

19th January
2021

Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan

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Principal Planner
Belfast City Council



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Content

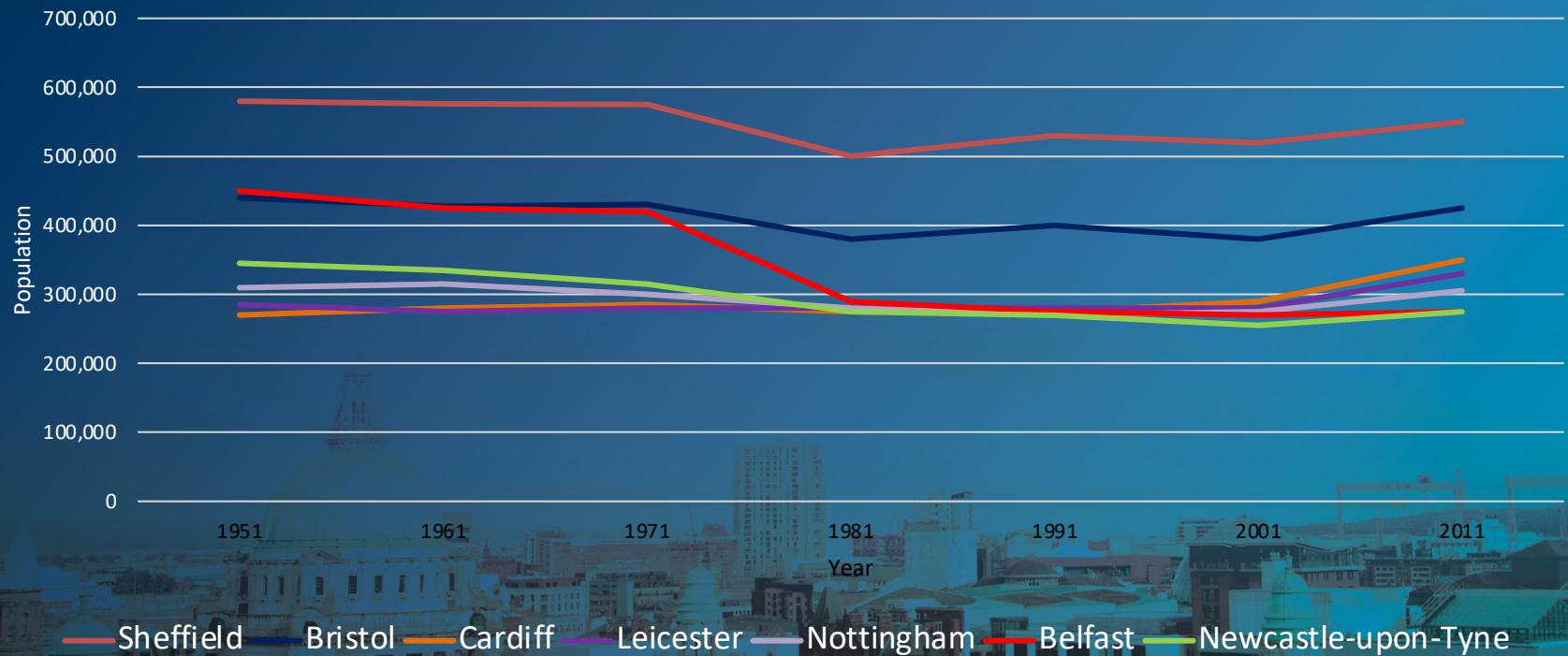
- The challenges for Sustainable City Planning
- What is Green & Blue Infrastructure?
- Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan
- Does it offer realistic solutions?
- Green and Blue Projects in Belfast
- Connswater Community Greenway



Cities are getting bigger

Population growth in similar sized cities

1951-2011



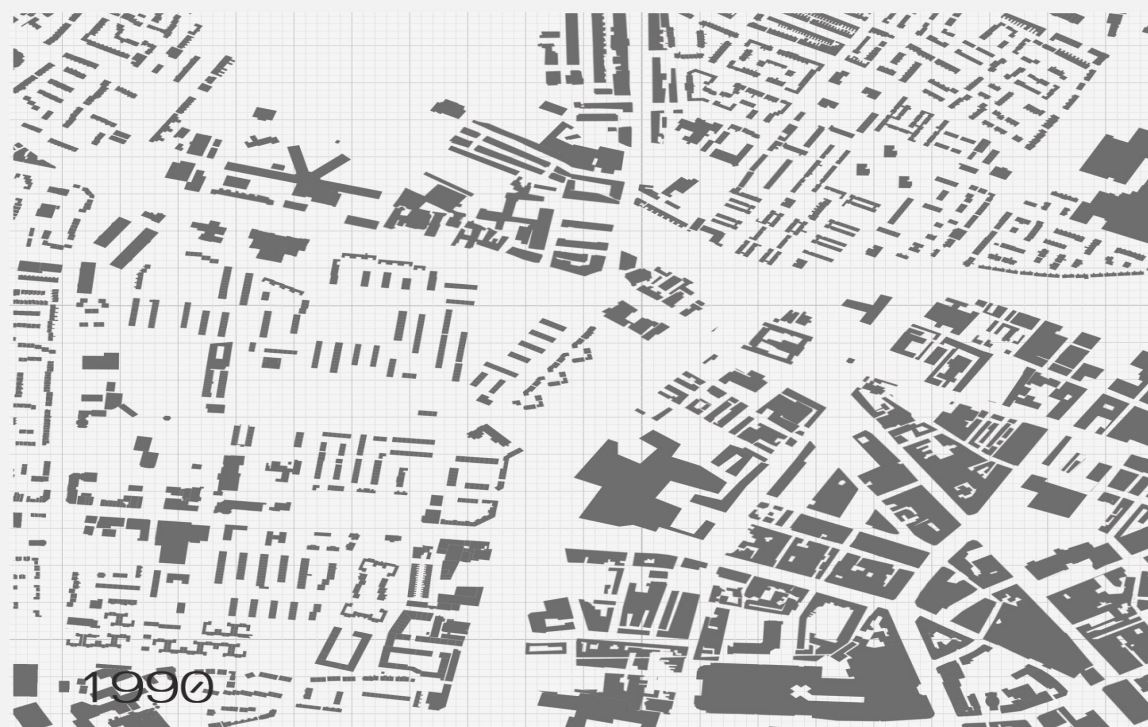
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Cities are getting busier



