

Title of Report:	Ballycastle Museum
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 December 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Cultural Services Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital Stage One costs
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Council an update on Ballycastle Museum.

2.0 Background

The Cultural Strategy 2016-21 identified a requirement to carry out an analysis of need and options appraisal for museums facility provision within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. In 2017, Council appointed Blueprint Development Consultancy and Associates to carry out this work.

The appraisal identified a range of issues and challenges in relation to Ballycastle Museum, specifically highlighting the poor state of the existing museum building/site and cited that investment decisions were required by council in order to sustain the collection, while considering the merits of investing in the 300 year old listed museum building itself.

A report with recommendations was brought to Council in May 2018 and subsequently approved. Recommendations included an agreement to complete an Outline Business Case for the Ballycastle museum to establish the feasibility of restoring the listed building, providing interpretative fit out, public toilets and a lift to ensure accessibility within the building.

Council subsequently appointed McGarry Consulting to prepare the Outline Business Case. This was completed and presented, alongside a series of recommendations to committee in November 2019. The business case report concluded that there is a need to preserve and promote local heritage, increase the tourist offering of Ballycastle and regenerate the town (address vacant and underused sites), in particular on Castle Street. The report affirmed that there was also a need to carry out works to ensure there was no further deterioration of the listed building, examine the sustainability, storage and marketing of Council's museums and place any potential development in the context of possible future civic or recreation investments in the town.

In December 2019, Council agreed to proceed with option 2 with outline costs of circa £1,012,459 (costs are currently being updated to reflect the uplift in material costs) as outlined in the business case, including the development of the existing site with a two storey block, disabled friendly toilets, a lift and additional storage compliant with legislation surrounding listed buildings, and that officers bring further reports to Council for consideration in relation to the additional steps contained within the report recommendations prior to proceeding to stage 2 of Council's capital programme.

3.0 Remedial Health and Safety Works Update

The building itself is Grade B+ listed, with the need to maintain and preserve the asset, given its historical significance, and legislative listing status.

The recommended work to treat woodworm was planned for the winter of 2020 – 2021. Due to the impact of the pandemic, the appointed contractor was unable to move onsite until January 2021. As work commenced with the removal of render and wall finishes, further structural deterioration, primarily in terms of timber structural supports, was identified raising concerns in relation to the structural integrity of the building. Following consultation, the Capital Works Department commissioned an inspection of the building by structural and electrical engineers, resulting in advice that access to the building should cease until health and safety works were addressed.

Council's Capital Works team appointed a conservation architect (Hamilton Architects) to ensure all works and future capital works meet with Dept. for Communities Historic Environment Division Listed Building Consent.

Following consultation and site meetings with Dept. for Communities Historic Environment Division, the intervention works for health and safety purposes were to consist of:

- a. Temporary propping to absorb loadings from first floor joists,

- b. Installation of permanent props to support end points of existing floor joists, and generally absorb the loadings over the ceiling area.
- c. Electrical works, to include the separation of 2 no. supplies which enter the building, which has the potential for a health and safety risk.

In June 2021 Council agreed to carry out the necessary intervention works to ensure the Castle Street building is safe. Total: £27, 340+ VAT (estimated)

The contract was awarded for the Gilmore Engineering team to carry out the intervention works.

To date this has included:

- Remainder of propping completed before opening up works commenced.
- Specialist damp and timber sub-contractor appointed who advised on locations for the opening up works.
- All structural timbers deemed 'at risk' by the specialist were exposed to allow their condition to be inspected.
- Several structural timbers, including the structural timbers of the staircase, were identified as being severely decayed.
- Repairs for the structural timbers are currently being designed by a structural engineer. Once these repairs are completed it will allow all props to be removed and enable the unrestricted use of the ground floor of the museum.
- The engineer is also designing propping for the existing staircase, which will enable their safe use again, and provide unrestricted use of the first floor of the building. The original intention was for the props to remain in place, whilst this would have permitted the museum to be used it would have been restrictive.

