



Belfast Local Development Plan

Technical Supplement 1
Population Profile and Growth
August 2018

www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP



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1.0 Introduction

Purpose of this Document

- 1.1 This technical document has been prepared to draw together the evidence base that *has been used to inform the preparation of the Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) 2035*. It is one of a suite of topic-based Technical Supplements that should be read alongside the LDP to understand the rationale and justification for the policies proposed within the draft Plan Strategy.
- 1.2 It builds upon the suite of 17 thematic Topic Papers prepared and published alongside the Preferred Options Paper (POP), which established the baseline position as at April 2017 and identified the key issues that need to be addressed by the LDP. This Population Profile and Growth Technical Supplement therefore updates this baseline position and sets out the evidence base that has informed each of the growth policies and the implications for the population profile from wider policies within the draft Plan Strategy.
- 1.3 Again, it forms part of a series of thematic reports to accompany the draft Plan Strategy. Whilst each of the Technical Supplements can be read separately, there are inevitably some important related matters and background evidence within other Technical Supplements also.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the evidence base collected to inform the LDP also forms the basis on which a series of additional assessments and appraisals, required as part of the plan preparation process, are undertaken, most notably the Sustainability Appraisal. By combining the evidence gathering stages for both the Sustainability Appraisal and Local Development Plan, the Council aims to streamline the documentation produced and avoid duplication. It will also help to ensure that sustainable development is embedded in the planning process and that the Sustainability Appraisal is one of the main drivers informing the preparation of the LDP.

Equality Impact Assessment

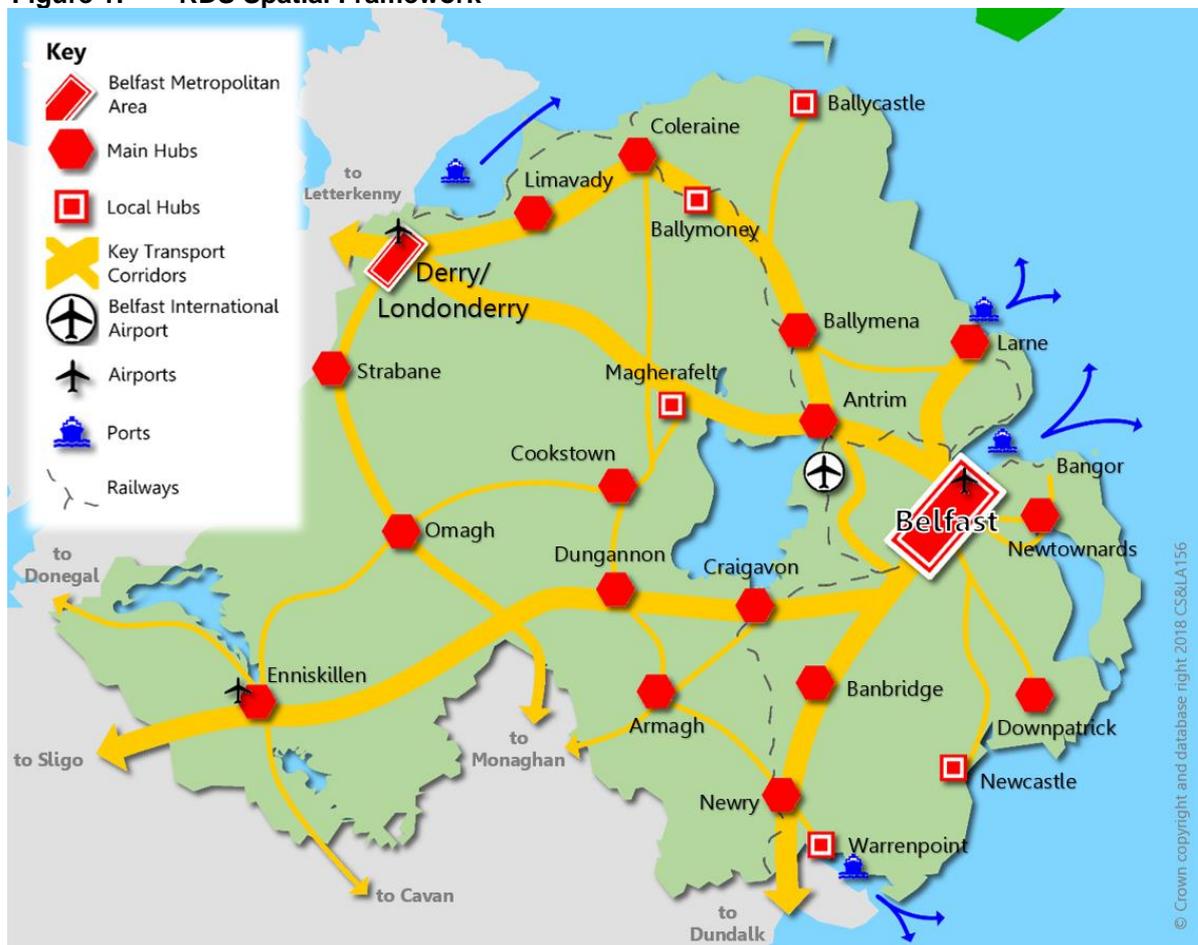
- 1.5 The purpose of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land to facilitate sustainable patterns of growth and development whilst protecting and, where appropriate enhancing the natural and man-made environment. To achieve this aim it is essential that the development needs of society are properly identified. The location and design of development is likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity and community relations between different groups based on religion, political opinion, age, gender, disability and people with and without dependants.
- 1.6 In order to plan for sufficient land to meet these needs, this paper briefly examines the existing population profile for the new Belfast City Council District. Whilst not all relevant to the development of specific Plan Strategy policies, the paper also explores the demographic baseline in relation to the groups identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This baseline information is included within Appendix A and is referenced within the full Equality Impact Assessment report.