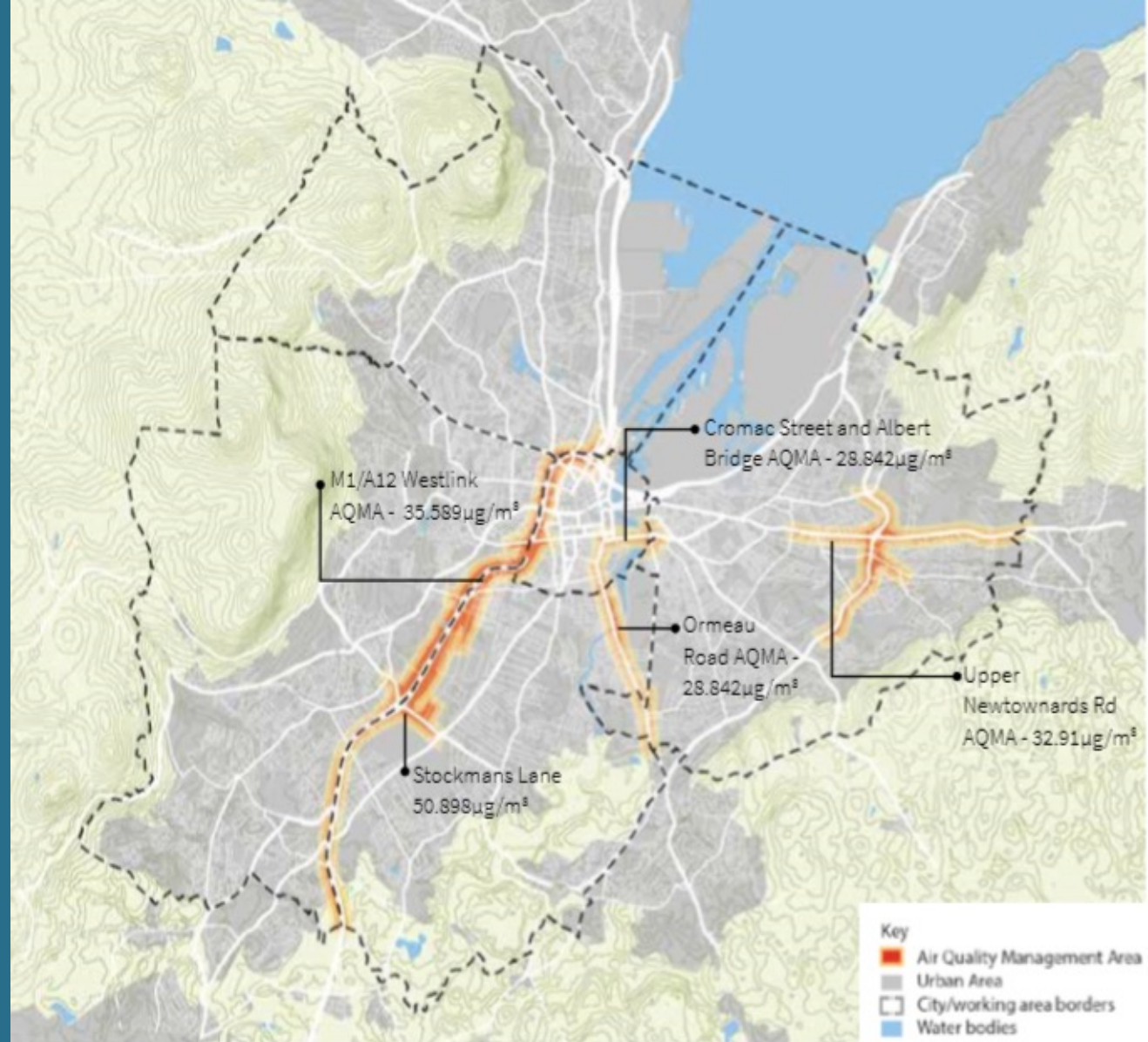
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Depopulation of some inner-city areas

