



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council

It's All About Buncrana

Buncrana Town Team
Action Plan Vision 2040



*“We work together to make Buncrana better
by reinforcing a sense of place and pride in this
brilliant wee town we get to call home.”*

Siobhán McCafferty, Town Team Member



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Introduction

A chairde, it is my pleasure as inaugural Chair of the Buncrana Town Team, to present to you the Buncrana Town Team Action Plan.

This plan is the culmination of more than a year's work, which involved engaging with residents, the public, local elected representatives, businesses, as well as voluntary, sporting, community and religious organisations. We have taken what you told us you want for Buncrana, collated that information and now present it to you as this Action Plan. I would like to extend a word of gratitude to my fellow Town Team members who have spent countless hours creating this plan. I look forward to working with you all in bringing it to fruition.

Is mise le méas,

Cllr. Fionán Bradley,
Chairperson of Buncrana Town Team



Executive Summary

This Town Team Action Plan seeks to be a catalyst for Buncrana's continued development into a vibrant, well-connected socio-economic hub over the next 15 years. As a strategically important town in the North West City Region (NWCR), Buncrana faces unique opportunities and challenges. The Buncrana Town Team proposes to build on local assets and community spirit, together with national policies, to revitalise the town through sustainable economic, social, and environmental initiatives.

Our Action Plan responds to the needs and suggestions from our community, identifying priorities for development over the short, medium and long term. Key areas of focus include enhancing public infrastructure, fostering economic diversification, promoting sustainable practices, and strengthening community engagement and collaboration.

Established in 2024, the Buncrana Town Team has developed this Action Plan through consultation, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement. The plan builds on the town's strengths – its natural environment, community spirit, and tourism potential – while identifying the needs and priorities of the local community. It sets out a vision for the future and identifies a series of targeted approaches and projects.

The plan is created for everyone with an interest in the future development of the town, including residents, local groups and businesses, the local authority, central government, and private developers – as well as those who work in and visit Buncrana. As a “non-statutory plan”, this provides a vision and framework for future developments that is not legally binding but will be used to inform decision-making, secure funding and help to prioritise projects.

The plan takes into account existing projects, plans and potential redevelopment initiatives for Buncrana including:

- > “Repowering Buncrana” led by Donegal County Council, which includes redevelopment of the old Garda Barracks and a proposed ambitious development of the Shore Front stretching from the Pier to the Fishing Greens and connecting the Shore Front with Buncrana Main Street.
- > Buncrana Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan – led by Donegal County Council, which will take into consideration the Town Team Action Plan and feedback from the local community.
- > The proposed redevelopment of the Leisure Centre/Swimming Pool
- > IDP's Eco Buncrana Strategy
- > The recently launched Buncrana Night-Time Economy Action Plan 2025-2026
- > IDP's proposed Social Innovation Hub

“The Town Team is a real driving force for the future regeneration of Buncrana, and they have given so much to make this plan possible. They are a joy to work with.”

Patricia McIntyre, Town Regeneration Officer, Donegal County Council

Vision, Mission, and Objectives

Vision

By 2040, Buncrana will be a thriving socio-economic hub with a vibrant community that embraces cultural and environmental sustainability.

Mission

To regenerate Buncrana through collaborative efforts, empowering local stakeholders to achieve sustainable economic growth, improved quality of life, and a robust community spirit.

Objectives

The Buncrana Town Team aims to be a collaborative advocate for positive change for the benefit of the town by laying out a detailed Action Plan to include:

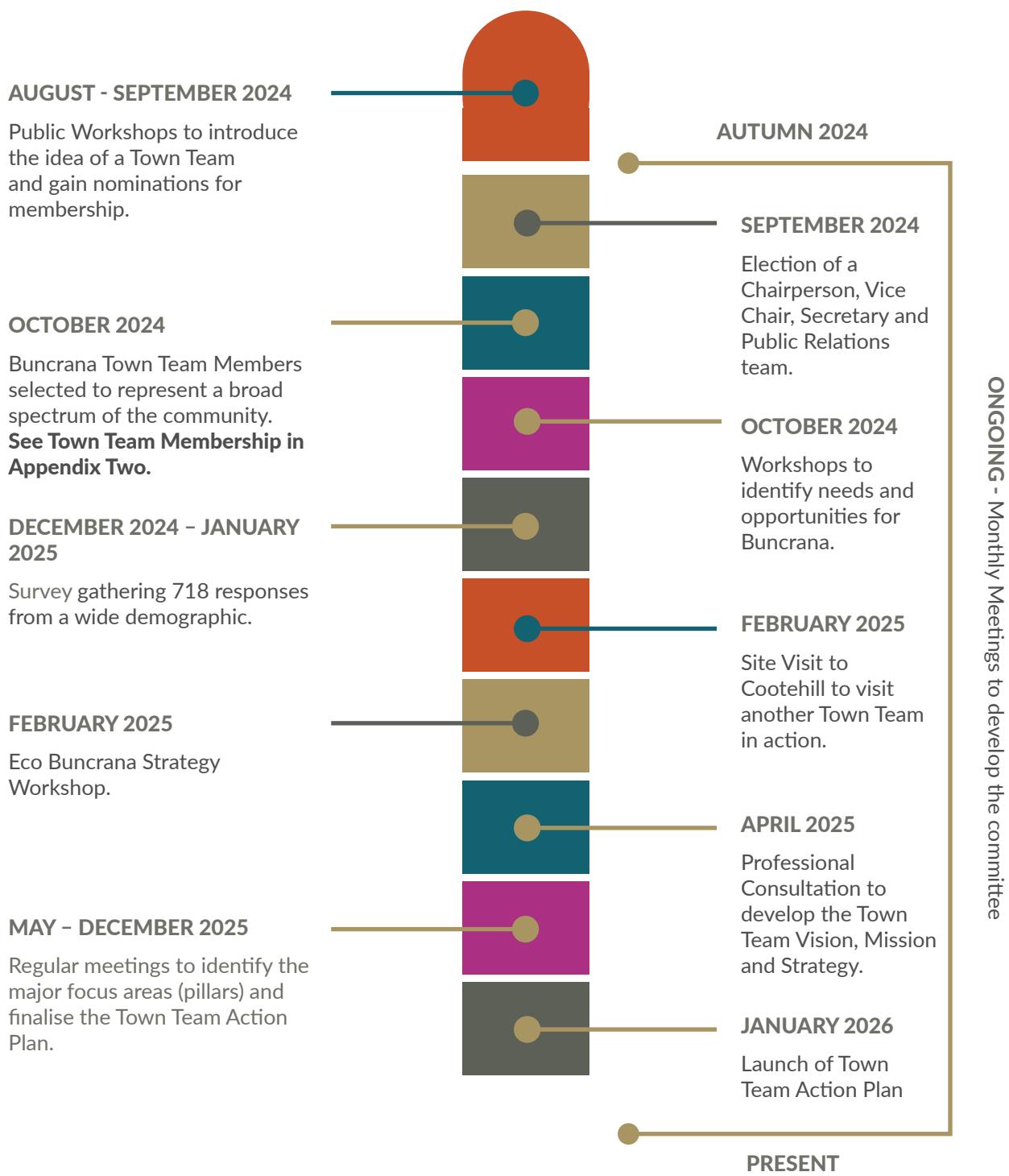
- 1. Enhanced Public Infrastructure:** Supporting comprehensive transport systems and modernised infrastructure and utilities to support sustainable growth.
- 2. Economic Diversification:** Encouraging a mixed economy with opportunities in technology, arts, and sustainable industries.
- 3. Strengthened Community Engagement:** Fostering collaborative approaches and inclusive decision-making processes.

