

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING HUB PROFILE

Larne



Compiled by QCAP academics, DTNI and partnership members



COMMUNITIES
AND PLACE



LARNE
COMMUNITY WEALTH
BUILDING PARTNERSHIP



INTRODUCTION

LARNE PROFILE

The aim of this place-based research profile is to provide an aggregated understanding of community anchor organisations that make up the Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership as well as the wider socio-economic context in which they work.

The profile has been developed through input from organisations that participate in the partnership along with support from Queen's Communities and Place (QCAP) and Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) and focusses on three areas:

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- Presenting data from the Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency and other published datasets at the Mid and East Antrim Local Government District level to better understand local economic activity and labour market trends.
- Profiling shared partnership data on financial measures which include turnover, expenditure, job creation and combined asset value. It will also explore their spatial relationship with existing geographies of poverty and deprivation by using cluster analysis techniques and GIS mapping software.
- Highlighting selected activities that are already being advanced by member organisations to explore the value and potential impact created when community wealth building activities are enacted in different places.



"Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership has the potential to rebuild the local economy in way that's inclusive and socially impactful. This is a unique opportunity to apply a 'place based' approach that is holistic and sustainable."



“Individually the anchor organisations bring a wealth of experience and local knowledge to the table but as a collaborative group they bring the ability to deliver transformational change for the town and its people”.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership is currently made up of 4 community anchor organisations that work in partnership to support inclusive economic growth, create more sustainable places and improve the lives of local people living across the Larne and the wider Mid and East Antrim area.

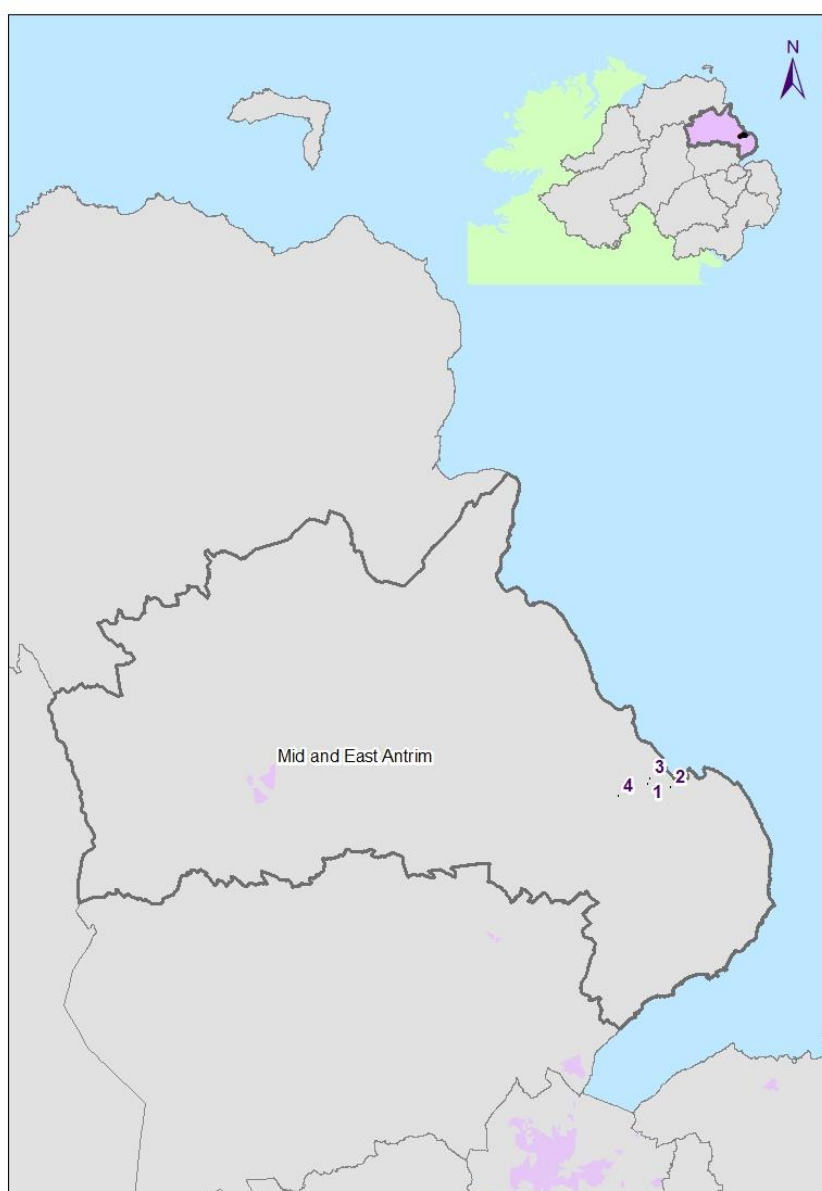
A central purpose of the partnership is to lobby and advocate for the advancement of community wealth building approaches within central and local government. This will involve working to deliver a collaborative, and participative approach to the management of local services, land, and physical or natural assets, enabling better delivery outcomes and more opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