2.0 Policy Context

Regional Policy

2.1 Northern Ireland has a two-tier approach to planning for growth, comprising the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) at a regional level and a Local Development Plan. The RDS introduced a framework for the future physical development of the Region based on urban hubs and clusters, key and link transport corridors and the main gateways of ports and airports. Protection and enhancement of the environment allied to the promotion of a strong spatially based economy, a healthy living environment and an inclusive society were an integral part of the drive to achieve balanced growth within the region. The Strategy has been reviewed and these themes have been built upon in the RDS 2035 (2012).

Figure 1: RDS Spatial Framework



2.2 Spatial Framework Guidance in the RDS, which is aimed at achieving sustainable development, promotes economic development opportunities one of its eight aims is to “Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver”. The RDS recognises that “successful regions have strong and vibrant cities at their core” and that “Belfast drives much of the economic growth and shares its wealth across the Region”.

Figure 2: NI Housing Growth Indicators 2012-2025

Local Government District	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Number of Households 2025	Second Homes 2025	Vacant Stock 2025	Net Conversions, Closures and Demolitions 2012 to 2025	New Stock Estimate 2025	Housing Stock 2012	Projected New Dwelling Requirement 2012 to 2025
Antrim & Newtownabbey	58,400	400	4,600	200	63,600	56,400	7,200
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	86,600	800	5,400	2,200	95,000	80,600	14,400
Belfast	147,900	2,200	15,300	2,300	167,700	154,000	13,700
Causeway Coast & Glens	57,300	3,700	5,600	2,100	68,700	62,000	6,700
Derry & Strabane	59,400	300	3,800	900	64,300	59,300	5,000
Fermanagh & Omagh	45,700	900	4,500	600	51,700	47,200	4,500
Lisburn & Castlereagh	60,400	500	3,500	700	65,000	55,400	9,600
Mid & East Antrim	57,800	100	4,100	800	62,800	57,400	5,400
Mid Ulster	55,200	100	3,800	1,500	60,600	51,100	9,500
Newry, Mourne & Down	70,900	900	5,100	500	77,400	66,500	10,900
North Down & Ards	68,800	1,000	4,900	1,100	75,800	68,700	7,100
Northern Ireland	768,300	10,800	60,400	13,000	852,500	758,500	94,000

Cells are rounded to the nearest 100. Calculations have been worked out using unrounded data. Therefore summing individual figures in the table add to total.