Background

Buncrana Town Team is one of several Town Teams in Donegal, established by the local authority in 2024 to respond to community and business needs in the town and its hinterland. Town Teams create the opportunity and space to bring together people and groups who represent a wide spectrum of stakeholders. Town Teams act as catalysts to encourage businesses, local communities and others to work together to energise and reinvigorate their towns and communities in collaboration with public authorities and other service providers.

“[We want to create] Places that are shaped by the community that live there, where local residents and the business community are enabled to plot the future for their own towns and villages...”

Towards a Town Team Action Plan



“The diverse representation of members only strengthens our ability to engage with the local community, ensuring collaborative development of our lovely Buncrana.”

Luke Timlin, Town Team Secretary

The Town Team's Vision of Buncrana in 2040

- > In 2040, Buncrana will be a thriving socio-economic hub powered by renewable energy, with a mixed economy of large industrial employment and new generation SMEs in arts, fashion, sustainable construction, design and food. Buncrana's tourism potential will be realised with state-of-the-art facilities that enhance the area's rich culture and heritage and make the most of the natural environment.
- > Buncrana will have a range of contemporary leisure facilities serving the whole community and promoting health and wellbeing through leisure, sport and the arts.
- > Buncrana will have an internationally recognised innovation and training centre, specialising in sustainable industry, construction and renewables.
- > Buncrana town will have a vibrant, diverse and safe night-time economy which enhances the experience of residents and visitors alike. It will feel safe to all, and the Buncrana community spirit will be visible and palpable.
- > Buncrana will be devoid of dereliction, and the town centre and industrial buildings will be re-developed in innovative ways. Heritage-driven regeneration will preserve the building stock of the town in a modern urban regeneration setting.
- > Buncrana town will be easy to move around with innovative community transport systems based on the mobility needs of people of all ages and abilities. Buncrana will seek to be connected to the North West City Region Light Rail Network, which will reconnect and serve all the settlements of the North West. This will support commuting between Derry, Strabane, Letterkenny and Inishowen and provide wider connectivity to other major regional centres on both sides of the border.
- > The town will embrace the Swilly, with a vibrant water-based and marine economy, and an all-seasons water transport link across Lough Swilly.
- > Youth facilities will be run by the young people of Buncrana, who are empowered in social enterprise skills and have a significant democratic voice which is heard, listened to and engaged with in policy making and future developments for the town.

“By pooling our different skill sets, interests and expertise, we have built a strong, enthusiastic and dedicated team which shares one thing in common – a drive to better the town we all call home.”

Cllr Jack Murray, Town Team Vice Chairperson

Buncrana Town Team commits to:

- > Establishing an interactive forum for advocacy, partnership and exchange with decision-makers and service delivery bodies to advance the needs of Buncrana and encourage collaboration between different agencies and providers.
- > Ensuring ongoing effective information exchange on investment opportunities from Government and other sources.
- > Working collectively with relevant partners to mobilise and align funding and investment opportunities with Buncrana's documented development needs.
- > Drawing on all available networks and communication channels to raise Buncrana's profile as a strong proposition for investment and ensuring that this is reflected in planning and economic and social development strategies at local, county, regional and national levels.
- > Reviewing emerging evidence and ensuring that this is emphasised in promoting delivery of the vision for Buncrana in 2040, considering academic, policy-related, technical, and community research.
- > Recognising that nothing stays the same and responding with flexibility to prioritise or re-prioritise actions from time to time.
- > Building and retaining strong links with different key stakeholders in the town, peninsula, county and region, as well as nationally, and at EU and wider international levels.
- > Developing a communications plan to ensure strategic, clear and regular communication with the community, with agencies and other interested parties.