This cross-sectoral partnership is made up of social enterprises and private businesses. It will draw on its own experience and collective capabilities to develop more inclusive economies that aim to promote fair employment, the creation of resilient local supply chains and a more diverse business base, ensuring that wealth is locally owned and leverages maximum benefits for communities across Larne and the wider Mid & East Antrim area.

PARTNERSHIP ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS

The 4 community anchor organisations that make up the Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership are mapped below and include 1) Larne Football Club, 2) Port of Larne 3) Access Employment Ltd and 4) LEDCOM

Not all community anchor organisations that represent the Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership are social enterprises. However, their networked alignment has created the scope for cross-sectoral working and the potential to advance joint initiatives that will embed community wealth building approaches locally across the Mid and East Antrim area.





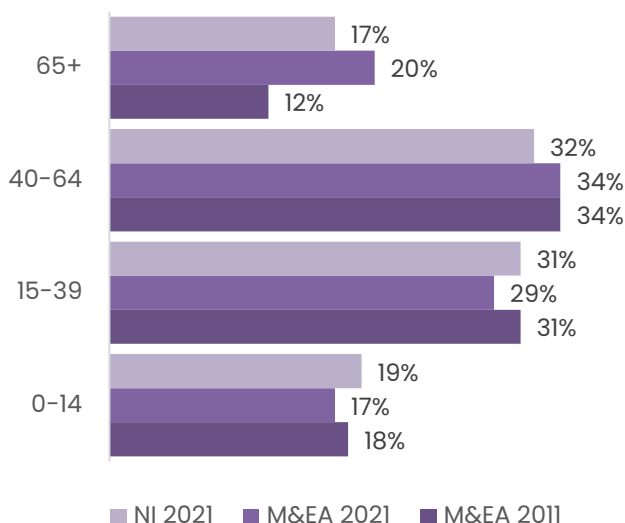
AREA DATA

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHY

The population of Mid and East Antrim was 138,994 at the time of the 2021 Census, which made it the 2nd smallest Local Government District – an increase of 2.7% since the 2011 Census.

The number of households across the LDG has also increased 7% to 58,300 in the same period and so did the proportion of residents that were aged 65 and over. In contrast, the proportion of younger people decreased.

The reported increase for the 65+ band was 12% in 2011 to 17% in 2021 which suggests the resident population of Mid and East Antrim is getting older.



BUSINESS PROFILE

In 2023, the NINIS Interdepartmental Business Register showed there were 5,065 businesses located within Mid and East Antrim representing 6% of Northern Ireland registered businesses in total.

Since 2013, the number of registered business has increased by 11% from 4,580 which represents the 8th largest in terms of percentage growth across all the Northern Ireland council areas.

10,700 employees or 17.5% of residents across Mid and East Antrim now work from home which is making local businesses re-think how they manage their office space demands.