Source: Department for Infrastructure

- 2.3 The RDS does not attempt to specify population growth for each Council district but instead applies housing growth indicators (HGIs), which provide an estimate of future housing need in Northern Ireland (see Figure 2 above). The figures use household projections produced by NISRA as their basis. The figures are therefore based on current population/household formation trends assuming that these trends will continue into the future. They should therefore be used for guidance rather than seen as a cap on housing development in the area or a target to be achieved.
- 2.4 The HGIs were updated in April 2016 to reflect the new District boundaries following local government reform in 2015. These are calculated on the basis of 2012-based population projections and provide an indicator for each district between 2012-2025.

Local Policy Context

- 2.5 The current planning policy context at a local level is complex as a result of a successful legal challenge to the adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015. There are therefore five existing development plans that relate to parts of the Belfast district, alongside draft BMAP. All of these documents will be superseded at the adoption of the new Belfast LDP 2035.

Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001

- 2.6 The current development plan for the majority of the Belfast district is the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001, which was adopted in December 1989. The area covered by the plan included the whole of the administrative area of the former Belfast City Council area, together with the urban parts of the former district council areas of Castlereagh, Lisburn and Newtownabbey as well as Greenisland and Holywood.
- 2.7 The purpose of the BUAP was to establish physical development policies for this broad urban area up to 2001, clarifying the extent and location of development and providing a framework for public and private agencies in their investment decisions relating to land use. Although alterations were made in 1996, the BUAP is now largely out-of-date and was formally superseded by the BMAP in September 2014. However, BMAP was quashed as a result of a judgement in the court of appeal delivered on 18 May 2017, meaning that the BUAP 2001 remains the statutory development plan for most of the council's area.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

- 2.8 Although formally adopted in 2014, this process of final BMAP adoption was declared unlawful as a result of a judgement in the court of appeal delivered on 18 May 2017. This means the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001 and the other Development Plans provides the statutory plan context for the area. However, BUAP was published in 1990, nearly 30 years ago. The Belfast City Council Plan Area has undergone massive transformation since then, particularly in the city centre. The formal development plans which apply are dated and silent on many of the planning issues pertinent to needs of current planning decision making. In recognition of this unique circumstance and taking

account of the short term transitional period in advance of the adoption of the Local Policies Plan it is important to provide clarity in relation to the application of planning policy.

- 2.9 Draft BMAP, in its most recent, post-examination form remains a significant material consideration in future planning decisions. It was at the most advanced stage possible prior to formal adoption. Draft BMAP referred to throughout this document therefore refers to that version. However, in preparing this document the council has also had regard to the provisions of the draft BMAP which was published in 2004, the objections which were raised as part of the plan process and the Planning Appeals Commission Inquiry report.
- 2.10 The SPPS's transitional arrangements provide for continuity until such times as a new LDP for the whole of their council area is adopted to ensure continuity in planning policy for taking planning decisions.
- 2.11 BUAP contains less zonings or designations than draft BMAP and delineates a city centre boundary which has expanded significantly since then by virtue of the application of Draft BMAP. The council therefore intends to use a number of the existing designations contained in the draft BMAP, insofar as it relates to the Belfast City Council Plan Area, to form the basis of decision making until the LDP is adopted in its entirety. A list of the existing draft boundaries and designations is contained in appendix A.
- 2.12 In relation to population and growth, draft BMAP incorporates the BMA Settlement Strategy which sets out a number of high level aims, including the development of a regional core centred on Belfast, the focus of development in existing urban areas and the need to re-enforce the role of arterial routes in Belfast. Draft BMAP also includes settlement policies SETT1– SETT4 which deal respectively with, the settlement hierarchy, the settlement development limits, arterial routes and development outside the settlement limits with reference to the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland.