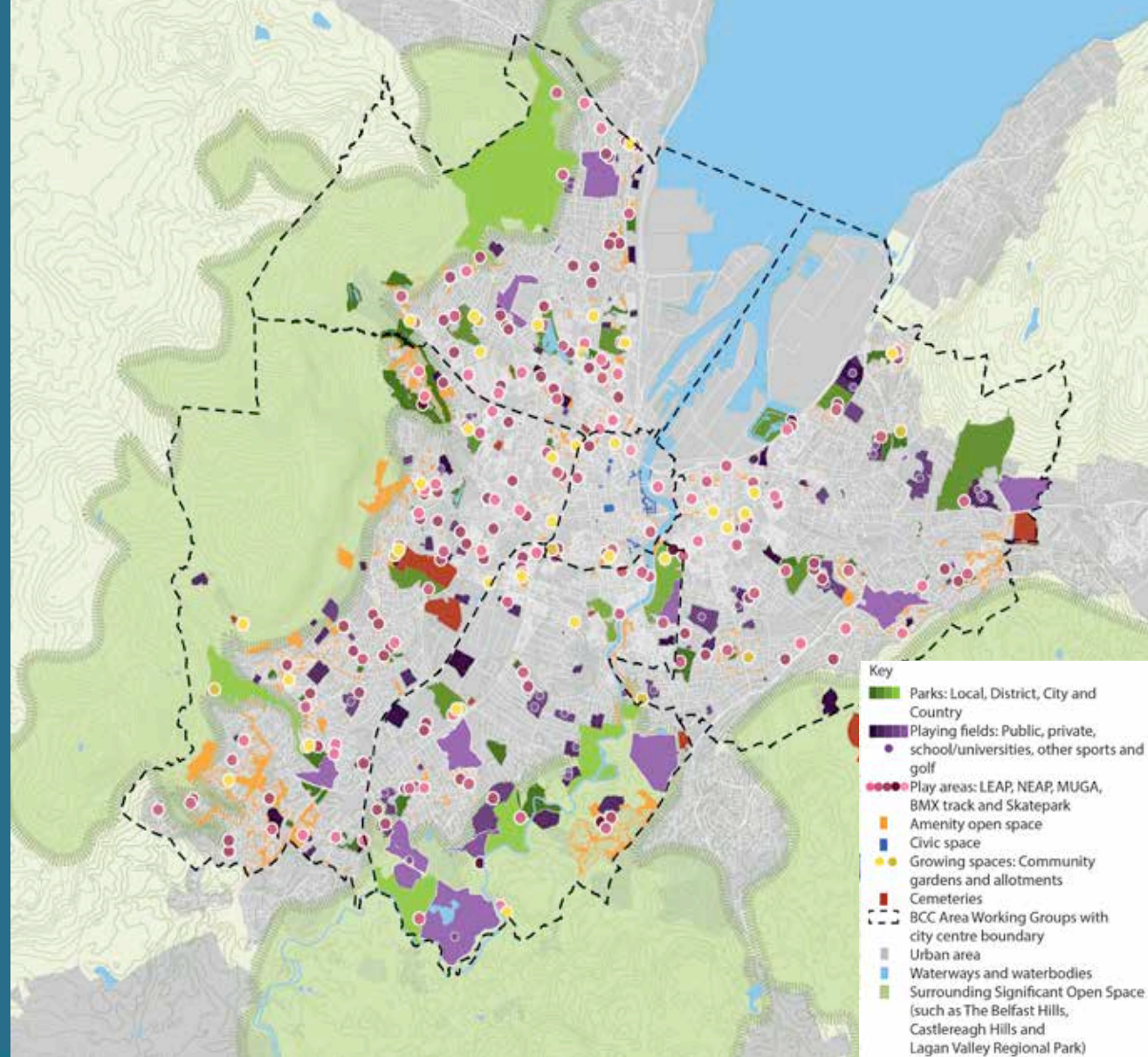


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Air Quality and Traffic Congestion