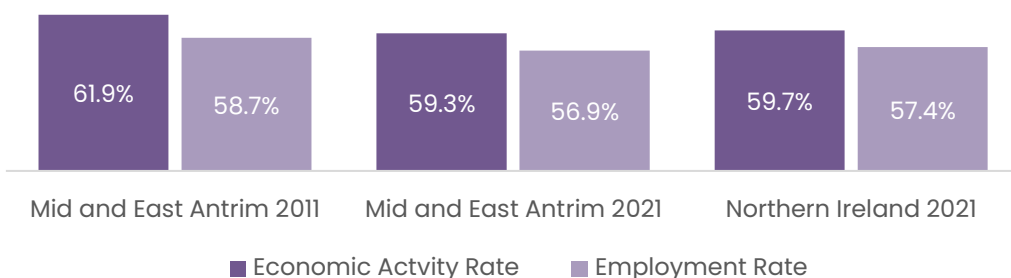
BUSINESSES 2013 = 4,580

BUSINESSES 2023 = 5,065

11% INCREASE SINCE 2013

LABOUR FORCE

The Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey in 2021 showed that the economic activity rate (59.3%) and employment rate (56.9%) for Mid and East Antrim were below the overall rates registered for Northern Ireland. Since 2011, both the economic activity and employment rate have decreased and in comparison to the other 11 Northern Ireland council areas it ranked 8th overall.



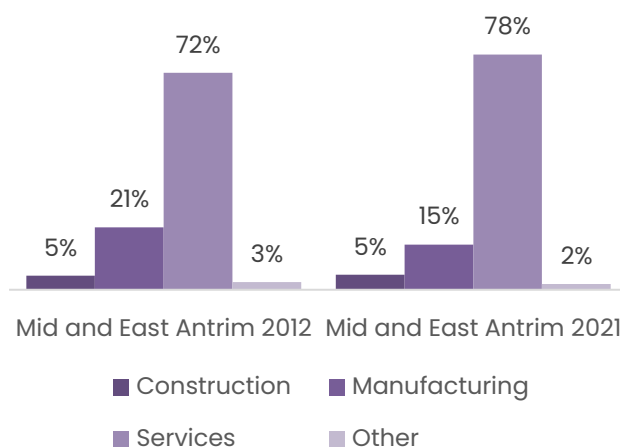
Mid & East Antrim experienced a reduction in jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic with a net decrease of 1,700 jobs from 2020-2022. Economic inactivity is a persistent issue across all council areas and there is need for new approaches and initiatives to try and help tackle the problem.

EMPLOYEE JOBS BY SECTOR

In 2021, the Northern Ireland Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) showed that there were 42,842 jobs across Mid and East Antrim, a 0.7% rise since the BRES survey in 2012. The service sector accounted for the highest proportion of jobs (33,448) followed by manufacturing (6,415) then construction (2,128) and other (811).

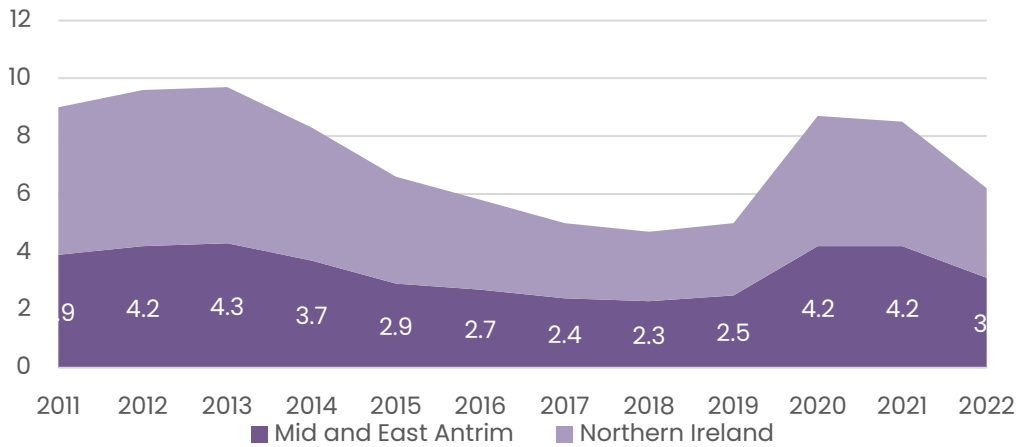
High value sectors such as Professional & Scientific Services and ICT have experienced significant increases during this time.