Once the works have been completed, Estates and Museum Services have scheduled the building to be cleaned, painted and panels and collections reinstalled for seasonal opening in April 2022, subject to the necessary works as described above being completed within the agreed timeframe.

Furthermore, inspections by the conservation architect have followed to establish an annual maintenance plan and associated costs to prevent the building from deteriorating further.

High priority maintenance actions costing circa £12,000 have been identified for 2022/2023 and will be included in the budgets for rates setting process. Medium and low priority actions are included in the NLHF project and will be reviewed following outcome of Development Phase Application next year. It should be noted that the High Priority actions to be subsequently tendered, will not interfere with the public opening of the museum in 2022.

The schedule of works to mitigate against further deterioration does not occur includes:

- Replacement of 4 timber lintels.
- Additional woodworm treatment.
- Replacement of 3 timber sash windows.
- Unblock align and level gutters on all rear elevations.
- Repoint stonework on all rear elevations.
- Repair and fixing of window grill.

4.0 Update on Recommendations from 2019 Outline Business Case

4.1 A Council wide museums storage policy is undertaken.

A report was taken to Council in September 2021 and it was agreed that there would be a centralised museum store (for all collections including Ballycastle) subject to a maximum increase in costs. This will reduce the amount of collections storage required on site.

4.2 Online marketing presence should be further developed.

Ballycastle Museum now has its own social media presence where information on opening hours and programmes along with regular posts on interesting items in the collection, can be found. This is in addition to www.niarchive.org which has information on museum collections, heritage projects and other information.

A Draft Digital Marketing Strategy has been completed in November 2021 by SocialBeeNI and is attached in **Annex A**.

4.3 Council investigates potential additional usage of the museum building.

Museum Services are developing an Action Plan for the development and delivery phases of the capital project, in accordance with National Lottery Heritage Plan guidance, to deliver on targets for audience, participation and programming in the proposed museum to increase usage of the museum building.

4.4 Council should consider an enhanced role in the operation/delivery of services with Friends of Ballycastle Museum (FoBM).

In January 2020, Council Officers met with the group to explore their interest in increasing their role. Some volunteers expressed preference to continuing as offering the front of house services. Others were keen to be involved in the capital project in some way in terms of advice, guidance and programme development. Council's Community Development team engaged with the group to consider their needs in the immediate and medium term and have provided support to the group in terms of governance and planning. Museums staff meet the group on a regular basis, have included them in outreach and engagement projects off site and will involve them in assisting the development of storylines and interpretative content of the proposed new museum. Further details are contained in **Annex B**.

4.5 Any significant investment should take place within the context of a new town masterplan/ development plan for Ballycastle.

The Draft Masterplan has been completed by DfC. It is noted that the museum is a key project as part of the regeneration of Castle St.

4.6 An Equality Impact and Review of Disability access.

Northern Ireland Museums Council funded an Access Audit of the current setup, in the context of potential development of the Museum. Ballycastle Museum was also one of the sites explored in the Peace IV Understanding Our Project: Accessible Heritage Project. Full results are available on www.niarchive.org.

The Capital project and Action Plan for NHLF will be subject to Equality Screening, Rural Proofing and designed to ensure compliance.

5.0 Museum Services Programming for Ballycastle Museum

Since June 2021 Museums Service have been delivering an alternative animation programme to mitigate against the temporary closure of the facility. (**Annex B**)

6.0 National Lottery Heritage Fund Main Grants Programme Update

Following the 2019 Outline Business Case, officers commenced exploring funding options including the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). NLHF have reopened their Main Grants Programme, closed due to the pandemic, in March 2021. Officers from Funding Unit and Museum Services initially met with NHLF Public Engagement Team prior to developing the Expression of Interest. The stages and information required for Main Grants is included in **Annex C**.

The Expression of Interest prepared by Museum Services and submitted with support from Funding Unit in September as stage one of the application process, has resulted in an invitation from NLHF to submit a Development Phase application.