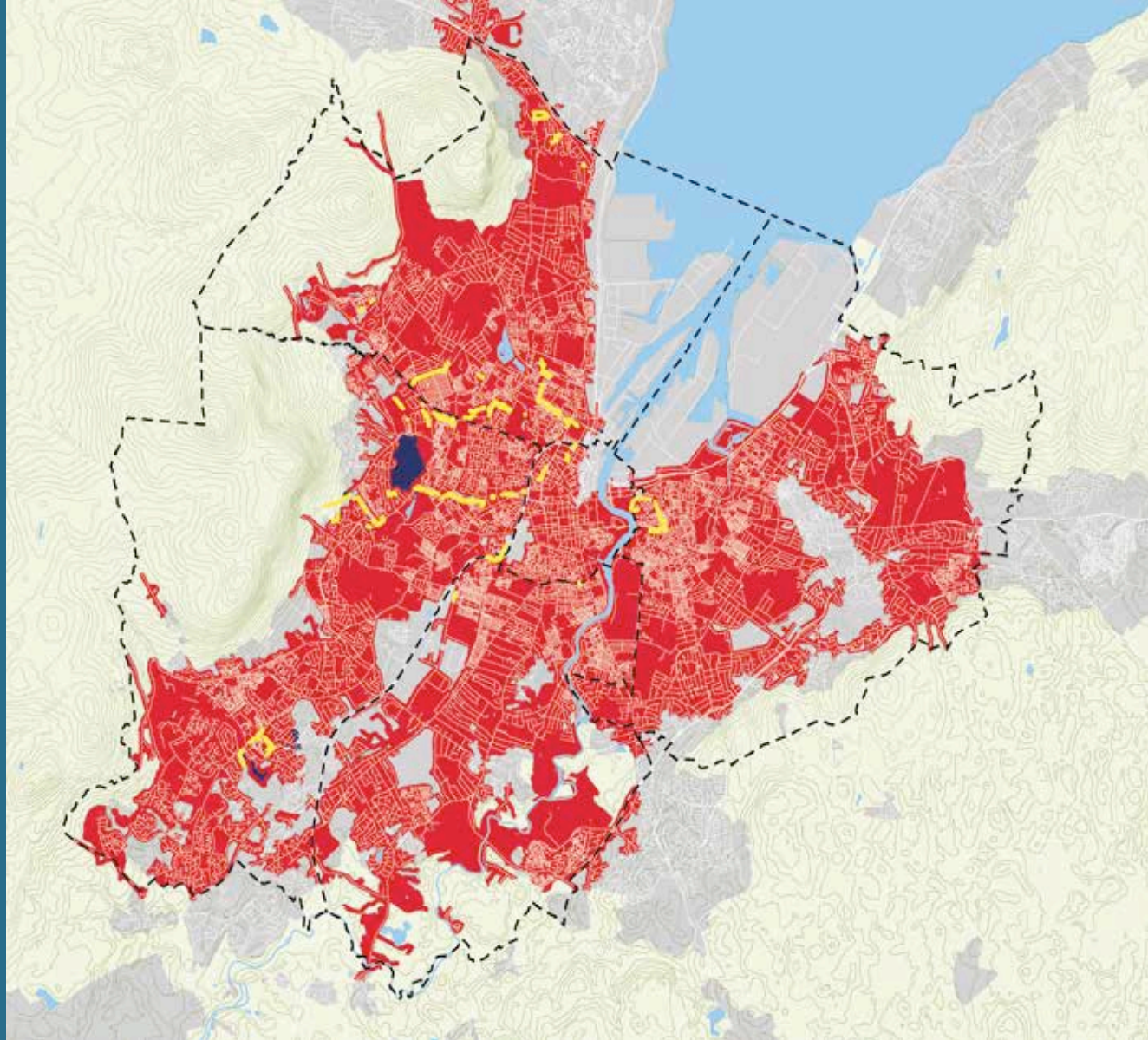


Biodiversity Park Provision Connectivity



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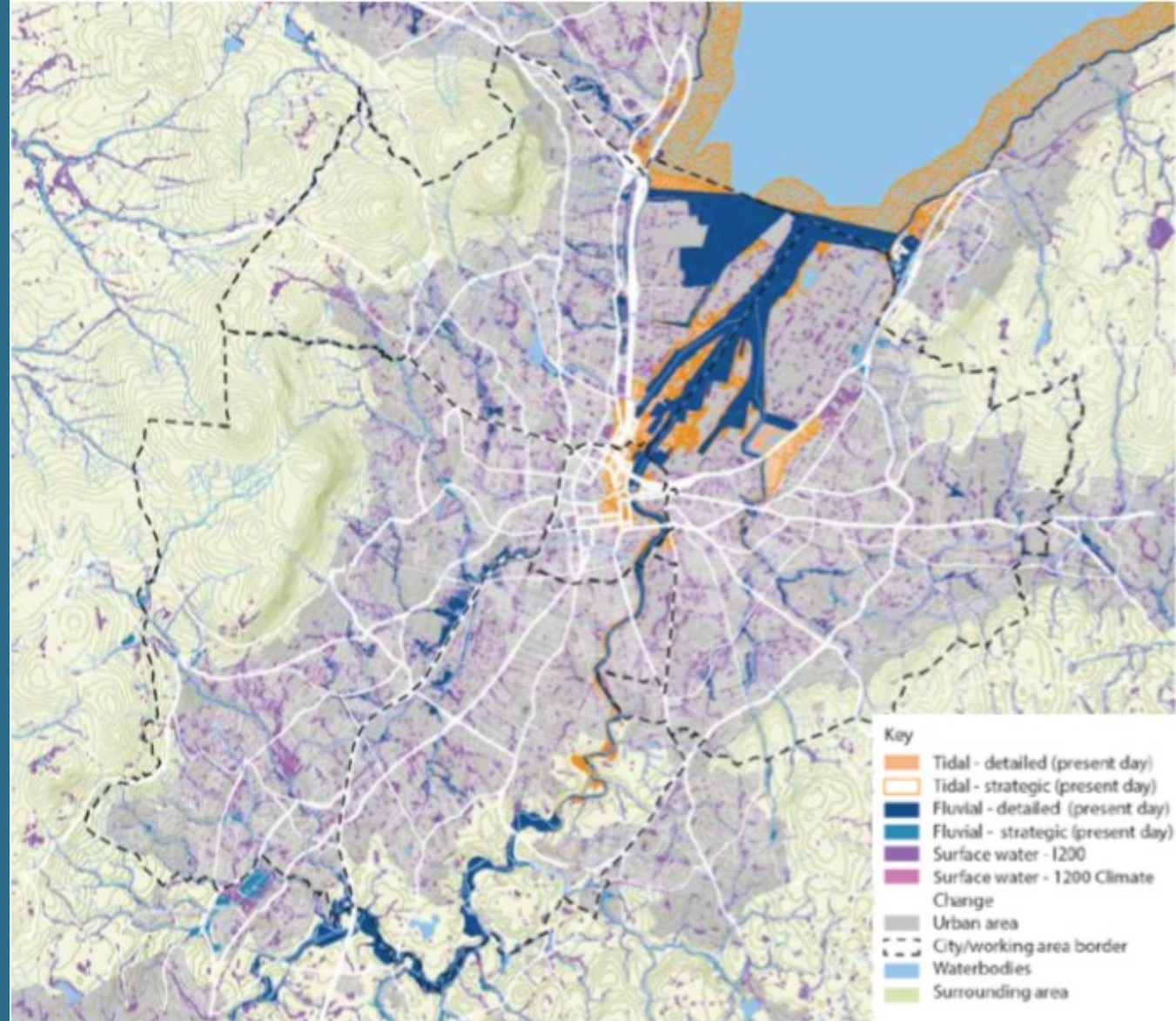
Access to Open Space and Community Cohesion



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Climate Change and Flooding



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Traditional Solutions



Traditional Solutions



The Shifting Paradigm

- Right across the world cities are being transformed into vibrant healthy liveable places where the needs of citizens and the environment at the front and centre, where multi functional public spaces are being used to better effect for physical and mental health, the promotion of biodiversity, where we work with environment to address climate change



What is Green and Blue Infrastructure

- Green areas and water features.
- Natural heritage, open space, water, hills & coast.
- Greenways & community paths.
- Ecosystem services function.
- Importance for city resilience.
- Opportunities to connect & enhance sites and features.
- Multi-functional network across the entire city area.