“Our multi-disciplinary Town Team with diverse skillsets, coordinates community engagement and collaborates as an active collective on all aspects of urban regeneration, protection, management and development of our built, natural and social environment.”

Siobhán McCafferty, Town Team Member

Context

Buncrana is the largest seaside town in County Donegal, the second-largest town in the county and a key settlement within the North West City Region (NWCR), which includes Derry, Strabane, and Letterkenny.

The Buncrana Town Team Survey Report and other research documents such as IDP's Social Innovation Hub Buncrana Scoping Paper, Eco Strategy Document, Buncrana Night-Time Economy Plan, etc., all point to key strengths and assets of the town.

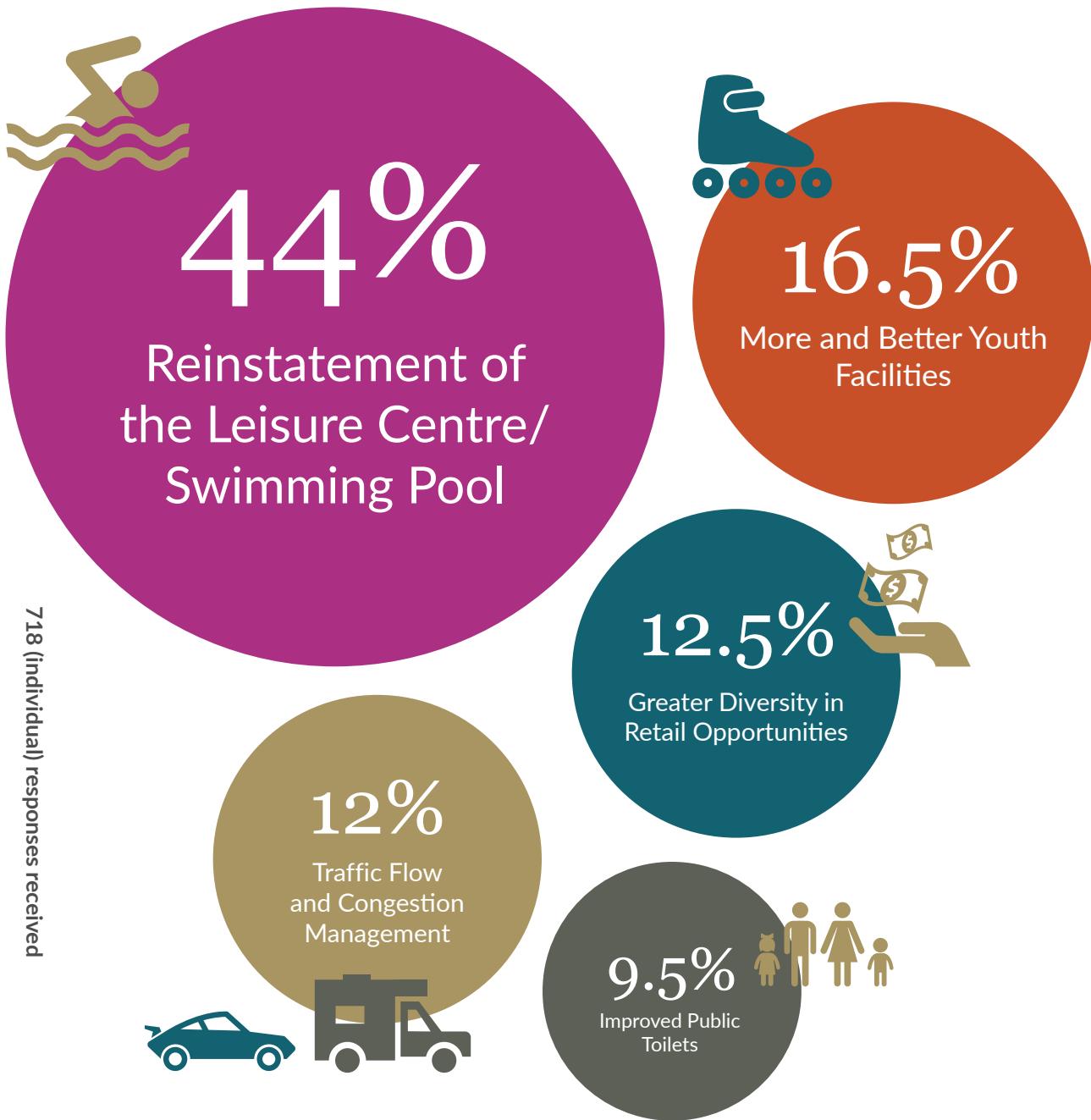
Buncrana's Strengths and Assets

- > **Natural Environment:** The town's seaside location and natural environment are consistently highlighted as key assets. The vision for Buncrana in 2040 emphasises harmony between the natural environment, culture, heritage, and wellbeing and a vibrant water-based and marine economy, e.g., the Crana River and the Mill River have potential for a hydro-electric scheme. The scenery, coastline and location help to make Buncrana a great place to live and work according to almost half of the respondents to the Town Team Survey.
- > **Cultural and Heritage Resources:** Buncrana is noted for its distinctive industrial heritage and the potential for heritage-driven regeneration to preserve its building stock.
- > **Community Spirit:** Buncrana's community spirit is visible and palpable. The Town Team model itself is an important mechanism for ensuring local leadership and cross-community representation. The Town Team's research also highlights Buncrana's people and community spirit as key assets.
- > **Tourism Potential:** Buncrana is a popular holiday destination and has been welcoming visitors for generations both as a seaside town and the "gateway to Inishowen".