Officers have recently met with NLHF on site to progress with the stage 2 application. It is anticipated that this application will be submitted in May. A key part of their feedback was to increase the level of Activity Planning during the Development (stage 2) and Delivery (stage 3) Phases of the Project to engage with new audiences and to include new project staff costs to deliver same. *Their key funding criteria is to engage more people with their heritage.* The expression of interest (stage one application) allowed for approx. 10% of a total estimated project cost of £1.3 million subject to updated OBC costs being prepared.

Staff have commenced work for the Development Phase application including the following actions to date:

- a. Digital Marketing strategy commissioned. Draft attached **Annex B**.
- b. Interpretative designers TOR issued.
- c. Outline interpretative plan drafted.
- d. Development Phase Activity Plan drafted.
(Above 2) subject to review by interpretative design team and NLHF
- e. Key Collections Report completed.
- f. Key storylines identified through survey and FoBM.
- g. Draft Conservation Management Plan has been completed through Capital Works team and Hamilton Architects.

Additional items to be completed for submission:

- Following advice from NLHF *the level of investment in the Activity Plan is to be increased* along with combining the Activity Plan and the Interpretative Plan.
- Capital works for listed building and interpretative fit-out prepared to RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design
- There are number of briefs or Terms of Reference for services to be prepared including:
 - Interpretative design team.
 - Research elements.
 - Additional staff costs to oversee and deliver.

Refined/updated construction costs and schedule for all elements of the Development Phase are required: capital works for listed building to tender ready stage, capital works for interpretative fit-out to tender ready stage and activity plan.

Outline costs and schedule for all elements of the Delivery Phase are required: implementation of capital works for listed building, capital works for interpretative fit-out and activity plan.

The Expression of Interest was based on working assumptions derived from original 2019 Outline Business Case. Indicative cost increases for building supplies and the impact of COVID19 on activities. More detailed costs will be confirmed as the preparations for the Development Phase Application progress. Officers will bring the draft NHLF Development Phase Application to Council for approval (including proposed council match funding) prior to submission. This will include Stage One design for building and interpretation, NLHF Action Plan, schedule and costs.

Louise

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DIGITAL STRATEGY

Ballycastle Museum
Capital Project

November 2021

Contents

1. About Ballycastle

- Objectives

2. Brand positioning

- Audience
- How to reach them

3. Digital strategy

- Our goals
- Our strategy
- Measuring success and KPIs

4. Channels

5. Content

- Recommendations for best practice

5. Summary and next steps



1. About Ballycastle



About Ballycastle Museum

Ballycastle Museum is a council-run museum in the Glens borough. It is supported by a volunteer group, Friends of Ballycastle Museum.

Current digital footprint

- One page on the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council website
- Ballycastle Museum Facebook page
- Friends of Ballycastle Museum page
- NI Archive (niarchive.org) which is linked from the website and social media pages



Objective

Broad objective

To connect visitors to the people and places of Ballycastle and the area through the museum and its services it provides.

Digital objectives

1. Support planning a visit to Ballycastle and Glens area
2. Promote the activities, resources and events to local people for the new museum development