3.0 Recent Studies

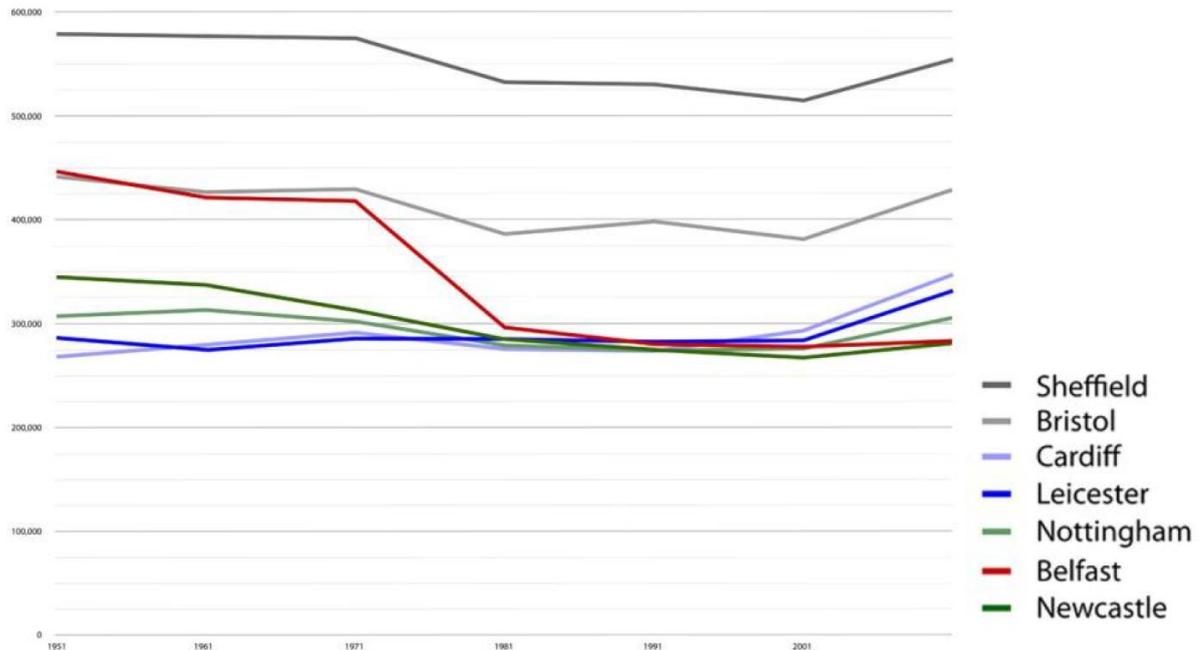
Belfast City Population and Housing Growth Study

- 3.1 The Council commissioned a 'Belfast City Population and Housing Growth Study' in March 2016¹ to consider the future population and housing growth of Belfast, and present a reasonable range of potential population and household growth scenarios.
- 3.2 This sought to provide a baseline review of factors that will have an impact on future population and household growth in Belfast and, therefore, its need for housing. It provides:
- (a) An overview of the Belfast housing market context;
 - (b) A summary of the demographic picture of Belfast;
 - (c) An overview of the economic context;
 - (d) A range of potential growth scenarios; and
 - (e) An evaluation of the various growth scenarios.
- 3.3 The first stage in this project involved the completion of a baseline review of factors that will have an impact on future population and household growth in Belfast and, therefore, its need for housing. This baseline research undertaken as part of the Study considered:
- The changing historic population profile of Belfast and factors which have shaped its development;
 - Future potential trend-based demographic projections of population growth;
 - The implications of these projected scenarios of population growth on the labour-force of the authority;
 - The evolution of the housing market within Belfast through analysis of a series of housing market signals; and
 - The implications of the comparative demand and need for housing on the formation of households historically in the authority and its implications over the plan period.
- 3.4 The study presented the outputs of analysis considering the establishment of a reasonable range of potential scenarios of population and household growth within the Local Government District (LGD) of Belfast. This suggested that population growth in accordance with official population projections would result in limited or no growth in the labour force, effectively constraining economic growth.
- 3.5 Comparisons with cities of a similar size across the UK showed that Belfast has gone from being one of the largest in the 1950s to one of the smallest now, despite a boundary change increasing the population by around 53,000 people in 2015. Most cities saw a decline in population during the 1960s as a result of new housing programmes, but Belfast's population continued to decline by over 33% from 1971 to 2011, whilst the population of Northern Ireland as a whole increased by over 18%. The population of