"Buncrana has it all: beautiful scenery, great walks, beaches, hills and parks, with Swan Park a magnificent amenity. Buncrana was described by a travel writer in the 19th century as "Parthás Éireann", Ireland's Paradise. The gateway to Inishowen, Ireland in miniature, Buncrana has everything you could hope for in a vibrant town with a strong community spirit."

Key Areas for Improvement and Identified Needs

The Buncrana Town Team Survey* Report (Appendix One) provides a detailed breakdown of areas the community wants to improve. The top priorities identified by the local community are:



“The Town Team has provided a forum for innovative collaboration across many facets of our community. Businesses, volunteers and statutory agencies are pulling together for the good of the town. Ní neart go cur le chéile.”

Cllr Jack Murray, Town Team Vice Chairperson

Town Team Action Plan

Pulling together suggestions from a wide range of consultations, the Buncrana Town Team has developed this detailed Action Plan which is divided into six pillars representing key areas for regeneration and development of the town. Within each of the pillars, the Town Team will work with all key stakeholders locally, regionally, nationally and internationally to advocate for each of the actions being prioritised and resourced.

“The real strength of the Town Team lies in listening to the people of Buncrana and turning community voices into action.”

Anne Marie McLaughlin, Town Team Member & Inishowen Innovation

Pillar 1 - Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion

Pillar 2 - Economic Growth, Innovation and Tourism

Pillar 3 - Quality Infrastructure and Connectivity

Pillar 4 - Environment and Climate Action

Pillar 5 - Culture, Creativity and Heritage

Pillar 6 - Communication, Democracy and Governance

Pillar 1 - Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion

Promoting healthy minds and bodies in a community where everyone feels included, valued and supported.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Provide high quality sports and leisure facilities to meet the needs of local people and visitors alike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Work collaboratively to secure the re-development of the Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre. 1.2. Support local sports clubs to develop multi-purpose sports facilities 1.3. Advocate for the upgrade of existing sports and leisure facilities 1.4. Ensure all local sports clubs and groups have information about and access to appropriate grants and funding streams. 1.5. Promote collaboration with local sports groups to encourage evening sports, wellbeing, and holistic events.
2. Ensure there are adequate community facilities to meet the wellbeing and social inclusion needs of the entire community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Support and champion existing community centres and community spaces to meet the needs of the local community 2.2. Identify gaps in provision of facilities 2.3. Work collaboratively and creatively to plug the gaps (e.g. possible IDP Social Innovation Hub)
3. Ensure greater inclusion and support for vulnerable groups within our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Ensure safe spaces for LGBTQ+ within youth work and community 3.2. Advocate for accessible spaces for those with additional needs 3.3. Encourage the development of additional parent and toddler groups 3.4. Continue to provide supports and services for older people 3.5. Continue to support local groups in addressing poverty 3.6. Provide community supports for mental health 3.7. Support the integration of new arrivals and minority groups in the town. 3.8. Advocate for inclusivity by encouraging engagement with minority groups, youth, elderly, and people with additional needs in Night-Time Economy planning and development. 3.9. Support initiatives that raise awareness and provide training on accessibility in Night-Time Economy venues.
4. Improve and develop the provision of youth services and facilities across Buncrana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Map existing youth work services within the area and ensure these are widely publicised 4.2. Prioritise the development of safe spaces for young people to socialise and hang out, especially in the evenings 4.3. Empower young people to be part of the decision-making process for the development of new programmes, activities and facilities
5. Develop and promote a wide variety of community activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Map existing activities and identify gaps 5.2. Ensure people know what is already happening (see also Pillar 6) 5.3. Encourage the development of new groups and programmes as identified in the gap analysis.
6. Improve the provision of Health Services within Buncrana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1. Advocate for more facilities within the new Primary Care Centre (e.g. scanning, X-rays, etc.)
7. Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all residents and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1. Advocate for increased visibility of An Garda Síochána 7.2. Support measures to address anti-social behaviour, vandalism and "racers" 7.3. Endorse efforts to improve safety and wellbeing including enhanced lighting in public spaces.

Pillar 2 - Economic Growth, Innovation and Tourism

Supporting and encouraging initiatives that will sustain and develop our economy across all sectors.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Create more diverse shopping options in Buncrana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Encourage and support new businesses 1.2. Explore the potential for pop-up shops, street markets and/or regular farmers' markets 1.3. Encourage late opening options to extend business hours 1.4. Identify gaps in the market and encourage innovative solutions
2. Support and promote local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Support local business organisations/trading associations 2.2. Restore town voucher scheme 2.3. Promote "shop local" 2.4. Attract more people to the town centre with creative and innovative programmes (e.g. street entertainment, etc.) 2.5. Champion the development of Night-Time Economy initiatives by advocating for business engagement to support late opening hours. 2.6. Support and encourage diverse night-time economic activity and collaborative working among local businesses.
3. Support and promote festivals and seasonal events that attract visitors to the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Develop an Annual Calendar of Events 3.2. Promote festivals on the Main Street 3.3. Advocate for the integration of Night-Time Economy events with existing festivals and the development of niche tourism experiences.
4. Continue the development of a thriving Night-Time Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. *See Night-Time Economy Plan
5. Encourage new tourism initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Develop water sports activities on the Shore Front
6. Create dynamic branding for Buncrana as a tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1. Work together with Go Visit Inishowen and other tourism providers in the branding and marketing of Buncrana to better fulfil its tourism potential. 6.2. Support coordinated branding and marketing efforts to align Night-Time Economy programmes with wider local tourism strategies.