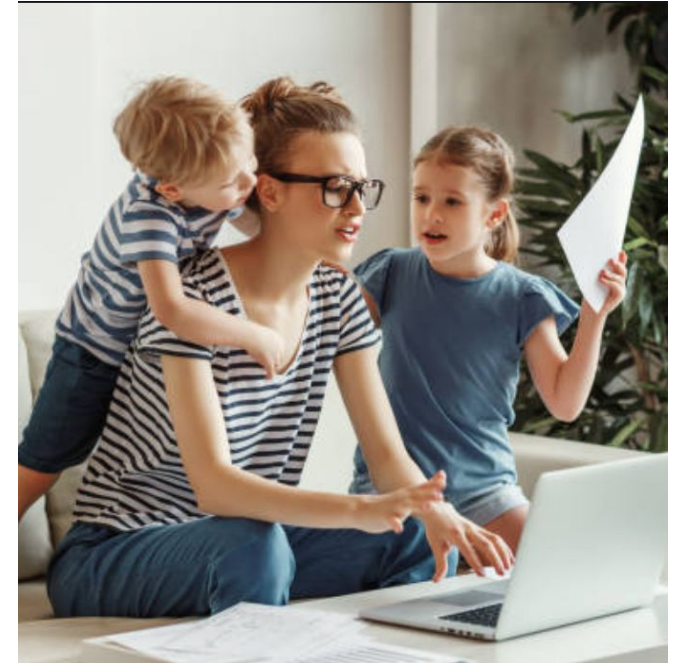
2. Brand positioning



Who's the audience

Sarah-Jane – The Busy mum

- Sarah is a graduate in the early stages of building her career after a break to have children. She has returned to work part time but the pressures of juggling both can sometimes be overwhelming
- She cares for her pre-school and nursery-aged children two days a week and likes to plan stimulating activities for them to get them away from screentime
- Amongst her friends, Sarah is seen as the organiser – someone who will find new things and invite others to come and experience them with her
- When she's not at work she enjoys outdoor activities with her family, going for walks and visiting relatives
- She is tech-savvy and well immersed in social networking and uses Whatsapp to connect with different groups of friends – fellow mums, school friends, family



Age: 30

Marital status: Married

Lives in: Glens area

Occupation: part-time office administrator



Who's the audience

Robert and Kellyanne – The travelling tourists

- Robert and Kellyanne have been married for 45 years and have always enjoyed travelling together
- They have booked their first visit to Ireland via their local travel agent. Robert is of Irish descent and can trace his distant relatives to Donegal so has always felt the pull of the Emerald Isle. They plan to stay in guest houses.
- They have a guidebook from which they have planned their trip. The itinerary includes the Giants Causeway, Dublin and an organised tour to Cork
- Kellyanne has a love of history and is well read. She particularly enjoys crafting and is a member of her local needlepoint group
- Both have mobile phones but only Kellyanne is engaged on social media groups. She has a facebook page to keep up with friends, and uses Whatsapp groups with her family
- Robert and Kellyanne love the ancient history that they have seen on their travels. They have been to Europe a number of times and always like to get a feel for the places they go, visiting museums and taking guided tours to expand their knowledge



Age: 67 and 73

Marital status: Married

Lives in: Missouri

Occupation: Retired



Who's the audience

Mrs Hagan – The school teacher

- Mrs Hagan works at St Olcan's Primary School in Armoy
- She is a member of the school's senior leadership team and the head of year 4. She has responsibility for meeting educational targets as well as shaping the syllabus to inspire the children's learning
- Teaching is her passion. On her days off she is always thinking of new ideas to bring topics to life
- She is tech-savvy and uses Google Classrooms to set weekly homework for her class and to communicate with parents



Age: 40

Marital status: Married

Lives in: Glens area

Occupation: Year 4 primary school teacher



Who's the audience

David – The history buff

- David lives alone in a bungalow on the outskirts of Dublin
- David enjoys hiking, history documentaries and watching sport in his local pub
- Since his wife died 15 years previously, David has joined local interest groups and is on the committee of his local Historical Society. He is always on the lookout for new events that his fellow members would enjoy
- He uses a desktop computer to check his email. He has a mobile phone but prefers to communicate via email



Age: 57

Marital status: Widowed

Lives in: Dublin

Occupation: Retired
serviceman



How will we reach them

Audience	How to reach them
Visitors and tourists all year round	Dedicated Ballycastle website, partnership marketing
Special interest groups	Email marketing, social media
Ballycastle diaspora	Local advertising, social media
Day trips	Partnership marketing, events listing, social media
Local people	Local advertising, social media
Families with young children	Social media and partnership marketing
Primary and secondary schools	Dedicated schools liaison with targeted schools educational programmes and partnerships
Young people 16- 25	Social media, local advertising, partnership marketing
People and groups with special needs.	Partnership marketing, social media, events listings
Homeschoolers	Dedicated educational programmes, partnership marketing