¹ **NB.** *The Belfast City Population and Housing Growth Study completed on behalf of the Council in October 2016 is based on the 2014 population estimates and 2014-based population projections, being the most recent data available at the time.*

Belfast city has seen modest increases in the last 10 years (about 1.3%), but continues to lag behind population growth in the rest of NI and, perhaps more crucially, other similar sized cities such as Cardiff and Sheffield who have reversed population decline.

Figure 3: Population Growth in Belfast and Other UK Cities 1951 – 2011



Source: Prof Frank Gaffikin, Queen's University Belfast

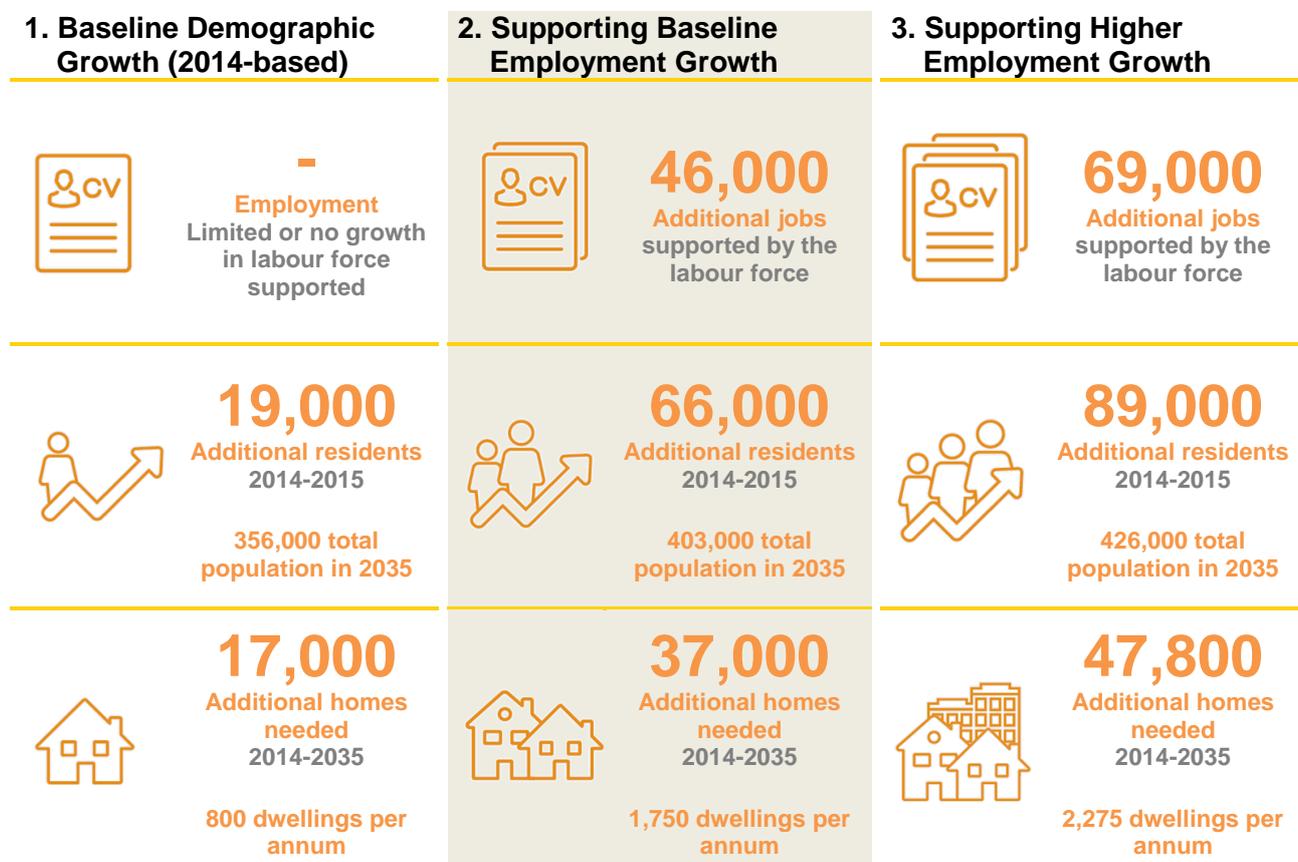
3.6 Three potential growth scenarios were developed as part of Study, namely:

