Branch – OFMDFM
Anne McDermott	McDermott Private Coach Hire

Lesley McDonald	Ulster Community Hospital Trust
Joe McKnight	Northern Ireland Fire Brigade
Mary Frances McManus	Health Visiting Dept, UCHT
John McPolland	Ambulance Services Head Quarters
Elaine McVeigh	Portaferry + District Comm. Safety Foru
Liz Moore	NIHE – Newtownards
Rodney Morton	Ards Local Health & Social Care Group
Elish O’Boyle	Ards Arts Centre
Fedelmia O’Gorman	Sure Start, Lower Ards Peninsula
Colin Reid	Borough Inspector (Ards Police)
Cathy Rice	Ards Development Bureau
Valerie Richmond	Ards Borough Council
Jackie Robinson	East Down Rural Community Network
Cllr Iris Robinson	Democratic Unionist Party
Vivienne Scott	South East Education and Library Board
Patricia Short	East Down Inst Further + Higher Education
Monica Sloan	Eastern Health and Social Services Board
Jane Smith	Cloughey and District Community Assoc
Dr David Stewart	Director of Public Health, EHSSB
Michael Taylor	Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Ards
Gerald Thornton	PSNI – Statistics Branch
Roslyn Todd	Environment Heritage Service, DOE
Translink	Translink
Bob Wilson	Ards Community Safety Partnership
Geoff Wilson	Northern Ireland Fire Brigade (Statistics)
Jan Wright	Community Fund



**Appendix 5**

**ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Abbreviation in Full</b>
DCU	District Command Unit (Police)
DHSSPS	Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety
DOE	Department of the Environment
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
EDIFHE	East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education
EHSSB	Eastern Health and Social Services Board
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PACT	Peninsula Community Transport
PSNI	Police Service for Northern Ireland
SEELB	South East Education and Library Board
UCHT	Ulster Community and Hospital Trust



**Appendix 6:**

**A record of community strengths and weaknesses highlighted by community members during a training day on CHIA held in February 2004**

<b>Community Strengths</b>	<b>Community Weaknesses</b>
Scenic, beautiful environment – also attracts visitors	Unemployment - decline of traditional industries
Tourism development prospects	Location of Peninsula leading to isolation
Clean air, Clear roads – no traffic jams	Distance – lack of transport available and cost. Limited public transport/times
Community spirit - Friendly and welcoming attitude	Distance from services and major centres
Safe, low crime rate	Difficulties in accessing services, education, and leisure facilities
Facilities/services are improving in the area e.g. Peninsula Healthy Living/Sure Start/ Fresh fruit in schools initiative	Large degree of apathy - Lack of community participation
GPs – perceived to be more responsive than GP's in cities as they know the people well	Overcrowded school buses (safety implications)
More partnerships have been established eg District Policing Partnership	Lack of financial resources to maintain activities
Good spread of skilled people	Amenities – lack of funding
Good Support (family/community)	Lack of community facilities (neutral)
Dynamic community – where people will come together (do things in groups together). Also caring community	Limited choice of services/shopping
Wide variety of activist groups	Lack of a physical bridge to connect the Peninsula to Co Down
Peaceful/ cross community	Poor literacy/numeracy
Certain areas have websites, where you can find out about things that are up and coming in their area	Lack of information – difficulties in getting people to access what sources are available
Well defined area – border perimeter	Lack of childcare affecting women returning to work
Abundance of creative/artistic people opening businesses	Limited affordable homes
	Sectarianism
	Alcoholism (under age), gambling addiction, domestic violence, vandalism