Origins and Practice

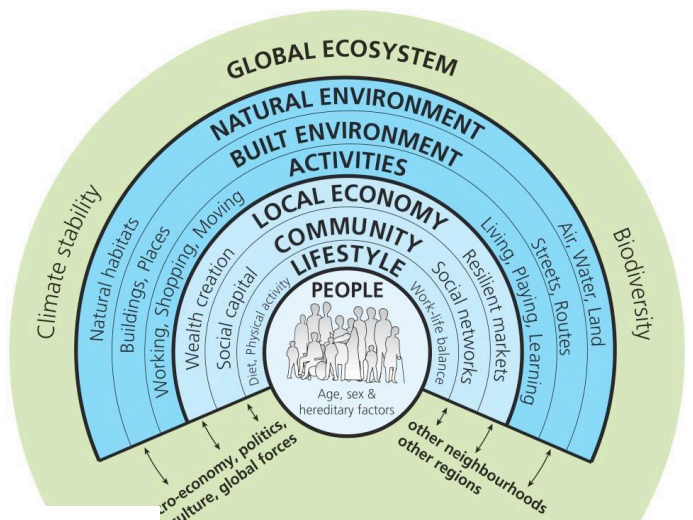


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN ENVIRONMENTS: THE ALL LONDON GREEN GRID

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

MARCH 2012
LONDON PLAN 2011
IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK MAYOR OF LONDON

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK



The determinants of health and well-being in our neighbourhoods

Barton and Grant 2010

A Green Network Strategy for the Glasgow City Region

Helping to deliver the Central Scotland Green Network

CONTACT US
01 222 2222
www.greennetwork.gov.uk

A Green Network Strategy for the Glasgow City Region



Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme



January 2014



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Belfast Local Development Plan 2035

- “Belfast will be a city re-imagined and resurgent. A great place to live and work for everyone. Beautiful, well connected and culturally vibrant, it will be a sustainable city shared and loved by all its citizens, free from the legacy of conflict. A compassionate city offering opportunities for everyone.”



Support
46,000
additional jobs



Our city is home
to an additional
66,000
people



550,000m²
of employment
floor space
(B-Use Class) 2020-2035



31,600
additional homes
2020-2035



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Belfast Local Development Plan 2035

- Maintain / improve environmental quality & avoid pollution
- Mitigate environmental change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Make city more resilient to adapt to change.
- Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments: green roofs, ponds & swales, permeable surfaces and tree planting.



Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan

- Our vegetated areas (the green) and our waterways (the blue) provide a broad range of economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Natural and Semi-Natural 'infrastructure' assets need to be actively planned, invested in and managed to ensure that they are utilised sustainably