The share of manufacturing jobs across Mid and East Antrim has decreased from 21% to 15% between 2011 and 2021 representing a loss of 2,394 jobs whilst the service sector gained 2,798 jobs.



CLAIMANT COUNT

In 2022, 3.1% of the population were claiming unemployment benefit in Mid and East Antrim which ranked the council area 4th overall across Northern Ireland. Since 2011, the claimant count across Mid and East Antrim has fallen from 3.9% to 3.1%. This is in line with wider trends across Northern Ireland which reported a similar decrease from 5.1% to 3.1%. A fall in the claimant count across all council areas is evident since reported increase from 2019–2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.



As tightness in the labour market continues to intensify a fresh effort will be needed to re-engage the inactive and community anchor institutions are suitably placed to connect with marginal or traditionally excluded groups.

MEDIAN GROSS INCOME

The Annual Gross Pay for Employee Jobs Survey showed that the median annual pay (gross) for all employee jobs in Northern Ireland 2021 was £24,099.

In 2021, Mid and East Antrim had the fifth lowest annual median gross earnings across all 12 Northern Ireland council areas at £21,303. The highest median salary was recorded for Belfast at £26,911.

In 2015 the median gross income in Mid and East Antrim was £16,689



NORTHERN IRELAND 2021
= £24,099

BELFAST 2021
= £26,911

MID & EAST ANTRIM 2021
= £21,303

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

The 2021 census results for Mid and East Antrim demonstrated how 29% of the population were qualified to NVQ Level 4 and above in comparison to only 22% in 2011. This was slightly below the Northern Ireland proportion of 32%. Level 4 and above includes participation in foundation and higher education courses as well as teaching and nursing degrees.



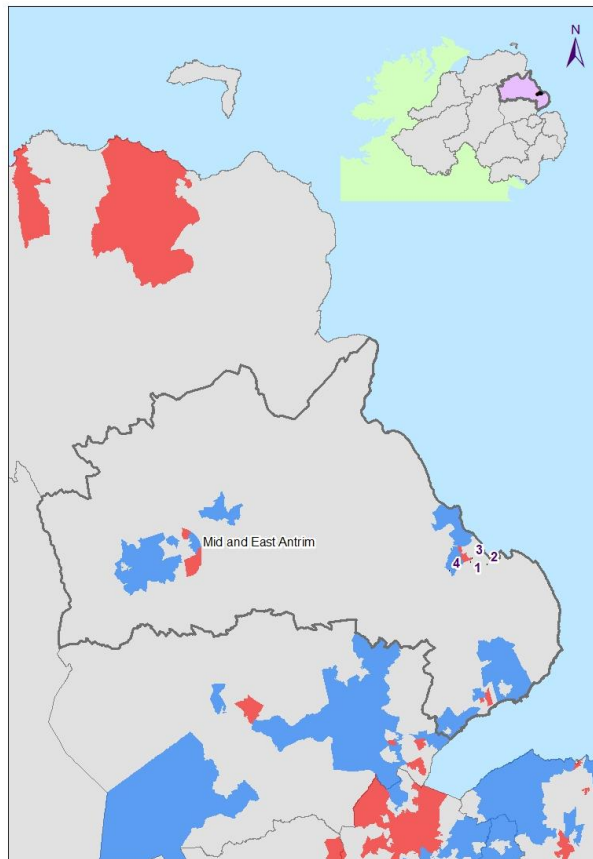
The proportion of the population with No Qualifications also fell from 29% to 24% in the same census period which equated to the broader Northern Ireland figure of 24%. The skills base of the Mid and East Antrim population is getting stronger and more qualified, but this is not necessarily translating into high economic and employment rates or higher earnings.