3. Digital Marketing strategy



Our goals

Brand awareness

- ✓ Increase in visitors to the museum and glens area

Community building and education

- ✓ Content is liked and shared

Converting clients

- ✓ Drive target audience from online interactions on social media or with the website to organising their next visit



Our strategy

Brand awareness and community building

- ✓ We will grow fans and engage followers by publishing content they want and need
- ✓ Build the community by creating bespoke content by audience and directly targeting key influencers within those groups

Education

- ✓ By raising the museum's profile and being seen to be leading the conversations in their specialist area

Converting to visitors

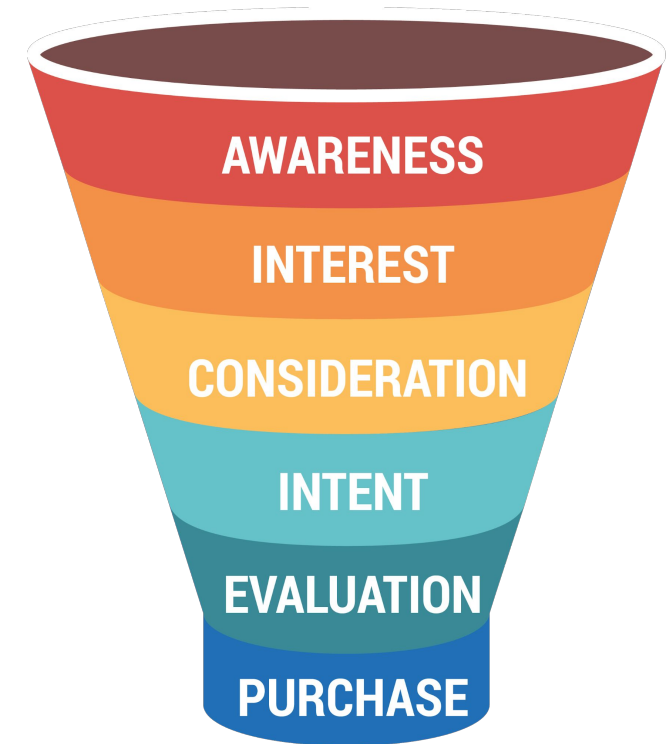
- ✓ We will drive visits to the museum and Glens area by offering experiences they want and need



Measuring success: KPIs

Measure the success of the digital strategy via the following KPIs:

- ✓ Awareness: **followers increasing**
- ✓ Community Building: **engagement % - interactions/reach**
- ✓ Network: **Conversations between visitors e.g. reviews, questions**
- ✓ Education: **Number of visiting schools and special interest groups' bookings**



4. Channels



Channel recommendation

Owned

Ballycastle
Museum
Facebook page

NI archive website

Dedicated
Ballycastle
Museum website -
NEW

Ballycastle
Museum
Instagram - NEW

Ballycastle
Museum YouTube
channel - NEW

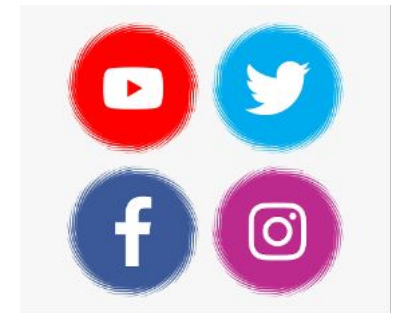
Ballycastle
Museum Twitter -
NEW

External channels

Friends of Ballycastle
Museum Facebook
page

Partnerships

Events listings, online
and offline



3. Content strategy



Content creation

Create regular content that can be used across the social channels and NI archive, including:

Posts

Create a content calendar based on your themes e.g. Swans, Selkies and Sidh folk. Use images and start conversations

Video

Use video to showcase the collections, new finds, interviews with volunteers or Glens area sites