- **Scenario 1 - Adjusted Demographic Growth** - a demographic trend-based scenario based on trends recorded over the past two years (2012 – 2014), which exceed the scale of growth implied by longer term historic trends but are considered to capture positive and improving demographic trends in the city, including a declining net outflow of residents and a continued growth in employment;
- **Scenario 2 - Supporting Baseline Employment Growth** - illustrating the scale of population and labour-force growth that may be necessary to support baseline levels of employment growth forecast by Ulster University (UU), based on prudent assumptions on labour-force behaviour; and
- **Scenario 3 - Supporting Higher Employment Growth** - as above, based on higher levels of employment growth forecast by UU.

3.7 The scenarios were subject to review and evaluation in order to arrive at a recommended position on a reasonable level of population and household growth planned for over the period from 2014 to 2035, having regard to the historic demographic, market and economic context of the city. Variant levels of population, housing and employment growth are

associated with each scenario, the key differences over the full plan period (2014 – 2035) summarised in the following table.

Figure 4: Future Growth Scenarios



Source: Belfast City Population and Housing Growth Study, 2016

Evaluating the Growth Scenarios

- 3.8 The Growth Study considered and tested each scenario in the context of their likely demographic and economic implications. This enabled a considered view to be reached on an appropriate and reasonable level of housing to be provided for through the emerging Belfast LDP. Scenario 2 was identified as the preferred option. While the relationship between employment and population is complex, providing for a higher level of housing growth would be more likely to grow the labour-force, enabling the attraction of new working-age residents and the retention of those existing residents who would otherwise move elsewhere in NI or overseas. It is considered reasonable and credible to plan for a growth in Belfast’s economy at least in line with the baseline scenario developed by UU (Scenario 2), enabling a continued growth in the city’s economy as in recent years.
- 3.9 A reasonable and credible level of population and household growth sits somewhere between Scenario 1 and Scenario 2, with the evidence implying that this should be nearer to Scenario 2. The provision of between 1,600 – 1,800 dwellings per annum over the plan period appears reasonable in light of these considerations and the latest information available.

- 3.10 The implications of planning for a level of growth within this range are summarised in Figure 4 above, based on the modelling underpinning Scenario 2 (1,750dpa) which sits in the middle of the identified range. A full copy of the Study is published alongside this technical supplement as part of the consultation on the Draft Plan Strategy.

Size and Type of Housing Needed, Addendum to the Belfast City Housing Growth Options Report, December 2017

- 3.11 Following consultation on the POP, where confirmation of support for the preferred option was attained, the council commissioned additional work to provide detail on the size and type of housing likely to be required under the scenario recommended in the growth study. Some of its key findings included:
- Around one third of additional households forming in Belfast are expected to contain a single resident, with a similar proportion containing two adults without children;
 - The majority (89%) of additional households are not expected to contain children, although modelling indicates that around one in four (23%) households will contain at least one child;
 - Industry research recognises the preference for family sized housing with three or four bedrooms, with families typically averse to smaller flats due to space limitations. Meeting family need in Belfast will require a balanced profile of housing development.
 - Around one in five Belfast households (18%) was occupied solely by older residents at 2011 Census. Older persons in Belfast will increase by more than half over the plan period, which will generate growth in the number of older resident households and specialist accommodation such as care homes.