Pillar 3 - Quality Infrastructure and Connectivity

Enhance our built environment for the betterment of our community.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Ensure that appropriate housing is available for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Advocate for additional, better quality, sustainable & more affordable housing 1.2. Ensure that there is support for those affected by Defective Concrete Block (DCB) crisis. 1.3. Promote the concept of main street accommodation 1.4. Highlight the need for safe and accessible housing for older people and people with disabilities.
2. Ensure better traffic flow and congestion management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Highlight traffic hot spots and advocate for innovative solutions (e.g. relief roads) 2.2. Advocate for ongoing road repairs and improvements at appropriate times of the year 2.3. Explore part-pedestrianisation of Main Street 2.4. Improve pedestrian crossings (safe, more clearly marked, etc.)
3. Improve Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Advocate for more and better public transport 3.2. Increase the number of taxis operating especially at peak times 3.3. Continue to advocate for A5 development 3.4. Continue to advocate for rail links between Derry and Donegal 3.5. Ensure greater accessibility for wheelchair users on all footpaths and in public buildings 3.6. Advocate for more cycle paths and bike parking 3.7. Explore the potential for cycle hire or electric bike hire 3.8. Encourage expansion and enhancement of late-night public transport services and address transport barriers such as taxi availability.
4. Provide more car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Explore innovative solutions such as underground parking
5. Redevelop Buncrana's Shore Front	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Support the ongoing "Repowering Buncrana" project and encourage community engagement with the consultation process to see a complete redevelopment and revitalisation of the Shore Front area and the old Garda Barracks.
6. Renovate and repurpose derelict and vacant buildings and sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1. Identify key buildings and sites and encourage owners to explore regeneration or repurposing possibilities. 6.2. Raise awareness of grants to redevelop derelict housing and buildings 6.3. Advocate for the identification and activation of vacant public spaces for Night-Time Economy-related use including pop-up and arts hubs.
7. Ensure the provision of more and better public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1. Survey existing locations 7.2. Advocate for public toilets in response to community requests
8. Enhance the Main Street's aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1. Encourage and promote attractive facades for shops and businesses 8.2. Resource re-painting, street art and murals
9. Improve lighting for streets, footpaths and parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.1. Enhance lighting for paths and walks 9.2. Maintain and improve street lighting 9.3. Explore environmentally safe/considerate lighting options for parks and public spaces 9.4. Support improvements in the public realm to better facilitate night-time activity such as ambient lighting, signage, and safe access routes. 9.5. Endorse improvements in street lighting and night-time infrastructure to support safe and vibrant night-time environments.
10. Increase the amount and quality of public seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10.1. Gather opinions on public seating needs 10.2. Install seating in places identified through consultation.

Pillar 4 - Environment and Climate Action

Protecting our natural resources and reducing our carbon footprint.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Promote responsible dog ownership and reduce dog mess	1.1. Ensure there are sufficient dog waste bins 1.2. Improve signage 1.3. Explore the potential of a dog warden
2. Protect the natural environment	2.1. Take part in regular tree planting initiatives 2.2. Continue to promote biodiversity and support pollinators
3. Establish Community Gardens	3.1. Support the development of community gardens 3.2. Promote gardening and "grow-your-own" initiatives 3.3. Develop a seed bank
4. Promote a litter-free Buncrana	4.1. Secure sufficient resources for Buncrana Tidy Towns 4.2. Provide more litter bins 4.3. Support local community clean-up days etc.
5. Resource reduce, reuse and recycle initiatives	5.1. Explore the purchase of a commercial-size composter/bio-digester in the community 5.2. Create a recycling centre in Buncrana 5.3. Promote up-cycling projects
6. Cleaner beaches, rivers and lough	6.1. Hold regular beach and river clean-ups 6.2. Identify risks of coastal erosion and install mitigation measures 6.3. Upgrade sewage works and ensure clean water
7. Support environmentally responsible improvements	7.1. Promote environmentally responsible improvements in public spaces, lighting upgrades, etc.

Pillar 5 - Culture, Creativity and Heritage

Protect our shared values, identify and feed our imagination.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Promote and develop the use of existing venues (music, theatre, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Support redevelopment of existing and development of new venues/multi-use spaces 1.2. Encourage innovation and co-operation for new initiatives, festivals and joined-up events (such as Culture Night) 1.3. Advocate for increased cultural and creative activities by encouraging use of libraries and community venues as cultural hubs. 1.4. Communicate funding opportunities with local stakeholders for creative providers to help contribute to the community and night-time programming. 1.5. Support collaborations between local artists, musicians, and cultural organisations to enrich the night-time arts scene.
2. Develop a multi-use arts centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Identify the needs of the arts community and map existing groups and resources 2.2. Carry out a feasibility study to explore potential venues/solutions and funding streams.
3. Advocate for the development of a Buncrana museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Commission a feasibility study to explore possible venues and solutions. 3.2. Campaign for the return of the Harry Swan Collection
4. Continue to share the history and heritage of the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Support development of a guided historical walking tour 4.2. Strengthen existing signage with digital information points 4.3. Develop a database of local tour guides, providers, services