Blogs

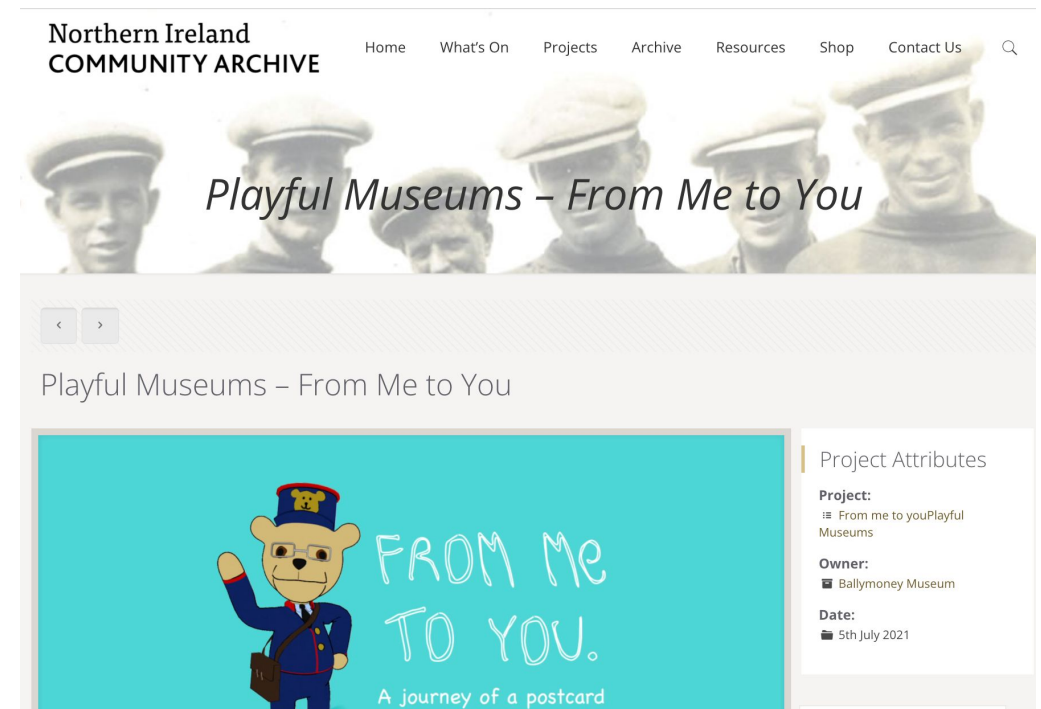
Write weekly blog posts connected to your themed topics. Use your social media channels to share and start conversations



Content sharing

Continue to use content created on the ArchiveNI site to share back to your social media channels.

Tag partners (e.g. Ballymoney Museum) in any posts to increase engagement.



I. Facebook content

Actions to take

1. Use images with every post for higher engagement
2. Video posts are better still - even higher engagement rates than photo (video plays automatically in the news feed so it really catches attention)
3. Consider using Facebook Live for Q&As, behind-the-scenes tours, artefact studies etc
4. Facebook Stories are photo or short video posts in vertical format that disappear after 24 hours. Photos appear for five seconds, and videos can be up to 20 seconds long. They appear at the top of the news feed and thereby are immune to Facebook's algorithm
5. Use pinned posts to highlight key information or events at the top of the page
6. Try different types of posts and review their success in analytics
7. one-third of your content should share ideas and stories, one-third of your content should involve personal interactions with your followers and the rest of your content can promote your business.
8. The platform wants to prioritize meaningful, engaging content



Page optimisation

- ✓ Respond to every post
- ✓ Keep content up to date
- ✓ Update the About section with latest opening times
- ✓ Comment on posts, or add posts, from Friends of Ballycastle Musuem page



Engagement vs Selling

It's so important to strike the right balance when posting. Too much engagement won't drive the KPIs, too much selling will turn customers off.

Engagement:
"Please like us"
80% of posts

We want our followers to...

- ✓ Comment
- ✓ Heart/like
- ✓ Share
- ✓ Watch

Selling:
"Please take action"
20% of posts

We want our followers to...

- ✓ Visit our website
- ✓ Sign up for our email
- ✓ Apply for a course
- ✓ Register for a webinar



Content posting

We recommend the following...