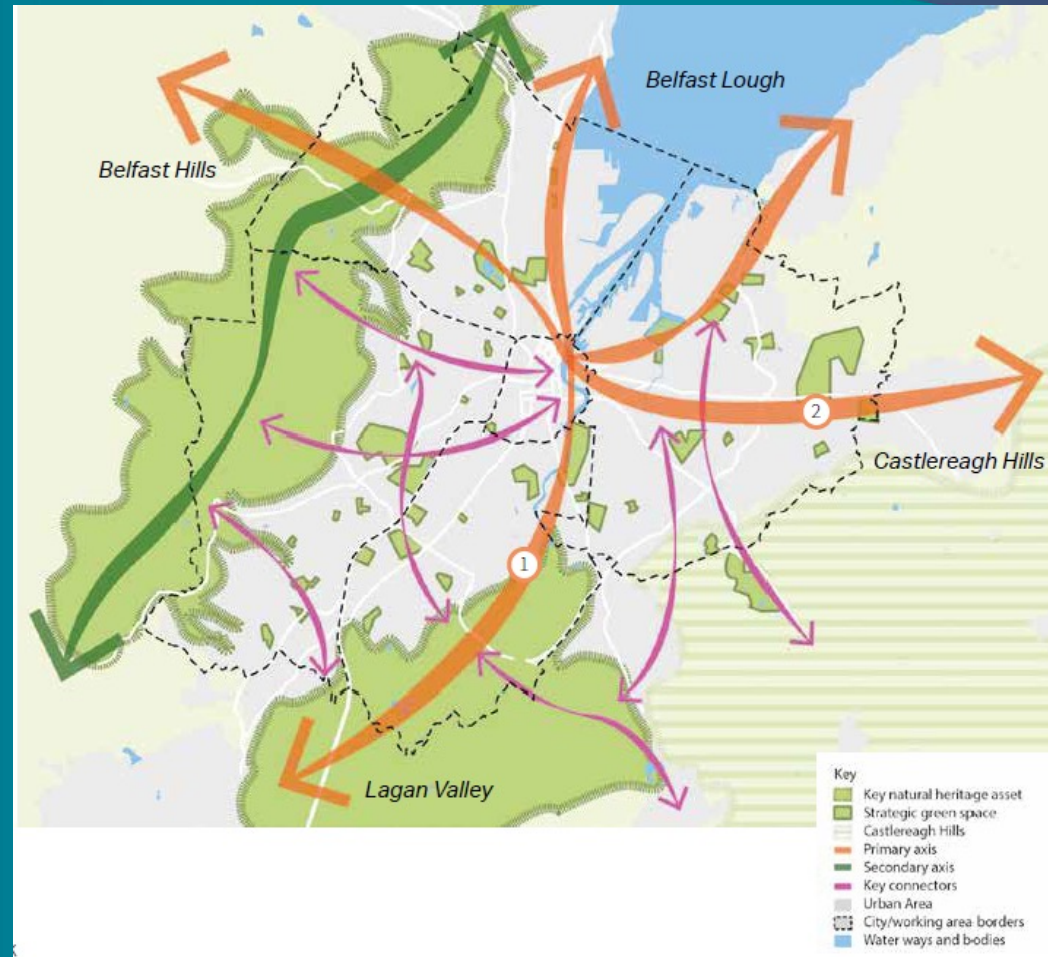


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Principles

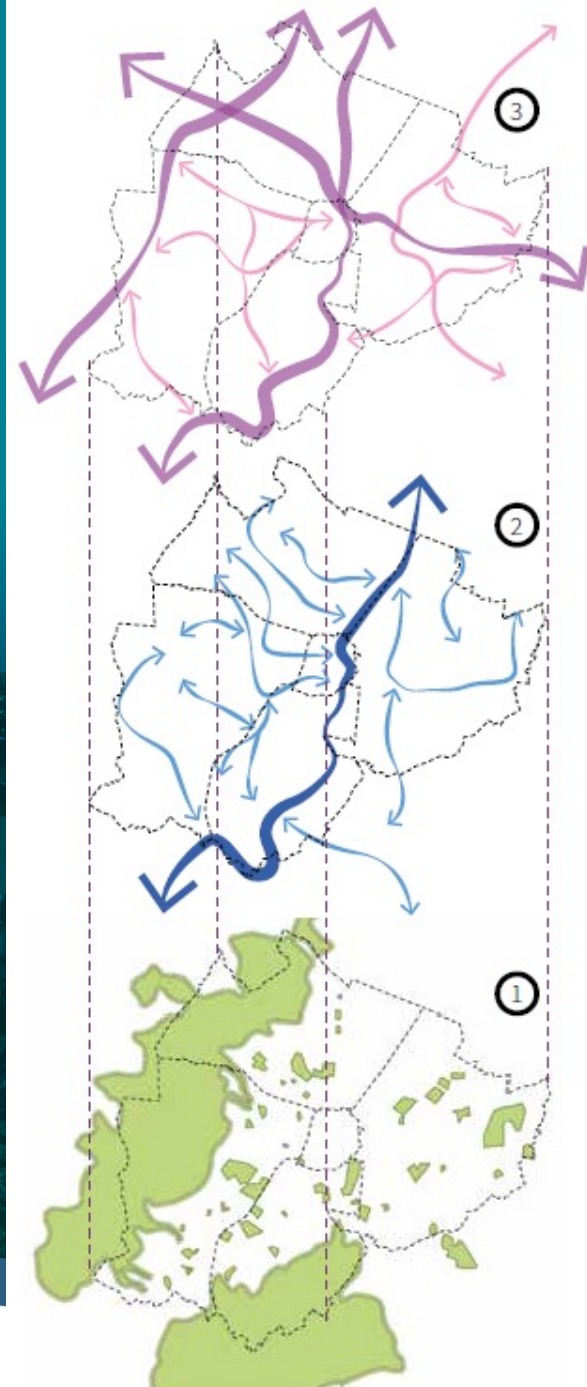
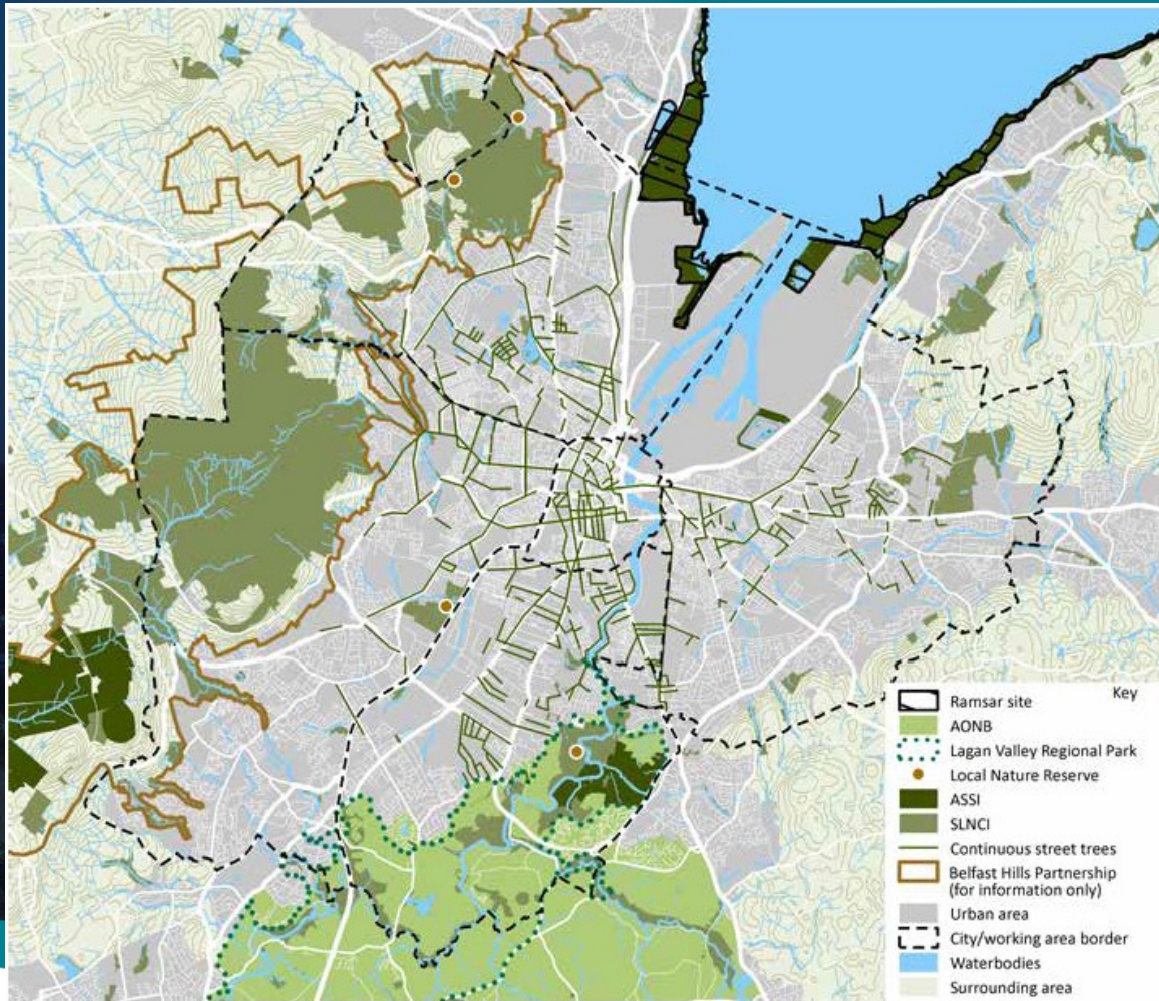
- Biodiverse
- Planned Interconnected network
- Integrated into the urban environment
- Well Design and Managed
- Appropriately funded