Pillar 6 - Communication, Democracy and Governance

Promote participation, equality, accountability, and transparency.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1. Ensure all members of the community are kept informed with regular, up-to-date and accurate information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Develop a Town Team Communication Plan 1.2. Develop a Town Noticeboard 1.3. Develop a year-round Calendar of Events that is updated regularly 1.4. Encourage the development of a unified communications plan (that also integrates Night-Time Economy messaging into Town Team outreach)
2. Strengthen democracy and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Advocate for the restoration of Buncrana Town Council 2.2. Carry out research and consultation events with local community and adjust Town Team Action Plan in response to the local voice. 2.3. Publicise county council consultation events and encourage participation 2.4. Strengthen the voice of young people and marginalised groups by intentional engagement. 2.5. Regularly review Town Team actions and adjust priorities in response to local feedback 2.6. Advocate for embedding the Night-Time Economy Advisor within the Town Team and relevant governance bodies to ensure integration of night-time priorities. 2.7. Support the establishment and ongoing engagement of a Night-Time Economy Steering Committee with Town Team participation. 2.8. Promote ongoing community engagement opportunities such as focus groups, drop-in clinics, and surveys to inform and refine Night-Time Economy development. 2.9. Support the collection and use of data to monitor and evaluate the impact of Night-Time Economy initiatives.
3. Encourage blue-sky thinking, creativity and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Provide regular opportunities for the wider community to dream dreams, to share innovative solutions to Buncrana's needs and to share new ideas.
4. Encourage volunteering and civic responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Run regular volunteer information events 4.2. Hold a volunteer appreciation event 4.3. Promote annual spring clean or other special clean-up events.

Challenges and Considerations for Implementation

- > **Funding and Resource Allocation:** While significant national funds exist, securing adequate and consistent funding remains a critical challenge.
- > **Coordination and Integration:** It is essential to ensure a more integrated and coordinated approach to development across various investment programmes and between local groups.
- > **Legal and Governance Structures:** Establishing appropriate legal management structures for development initiatives is vital to ensure good governance, integrity and transparency.
- > **Data Gaps:** While data collection is emphasised, addressing gaps in existing data and developing a consistent research programme will be vital.
- > **Sustainability:** Ensuring the long-term sustainability of initiatives, including funding and operational models, is crucial.

Next Steps

To advance the Buncrana Town Team Action Plan, the following steps are proposed.

Step 01

Strategic Partnerships

Forge alliances with local authorities, businesses, and community groups to facilitate coordinated efforts.

Step 02

Funding Applications

Secure financial support through national, regional, European and international funding programmes.

Step 03

Implementation Planning

Develop detailed project timelines and resource allocation strategies.

Step 04

Monitoring and Evaluation

Establish a robust framework for tracking progress and adapting strategies as needed.

Conclusion

This Action Plan outlines proposed actions and ideas across various sectors to improve Buncrana. It details suggestions from our wide consultations and conversations, keeping inclusion and community at the centre. There is an emphasis on sustainability and environmental concerns as well as the need for investment in regeneration and amenities. This is underpinned by national policies like Town Centre First and Our Rural Future.

The Buncrana Town Team supports Buncrana as it stands at a pivotal point for regeneration. The Town Team's plan is about building on what has started already, such as the Night-Time Economy initiative, Repowering Buncrana and the Rural Regeneration project, as well as the background work done on a possible Social Innovation Hub.

The vision for Buncrana in 2040 is ambitious, focusing on a sustainable, vibrant, and well-connected town that leverages its natural, cultural, and community assets. Successful implementation will require sustained collaborative efforts, strategic investment, robust governance, and a continuous focus on addressing the identified needs and aspirations of its community.



© Fáilte Ireland - Buncrana Beach

"As a Town Team, we're united in the hope that our town builds on strong collaboration, connection, and community - a thriving town promoting Inishowen and rightfully recognised as the second largest in Donegal and at the strategic heart of the North West. Rooted in resilience, enriched by history, and blessed with natural beauty, Buncrana's future is one of growth, opportunity, and shared pride."

Shauna McClenaghan, Town Team Member representing IDP & Community Development



Appendix One: Buncrana Town Team Survey Findings



FULL REPORT AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD: WWW.EXCHANGEINISHOWEN.IE/TOWN-TEAM-SURVEY

The online survey received 718 individual responses.

Q: What is great about Buncrana?

With **688 comments**, it was clear that people were excited to share what is great about Buncrana.

- > People & Community: 187 responses
- > Location & Scenery: 332 responses
- > Buncrana Tidy Towns: 18 responses
- > Amenities: 14 responses
- > Everything: 9 responses
- > N/A or Nothing: 11 responses

Q: What would you like to improve about Buncrana?

A total of 706 people (98% of survey participants) provided suggestions for how to improve Buncrana. These are provided below, alphabetised by category.

Accommodation

- > Better/More Affordable Housing: 28 mentions (4%)
- > 100% Redress/Defective Blocks scheme: 7 mentions
- > More apartments/accommodation in Main Street: 4 mentions
- > Restrict Airbnb: 3 mentions
- > Safe Housing for the Elderly: 2 mentions
- > A group home for people with disabilities: 1 mention

Community Issues

- > Creating a Friendly and Welcoming Community: 26 mentions (3.6%)
- > Anti-immigrant Comments: 10 mentions
- > Community Spirit: 9 mentions
- > Collaboration & Working Together: 4 mentions
- > Develop safe spaces for LGBT+ community: 2 mentions
- > Develop a community hub/community centre: 3 mentions
- > More parent and toddler groups: 2 mentions
- > Keep up the great work of Tidy Towns: 3 mentions
- > Keep The Exchange/old people's lunch: 3 mentions
- > Ensure autism-friendly spaces: 1 mention

Education

- > New School Campus: 18 mentions (2.5%)
- > Scoil Iosagain building improvements: 3 mentions

Employment

- > More Employment opportunities/job creation: 25 mentions (3.5%)