IMPACT

DEPRIVATION

Whilst we have seen significant improvement in some indicators of economic activity and employment, relative deprivation remains a stubborn spatial problem across certain parts of the Mid and East Antrim Council area. The map below shows the Super Output Areas (SOAs) that were in the top 10% of deprived areas in 2017, shaded red, which includes housing estates located around Larne town centre such as Antiville and Craigyhill. The bottom 10% ranked SOAs are shaded blue.



The analysis shows that deprivation is clustered around urban centres like Larne and Ballymena. It also demonstrates how community wealth building partnership members AEL and LEDCOM trade in or operate very closely to these existing geographies of deprivation. It is social enterprises such as these, supported by an active community wealth building environment, that will generate jobs, services, access to work and most of all income across the region's poorest communities.

Working in meaningful partnership with private sector anchors like the Port but also community facing sports clubs like Larne FC, heightens the scope to deliver these transformational economic outcomes and create high levels of social impact at the point of need.

ANNUAL IMPACT

The aggregated financial analysis presented below shows that community anchor organisations that represent the Larne Community Wealth Building Partnership (excluding the Port of Larne) collectively demonstrate financial diversity, marked particularly by different types of social businesses working at considerable scale with a strong asset base across the Larne and wider Mid and East Antrim council area.



£4.36million in annual aggregated turnover



105 jobs split between both full time and part time positions



81% is the average level of unrestricted income per member



£3.25 million on salaries and supplier expenditure per annum

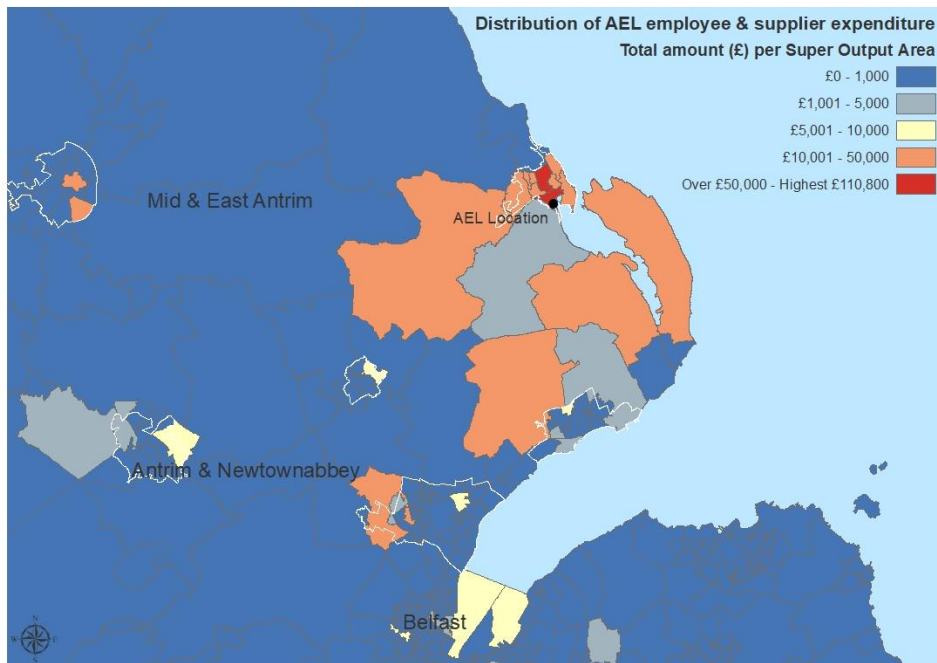


£7.7 million in combined net physical assets

The aggregated financial analysis also shows how in general the community anchor organisations are asset rich, generate high levels of revenue, are profitable, and employ significant numbers of people both in full and part-time roles. They also return a high proportion of unrestricted income which allows them to support competitive salaries as well as enable supply chain development across Larne as well as the wider Mid and East Antrim area and beyond.

SUPPORTING LOCAL WEALTH CREATION

Previously QUB conducted research to better understand how and where local partnership members and social enterprise Access Employment Ltd (AEL) recycled its turnover. The analysis summarised by the map below shows that nearly 60% of AEL's combined annual expenditure on suppliers and salaries flowed back directly into the local Mid and East Antrim council area. In the 2017 financial year this accounted for a total financial re-investment of £529,875 or just over £10,000 per/week.