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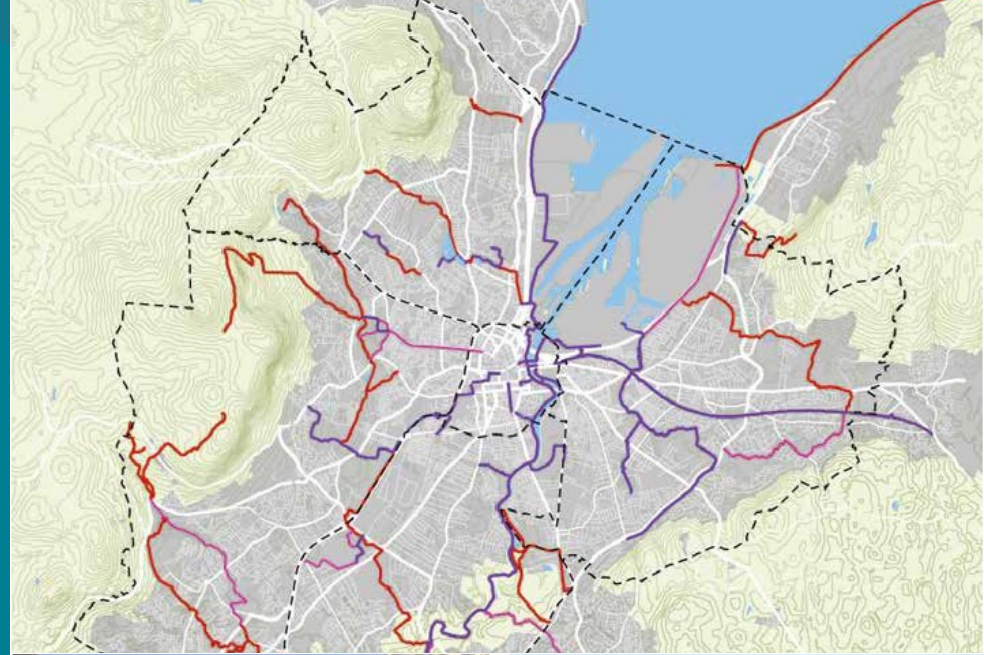
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Integration



Integration

- Important to Enhance and improve connectivity
- Significant benefits likely to be seen through cumulative impact of smaller interventions



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Comber Greenway

- 7-mile (11 km) traffic-free section of the National Cycle Network that runs along the old Belfast-Comber railway line.
- The railway was in use from 1850s until 1950.
- Through the 1950s the track was lifted in phases and infrastructure, including bridges, removed.



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Comber Greenway

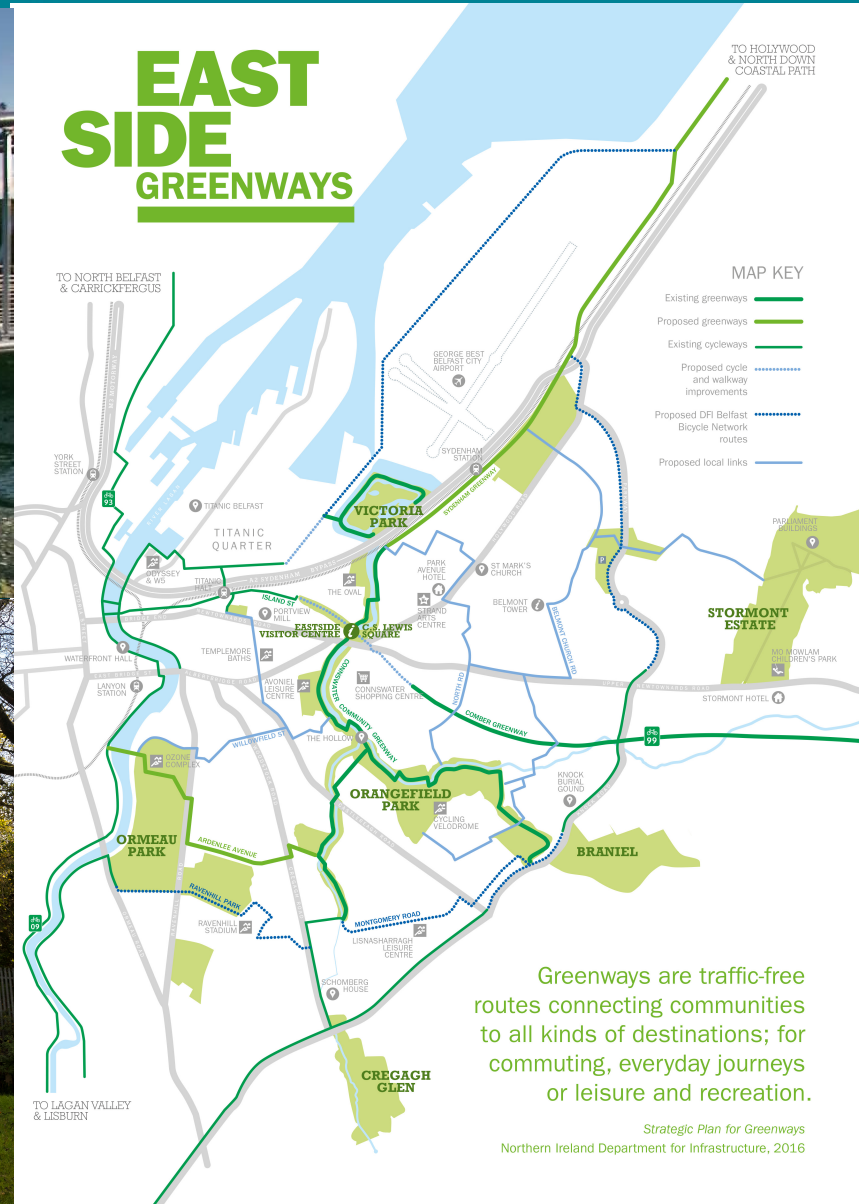
- In 2003–04 the Knock Valley Relief Sewer was installed from Ballymacarett to Dundonald.
- By late in the century the Greenway had become a recreation path for walkers, cyclists etc.