Environmental Issues

- > Tackle dog mess/keep dogs on leash/hire a dog warden: 39 mentions (5.5%)
- > More Waste Bins, Less Litter & Cleaner Streets: 64 mentions (9%)
- > Cleaner Beaches/Sea Water: 23 mentions (3%)
- > Protect our Natural Environment, landscape and greenspaces: 14 mentions (2%)
- > Developing a Community Garden and/or Allotments: 4 mentions
- > Upgrading our sewage and water systems: 4 mentions
- > More Tree Planting: 3 mentions
- > Protecting and enhancing biodiversity: 1 mention
- > Having a dedicated Recycling Centre in Buncrana: 1 mention
- > Protecting our Rivers: 1 mention

Maintenance, Renovation, Redevelopment & Decoration

- > Redevelop Fruit of the Loom Factory: 39 mentions (5.5%)
- > Shore Front Upgrade: 28 mentions (4%)
- > Facelift for Main Street: 22 mentions (3%)
- > More Christmas Decorations/More buy in for Christmas Lights: 2 mentions
- > Remove rubble at Plaza: 2 mentions
- > Funding for old buildings such as The Plaza/St. Mary's Hall: 1 mention
- > Renovate Derelict Buildings: 2 mentions (3%)
- > Remove/Move Buncrana Sign at Shore Front: 12 mentions (1.75%)
- > Lighting for Swan Park: 6 mentions
- > Lighting Shore Front & nature walks: 2 mentions
- > Lighting for Cockhill Graveyard: 1 mention

- > Upgrade scenic walks/prune bushes on shore path: 3 mentions
- > Better infrastructure (no specifics): 2 mentions
- > More public art/murals: 2 mentions
- > Connect town with shore: 2 mentions
- > Redevelop the pier: 1 mention
- > More Irish architecture: 1 mention
- > Landscaping: 1 mention
- > Redevelop Ned's Point Fort: 1 mention
- > Improve entrance to Swan Park: 1 mention
- > Extend Swan Park: 1 mention
- > Boardwalk on Shore Front: 1 mention
- > Better upkeep of Camper Van Site: 1 mention

Night-Time Economy

- > More late night coffee shops/cafes and alcohol free activities: 32 mentions (4.5%)
- > Night Club: 26 mentions (3.5%)
- > Improved night life (no specifics): 8 mentions
- > Evening opportunities for youth: 1 mention
- > Later opening for restaurants: 2 mentions
- > Late bar: 1 mention
- > Speakeasy bar: 1 mention
- > Sound-proof pubs: 1 mention
- > Less pubs: 2 mentions
- > Somewhere to dance: 1 mention
- > Comedy nights: 1 mention
- > More / Better Public Toilets - 68 mentions (9.5%)

Retail, Business and Hospitality

- > More/diverse shopping options: 88 mentions (12.5%)
- > Shopping centre/shopping mall: 17 mentions (2.5%)
- > Markets/Farmers Market: 11 mentions (1.5%)
- > Reduce business rates to help town centre: 3 mentions
- > Diversify businesses/encourage entrepreneurship: 1 mention
- > Support for new businesses: 2 mentions
- > Ethnic food shop: 2 mentions
- > Late opening for shops: 1 mention
- > Sunday opening for pharmacies: 1 mention
- > Restore Chamber of Commerce: 2 mentions

- > Town voucher scheme: 2 mentions
- > Street entertainment to create a more vibrant Main Street: 1 mention
- > Covered area in Main Street to develop a Café culture: 1 mention
- > Get rid of vape shops: 2 mentions

Food Businesses – 39 mentions (5.5%), including the following:

- > More cafes, restaurants & food outlets: 9 mentions
- > More takeaway options and/or lower prices: 17 mentions
- > McDonald's: 11 mentions (all from under 18s)
- > Street food vendors: 2 mentions
- > Longer opening hours for takeaways: 2 mentions

Sports, Leisure and Recreation Amenities

- > Swimming Pool & Leisure Centre - With 314 mentions, this theme represented 44.5% of responses and was the top suggestion
- > An Indoor Centre or all-weather facility: 45 mentions (6%)
- > Shore Front Upgrade: 28 mentions (4%)
- > More Family events/Community Events/Seasonal Events/Outdoor events: 24 mentions (3.5%)
- > More facilities/activities in general (no specific suggestions): 13 mentions
- > More Music Festivals: 6 mentions
- > More events for the elderly/over 50s: 3 mentions
- > More gigs/bands/live music: 3 mentions
- > More social clubs: 2 mentions
- > More Festivals/Food Festivals: 2 mentions
- > Social events for adults (not sports related): 1 mention

Children's Facilities & Activities

- > More Children's Activities: 22 mentions (3%)
- > More play parks: 2 mentions
- > Refurbish the play park: 2 mentions
- > Monkey bars in play park: 1 mention

Sports & Sports Facilities

- > Water Sports: 8 mentions
- > Sports Centre or better sports facilities: 5 mentions
- > Upgrade/refurbish tennis courts: 4 mentions
- > Mini Golf/pitch and putt: 4 mentions
- > Snooker hall/pool/darts: 4 mentions
- > Athletics Track: 3 mentions
- > More football pitches: 2 mentions
- > Skate Park: 2 mentions
- > Astro Pitch for Buncrana Hearts: 1 mention
- > Safe place for kids to play football: 1 mention

Accessibility

- > Wheelchair accessible swimming pool: 1 mention
- > Disability services/equipment: 1 mention
- > Wheelchair accessible sports facilities: 1 mention
- > Wheelchair access to public buildings: 2 mentions
- > Wheelchair access to Shore Front/beach: 2 mentions

Beach Facilities

- > Beach Facilities (changing rooms, etc.): 15 mentions (2%)
- > Sauna on the beach: 1 mention