4.0 Draft Plan Strategy Policy Approaches

A Settlement Strategy

4.1 Fundamental to the delivery of the LDP and its ambitious growth aspirations is the delivery of a robust spatial development strategy that will help to manage the shape and extent of the Plan area settlements. The Council has taken account of the following key factors in the development of an appropriate settlement hierarchy:

- The role and function of settlements the plan area;
- Development needs and infrastructural provisions;
- Sustainable patterns of development in accordance with the SPPS sequential approach; and
- Protecting the quality of the natural, built and historic environment

4.2 To achieve the RDS objectives of promoting population growth and economic development in the main hubs and sustaining communities living in smaller settlements, a strategy for accommodating growth can be defined based on the following settlement hierarchy:

- **Principal City** – *Belfast City acts as the main service centre. It is therefore intended to focus major population and economic growth in the principal city to maximise the benefits from efficient use of existing facilities, infrastructure and its strategic location on the transport corridors. It is anticipated that the attraction of the city centre will be reinforced by retail, office and mixed use development. Belfast City will accommodate economic development through expansion and creation of industrial estates and modern enterprise and business centres. It will accommodate new residential development both within the existing urban fabric and through the expansion and creation of new neighbourhoods.*

Figure 5: Settlement Hierarchy Classification

Infrastructure	Principal City	Regional Town	Smaller Towns	Villages
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Education • Special Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library • Post Primary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery • Primary School
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Hospital • A&E • Maternity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A&E Hospital • Children’s Home • Minor Injuries • Outpatients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacy • Health Centres • Social Services • Day Care Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor • Ambulance • Outreach Services
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museums/Galleries • Conference/Concert Arena 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Centre (pool) • Visitor Centre • Advice Centres • Arts & Culture Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centre • Sports Facility • Welfare Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Hall • Play Areas
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Generation • AONB/ASSI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water & Sewage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling • Renewables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to clean water