This financial re-investment by community anchor partner organisations like AEL is also helping to broker the development of wider supply chains across Northern Ireland that is supportive of other private businesses and jobs in neighbouring local council areas such as Causeway Coast and Glens and Antrim and Newtownabbey. The measurable benefits from this economic activity and potential for scalability are highly significant to a locality like Larne that has suffered geographic exclusions from wider processes of economic restructuring and has been adversely impacted by the decline and hollowing out of industries related to its Port.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING PRACTICE

SUPPORTING AND INCUBATING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

LEDCOM provides specialist advice and business mentoring services that help local businesses and their latest impact scorecard in 2021/2022 shows how they supported 250 businesses, completed 140 business plans and 94% of individuals that received pre-start up support progressed into employment or gained a qualification in 'Understanding Businesses Enterprise'. Previous QUB research shows how this activity creates a positive local multiplier of 1:87. In simple terms this means that for every £1 spent by LEDCOM, an additional 87p is spent or re-spent across Mid and East Antrim. Trading as a social enterprise LEDCOM also manage flexible office accommodation catering for various sectors as well as industrial units for manufacturing and incubating other social enterprises. This contributes to the creation of further employment and wealth building activities across Larne and the wider Mid & East Antrim area.



BUILDING LOCAL CROSS SECTORAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Access Employment Ltd has partnered with a local private firm Kilwaughter Mineral Company to manufacture their sample booklets which help market their home rendering service to potential customers. This sub-contracting work generates an annual sales income of roughly £40,000 and provides this local social enterprise with an unrestricted income stream as well as practical training and employment opportunities for young people or adults with learning difficulties. It also represents existing cross-sectoral supply chain development between private and third sector businesses operating across Larne.



COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING PRACTICE

LARNE ACADEMY OF SPORT

The Larne Academy of Sport (formerly known as the Cliff) represents a new training facility for Larne Football Club. It has also been redeveloped to house activities that engage with and benefit the wider Larne community. These include the onsite delivery of bespoke qualifications such as a BTEC level 3 in Sports Development which is helping to increase the provision of educational opportunities for local marginalised young people across Larne. Developed on derelict and underutilised lands the site has been transferred into the ownership of Larne Football Club charity on a 25-year lease. Moving forward there are plans to develop social enterprise projects across the site. This will strengthen the capacity of the academy to deliver relevant services at the point of need but also offer a viable and sustainable model of sports-led regeneration to benefit the wider Larne area.



CONCLUSION

It is important to stress that this research profile does not reflect an extensive picture of the region's social economy and community and voluntary sector. Rather it is an effort to better understand the capacity of a networked grouping of community anchor organisations that can learn and work collaboratively together in a way that can develop and sustain community wealth building approaches across Larne and the wider Mid and East Antrim council area.

By way of reference, in 2021 NICVA completed a member survey which demonstrated a buoyant sector located across Northern Ireland made up of 7,486 trading organisations and an aggregated turnover of £819 million that supports an estimated 53,620 full or part time paid jobs. NICVA's member directory shows that locally there are over 30 registered charities, social enterprises, development trusts and other community and voluntary sector organisations currently located in the Mid and East Antrim council area that contribute significantly to these outputs and the resultant social impact this creates across society.

Ultimately the research profile demonstrates the diverse nature of the Larne Community Wealth Building partnership that is constituted by organisations with various operational purposes but allied through a common commitment to social and economic justice. These four community anchor organisations are well positioned to support or move forward community wealth building projects in ways that tackle local inequalities across the Larne area and connect with existing geographies of deprivation. A large part of this is underwritten by their commitment to work in partnership with each other as well as advance the five pillars of community wealth building, which embody and give lasting form to local economic democracy, accountability, fairness and equality.

If you have any further questions about the Larne
Community Wealth Building Partnership, please
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