

#### Our Balbriggan 2019 – 2025 Executive Summary





#### **Introduction - Executive Summary**

The future of Our Balbriggan is set to be transformed thanks to a plan that has been shaped by you, the residents of the town.

Our Main Street and its surrounding areas look set for a massive transformation following the Our Balbriggan survey, which was taken by over 4,000 local people.

Over 25% of the local population aged over 11 took part in the survey to prioritise a list of suggested improvements for the Our Balbriggan 2019-2015 Rejuvenation Plan.

These priorities will now become reality, this summary document contains a map of the key rejuvenation initiatives with accompanying timelines, which have been directly influenced by the results of the Our Balbriggan survey.

Transforming the Main Street and connecting it to a reimagined Harbour area were your top choices across all age groups in the public realm and placemaking pillar of a survey which will become a model for towns around the country.

From a menu of potential improvements, there was an overwhelming desire to redevelop the heart of the Main Street opening up the centre of the town to Millbond Park and the Bracken River, with new landscaped civic amenities.

When asked to name the thing that people most valued about Balbriggan, the five most popular words used were beach, community, people, sea and harbour.

By connecting all of these, and creating a properly functioning town centre, we can build a bright future in a town with fabulous assets and a diverse and rapidly-growing talent base.

70% of locals chose the development of leisure experiences around the harbour, river, coastline, and local castles as the highest priority in developing the town economically.

The proposed developments to Balbriggan's existing amenities include the transformation of Bremore Castle into a premier visitor destination, as well as a new greenway connecting Balbriggan and Skerries.

In order to create a strong and inclusive community in Balbriggan, social spaces for young people to congregate, increased safety and policing, festivals and events to promote integration, and more sports facilities were seen as the four most important factors

A Balbriggan leadership group, chaired by Professor Brian MacCraith, President, Dublin City University, had prepared a menu of different

initiatives for the €20million-plus rejuvenation plan - an ambitious new vision for the town.

"We couldn't have dreamed of this level of response, with a huge section of the community getting involved to imagine the possibilities in a transformed Balbriggan," said Professor MacCraith.

"We now have a strong set of priorities such as the redevelopment of the main street and reimagining the harbour which will transform the town, realising its full potential.

"Balbriggan as a community has come together with the group of stakeholders, led by Fingal County Council, to engage in a collaborative and unified way to prioritise the ideas which will best address the socio economic challenges of the town."

The conversation is only starting - you can follow the progress of the plan and get involved through any of the Our Balbriggan social media channels, the blogs on balbriggan.ie or simply by posting about your town and using #ourbalbriggan.

Our Balbriggan - it's our future. To download the Our Balbriggan 2019 - 2025 Rejuvenation Plan go to www.balbriggan.ie, the full version contains a comprehensive set of socio-economic plans and actions.



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

# 21,722

#### **TOWN SETTLEMENT** POPULATION (CENSUS 2016)

That's an increase of 194% since 1991

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

30.8 YEARS AVERAGE AGE OF

**RESIDENT IN BALBRIGGAN** 

**37** YEARS NATIONALLY

**34** YEARS IN FINGAL

By comparison the

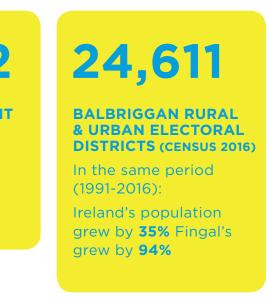
average age is:

The Our Balbriggan 2019 - 2025 Rejuvenation Plan is available at www.balbriggan.ie