- **Posting Cadence:** Daily
- **Content Calendar:** Create a monthly calendar following a repeating schedule to allow you to plan your posts in advance and have creative ready to go. Suggest using the brand values as useful themes to work around



Facebook: Sample schedule

Week number	Content	Theme	Design
1	2 x Links to useful articles with accompanying commentary/ opinion	Discover	Third party content
2	1 x Inspiring quote 1 x Testimonial post	New	Image overlay
3	1 x FAQ relating to theme of the month 1 x Link to current event / news article	Share	Designed graphic
4	1 x photograph linked to blog post 1 x post showing day in the life	Inspire	Designed graphic



5. Summary



Summary

There's a **real opportunity** here to bring Ballycastle Museum and the Glens area to life and start demonstrating its value to prospective visitors in engaging ways.

Engage with content being shared in your ecosystem.

Go '**beyond the likes**': with richer content that encourages followers to engage more credibly by starting a conversation.

Using **content schedules and image editing** tools to plan ahead and keep messaging on track (don't forget the 80/20 rule) so that success can be measured and evaluated

Use the **comparison feature** on facebook to choose similar sized museums to watch. Consider their style of posts, timing, images etc for any learnings



Annex B

Museum Services Programming for Ballycastle Museum

Since June 2021 Museums Service have been delivering an alternative animation programme to mitigate against the temporary closure of the facility

Summer

Museum pop ups x 4
Museum survey to update Outline Business Case. 239 responded.
Story line development session with Friends of Ballycastle Museum




Winter 2021/2022

September – October	Mountsandel and archaeology field schools x 3 Dunseverick and St Patricks and St Brigids PS
September – January	Who Do You Think You Are 4 x workshops & Booklet
January – February	Museums Tell Stories project with Glenshesk Clanmill supported by Armstrong Storytelling Trust x 5 sessions
February	Playful Museums session x 1
March	King of Ballycastle reminiscence workshops x 2`
April	Reopening of the museum to the public

Ongoing

- BT Phone box at seafront. Currently with BT to answer enquiries
- 30 objects project with Friends of Ballycastle Museum content development being finalised for design and print in 2022.

ANNEX C
BALLYCASTLE MUSEUM CAPITAL PROJECT
SUMMARY OF NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUNDING PROCESS

STEPS	PHASE	Details	Date
FIRST STEP All expenditure at risk	EXPRESSION OF INTEREST	Initial plans for heritage, building, collections and activity to engage Updated OBC Consultation	Sept 2021
			
SECOND STEP Following Invitation to submit All expenditure at risk	PREPARE AND SUBMIT DEVELOPMENT PHASE APPLICATION PROCESS	ACTIVITIES events, research, training, collections , consultation	Invited to submit April/May 2022
		CAPITAL WORKS Incl building, interpretative fitout and conservation RIBA Concept design stage (1)	
		PROJECT OUTCOMES	
		PROJECT MANAGEMENT incl all briefs for consultants/contractors for develop phase	
		AFTER THE PROJECT ENDS Incl Business Plan	
			
IF SUCCESSFUL			
THIRD STEP if successful Grant to cover agreed % costs	DEVELOPMENT PHASE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT DELIVERY PHASE APPLICATION Up to 2 years	ACTIVITY PLAN	Commence Autumn 2022 for submission Autumn 2023
		CAPITAL WORKS to shovel ready stage for building, conservation and interpretative fit out	
		PROJECT OUTCOMES Updated	
		PROJECT MANAGEMENT All terms of reference/contracts to deliver activity plan and capital works scheme	
		AFTER THE PROJECT ENDS Updated Business Plan and risks	
		PROJECT COSTS incl cash flow and Income and exp forecasts	
			
IF SUCCESSFUL			
FOURTH STEP if successful Grant to cover agreed % costs	DELIVERY PHASE Up to 5 years	On site	Commence early 2024



1.5 FIFTH STEP	POST PROJECT COMPLETION		Open to public late 2025/ early 2026