Tourism and Leisure Facilities

- > More tourist attractions: 14 mentions (2%)
- > More/better public seating: 10 mentions (1.5%)
- > Developments at the Cinema: 9 mentions
- > More entertainment venues: 4 mentions
- > Dog Park: 3 mentions
- > More walking trails: 2 mentions
- > Arcade: 1 mention
- > Rollercoaster: 1 mention
- > Covered area for outdoor events: 1 mention
- > Outdoor gym (callisthenics): 1 mention
- > Outdoor exercise space: 1 mention

Culture, Arts and Heritage

- > A museum: 9 mentions (1%)
- > Cultural/Arts Centre or Arts Café: 4 mentions
- > Information points (history and heritage): 3 mentions
- > A theatre venue: 3 mentions

- > Guided historical walking tour (using a podcast): 1 mention
- > Drama Society: 1 mention
- > More Arts Funding: 1 mention

Tackle Crime

- > Greater visibility of Gardai: 15 mentions (2%)
- > Crack down on drugs: 6 mentions
- > Boy/girl racers: 1 mention
- > Reduced Vandalism: 2 mentions
- > More security cameras: 1 mention
- > Anti-social behaviour: 1 mention

Traffic, Transport and Road Safety

- > Traffic flow/congestion management: 83 mentions (12%)
- > Better Public Transport: 60 mentions (8.5%)
- > Shuttle bus from Buncrana to the Parish, Drumfries & the Illies: 1 mention
- > Improved Taxi Service/Taxi Rank: 43 mentions (6%)
- > More Parking/Free parking: 38 mentions (5.5%)
- > More understanding traffic wardens: 1 mention
- > Underground car park: 1 mention
- > Road repairs and Improvements: 23 mentions (3%)
- > Improved Street Lighting (roads & pavements): 18 mentions (2.5%)
- > Cycle Paths/Cycle Lanes and completed Greenway: 19 mentions (2.5%)
- > Cycle bays/bike parking: 2 mentions
- > Electric bike hire: 1 mention
- > Cycle Hire: 1 mention
- > Improved footpaths & accessibility: 11 mentions (1.5%)
- > Pedestrianised Main Street: 5 mentions
- > Pedestrian crossings/Zebra Crossing: 2 mentions
- > Crossing attendant: 1 mention
- > Restore ancient rights of way: 1 mention
- > Speed Ramps: 2 mentions

Youth Facilities

- > More and better youth facilities - 117 mentions (16.5%). Of these, 55 were from young people aged 24 or under.

These included the following:

- > Safe place to sit and/or hang-out/socialise: 35 mentions (17 from under 24s)
- > Under-age disco and/or nightclub: 14 mentions (including 10 from under 24s)
- > Evening and "no alcohol" spaces for youth: 7 mentions
- > Youth club: 6 mentions
- > Hub or Drop-in Centre: 9 mentions (all over 24)
- > Skate Park: 2 mentions
- > Pool hall: 1 mention
- > More Activities (not specific): 33 mentions (including 12 from under 24s)
- > More Facilities (not specific): 17 mentions (including 9 from under 24s)
- > More Opportunities for teens/Invest in teens: 2 mentions

Miscellaneous

There were 14 comments that did not provide any suggestions (e.g. variations of "test", "n/a" or "nothing").

Advertising and Promotion

- > What's On Website: 1 mention
- > Annual Calendar of events: 1 mention
- > Better advertising/promotion of the area: 7 mentions
- > Visitor guide: 1 mention
- > Improved signage: 3 mentions

Health Service Improvements

- > Mental Health services: 1 mention
- > Better health services/hospital/x-ray machine: 4 mentions
- > Ambulance Station in Buncrana: 1 mention
- > Management of/attitude towards change
- > Openness to change: 1 mention
- > Determination to get things done: 2 mentions
- > Strategic delivery of priority projects for the town: 1 mention

Other Suggestions

- > Reduce screen time: 1 mention
- > A blacksmith's forge: 2 mentions
- > Respite Care for Adults: 1 mention
- > Floral Displays: 1 mention
- > Veterinary Clinic: 2 mentions
- > Volunteer awards: 2 mentions
- > Marina at Buncrana Pier: 1 mention
- > Invest in Fahan Marina: 1 mention
- > Invent a plate of "local food": 1 mention

Democracy / Politics/Governance

- > More consultation for changes: 4 mentions
- > Bring back town council: 1 mention
- > Better council offices in town: 1 mention
- > Change politicians: 3 mentions

Appendix Two: Buncrana Town Team Membership



Buncrana Town Team Membership

Name	Role	Representing
Cllr. Fionán Bradley, Chair	Chair	Elected Representative, DCC
Cllr. Jack Murray	Vice Chair	Elected Representative, DCC
Luke Timlin	Secretary	Community
Rois Deeney	PRO	Community, Youth & Arts
Paddy Henderson	Assistant PRO	Business
Seamus Canning	Town Team Member	Resident & Local Authority
Anthony Barber	Town Team Member	Community
Anne Marie McLaughlin	Town Team Member	Business
Paul McGonigle	Town Team Member	Sports
Ciaran McGuinness	Town Team Member	Sports
Ruth Garvey-Williams	Town Team Member	Youth & Community
Shauna McClenaghan	Town Team Member	Local Development
Sophie Gallagher	Town Team Member	Tourism/Night-Time Economy Advisor
Siobhán McCafferty	Town Team Member	Resident & Local Authority
Rena Donaghey	Town Team Member	Tidy Towns



This plan and the full survey findings report are available for download here:
[Published Strategies, Action Plans & Town Centre First Plans | Donegal County Council](#)

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