Connswater Community Greenway



16km continuous footway/cycle way



Greenways are traffic-free routes connecting communities to all kinds of destinations; for commuting, everyday journeys or leisure and recreation.

What it was like



River Restoration



5km
River
Restoration



Living the Green Way



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Connswater Community Greenway



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Connecting Communities



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Davy, 58, who lives in a house that backs on to the Knock River, says he never tires of watching people ride, run and walk along the Greenway. “It has totally transformed this area,” he says. “I can’t sing its praises enough. I’m constantly telling people you should see this or that.” Davy says the Greenway’s biggest impact is drawing people out of their homes and into the parks. “This morning I was up at 6.30am with the dog and got four miles under my belt,” he says. “I’ll take a walking group out and we’ll do another six miles. It’s powerful.”

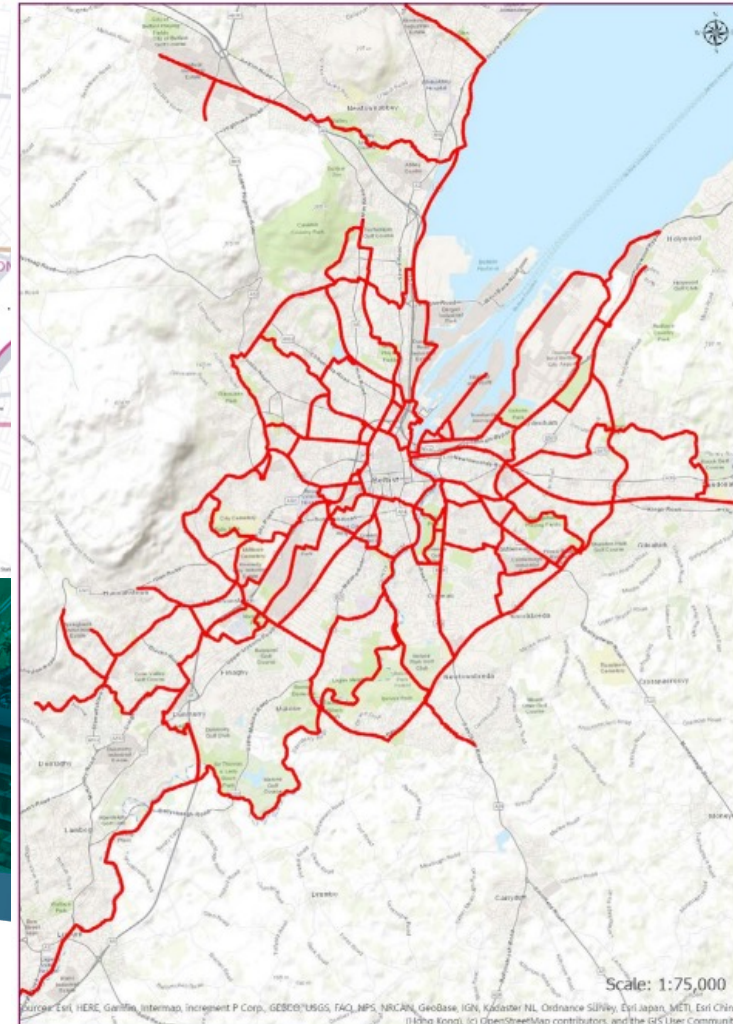
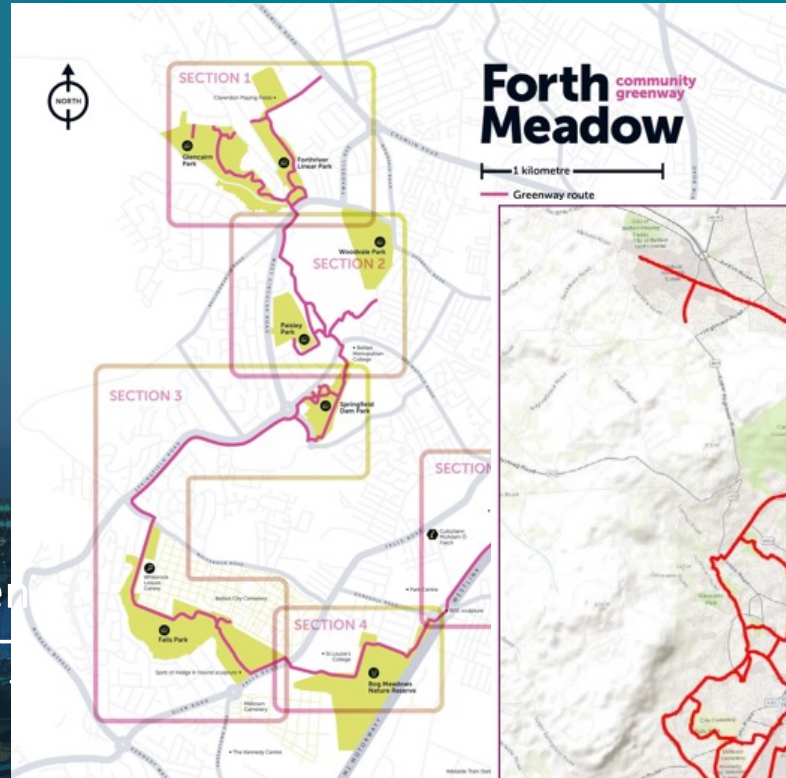


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Roll out across the city

- Shared Space Programming
- £5.1m EU Funded Project – PEACE IV Local Action Plan
- Set in context of Peace & Reconciliation focus on cross community - increase interaction between divided communities
- Connecting 12km existing open space in North / West Belfast – from Clarendon Playing Fields to the new Transport Hub – assigned to 5 key sections



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