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

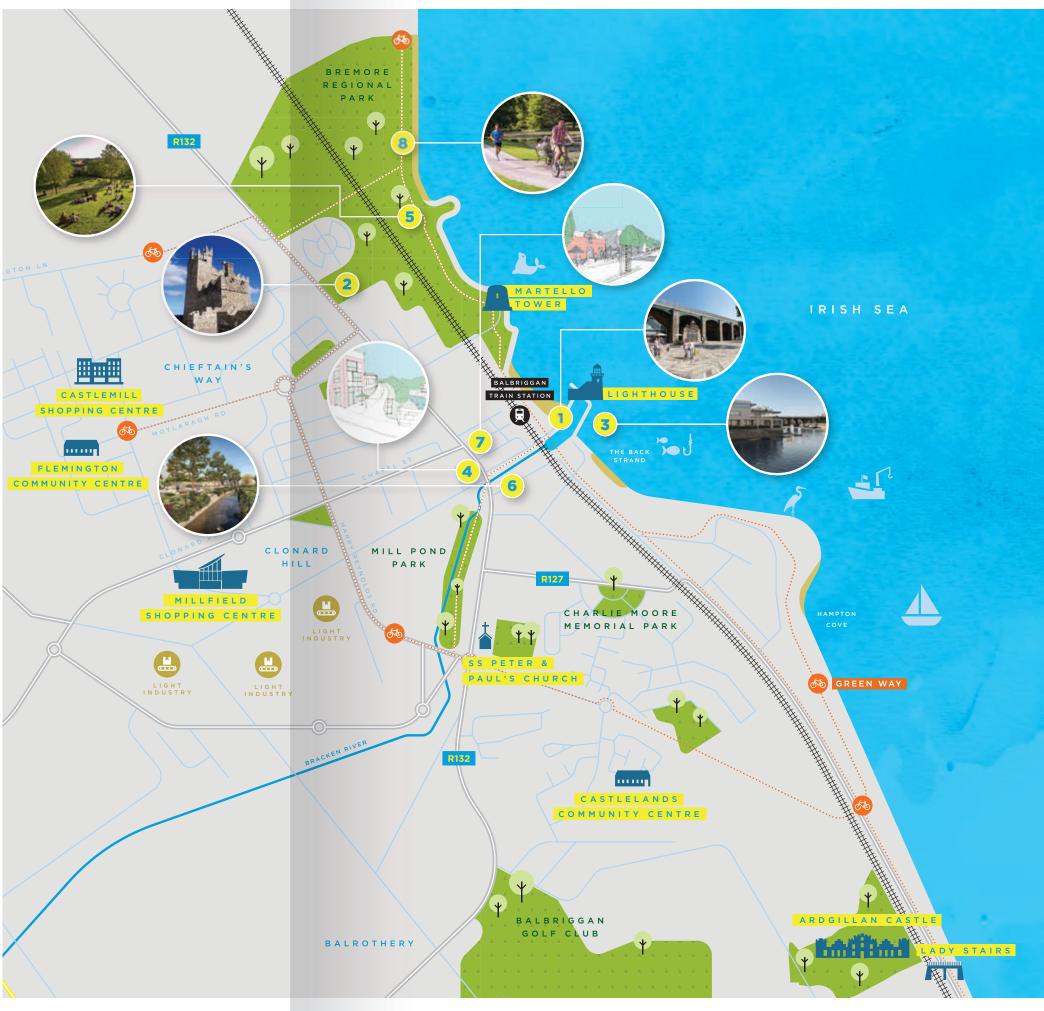
75%

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

#### **Town Rejuvenation Map**



Coastal Way. Cycle & Pedestrian facilities and upgrades to connecting residential areas. Expanding upwards to Gormanstown and below to Skerries.



#### Enabling Factors

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

## 01

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

#### 02

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

## 03

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

# 04

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

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

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

#### **Communications & Awareness:**

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

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

**Transport & Connectivity:** Improved sustainable transport network across the town, with specific reference to pedestrians and cyclists and connectivity between the town's center and residential areas. Improved linkages to and from the town particularly in relation to employment and further education. 'Balbriggan has so much potential. We need to build on the positive history we have here. Exciting times ahead.'

Emma Mulvany & Derrick O'Rourke



# Name one thing you currently really value about Balbriggan?

People place huge value on the beach. Community and people were 2nd and 3rd, followed by sea and harbour.







# Have we missed anything important to you?

2241 of the 4,001 participants (56%) of the survey left a response to this question.

The word cloud displays the most commonly occurring words, a swimming pool is by a considerable distance the most frequent occurrence.

Fingal County Council responded immediately committing to identify a site for a swimming pool development in the Castleland masterplan, and to working with private operators and other interested parties to make it happen.

The full public engagement results are available at **www.balbriggan.ie** 





# 20 thingsin the first12 months



Establish a place-making and social innovation fund.

Develop an annual Education, Training & Skills festival.



Increase the number of quality public festivals and events.

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

05

Establish an "Our Balbriggan" town centre shop front with staff responsible for the delivery of the actions in the plan. 06



Improve George's (town) Square.

Consult and publish a final

of Bremore Regional &

Amenities Park.

masterplan for the development

Increase the number of public play and exercise facilities in the town.



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

Start refurbishing the RNLI Boat House.



15

Improve the harbour area.

20

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

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

Increase the number of commissioned public art installations.

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



Publish an "Our Balbriggan" directory of services.

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For further information please email ourbalbriggan@fingal.ie





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WWW.BALBRIGGAN.IE

**Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall** Fingal County Council