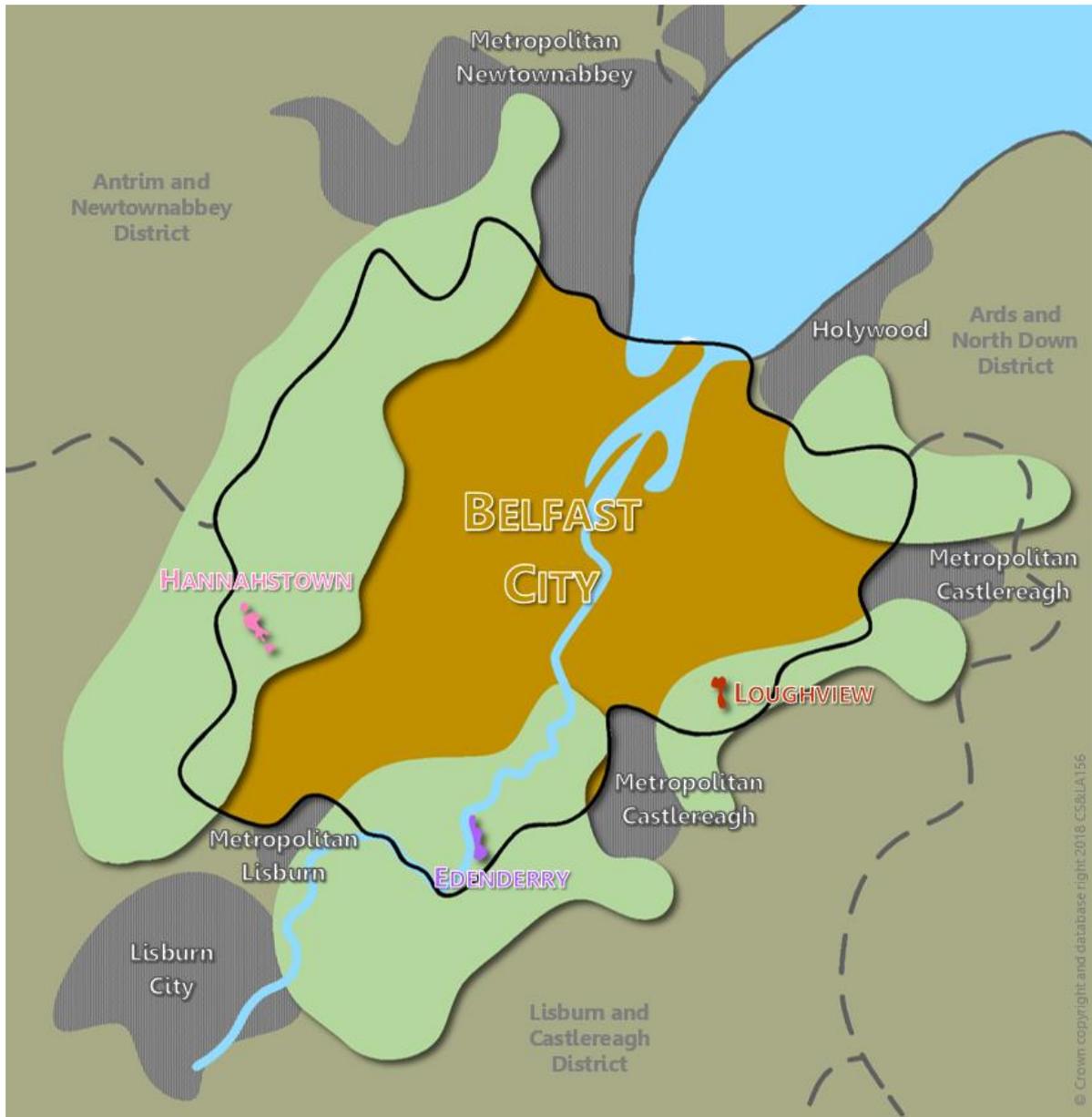
Infrastructure	Principal City	Regional Town	Smaller Towns	Villages
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment Plants • Waste-landfill • Waste-recycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water & Sewers Supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewage disposal
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Stores • Specialist Shops • Arts & Cultural • Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping Centres • Retail • Warehousing • Range of Restaurants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supermarket • Restaurants • Mix of Retail Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop • Pub • Post Office • Petrol Station
Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police HQ • High Court • Prison • Forensic Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police District • County Court • Probation Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Watch
Productive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Signature Projects • Science Centre • Major Industrial parks • Strategic Development Zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Park • Tourism Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Centre • Information Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop/ Business Unit
Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ports & Airports • Key Transport Nodes • Energy Generation Interconnector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Roads • Bus/Rail • Park & Ride • Cycle Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Corridors/ Trunk Roads • Bus/Rail to larger centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Roads • Broadband • Urban Street • Lighting • Local Bus • Cycle

Source: Extracted from RDS 2035

- **Small settlements** – These act as a focal point for the rural community, have a number of local community facilities and services, and take the form of a rural cluster or cross roads development where consolidation of the built form can provide opportunity for individual dwellings and/or small groups of houses and small rural businesses.

- 4.3 In defining where each settlement sits in the hierarchy, account has been taken of a wide range of factors, including the RDS spatial framework, the population of individual settlements and an assessment of their role or function. The settlement hierarchy is a basic continuation of what was contained in draft BMAP. As a point of note, the boundary of Edenderry was discussed during the BMAP process, specifically regarding the inclusion or otherwise of a former factory site, which has since seen the completion of 30 housing units. The boundary of Edenderry remains unchanged.
- 4.4 Under the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), Council's will be expected to bring forward a strategy for development in the countryside. This should reflect the aim, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS tailored to the specific circumstances of the plan area. This is addressed within the Development in the Countryside section of the draft Plan Strategy (section 10.5).

Figure 6: Settlement Hierarchy for New Belfast District

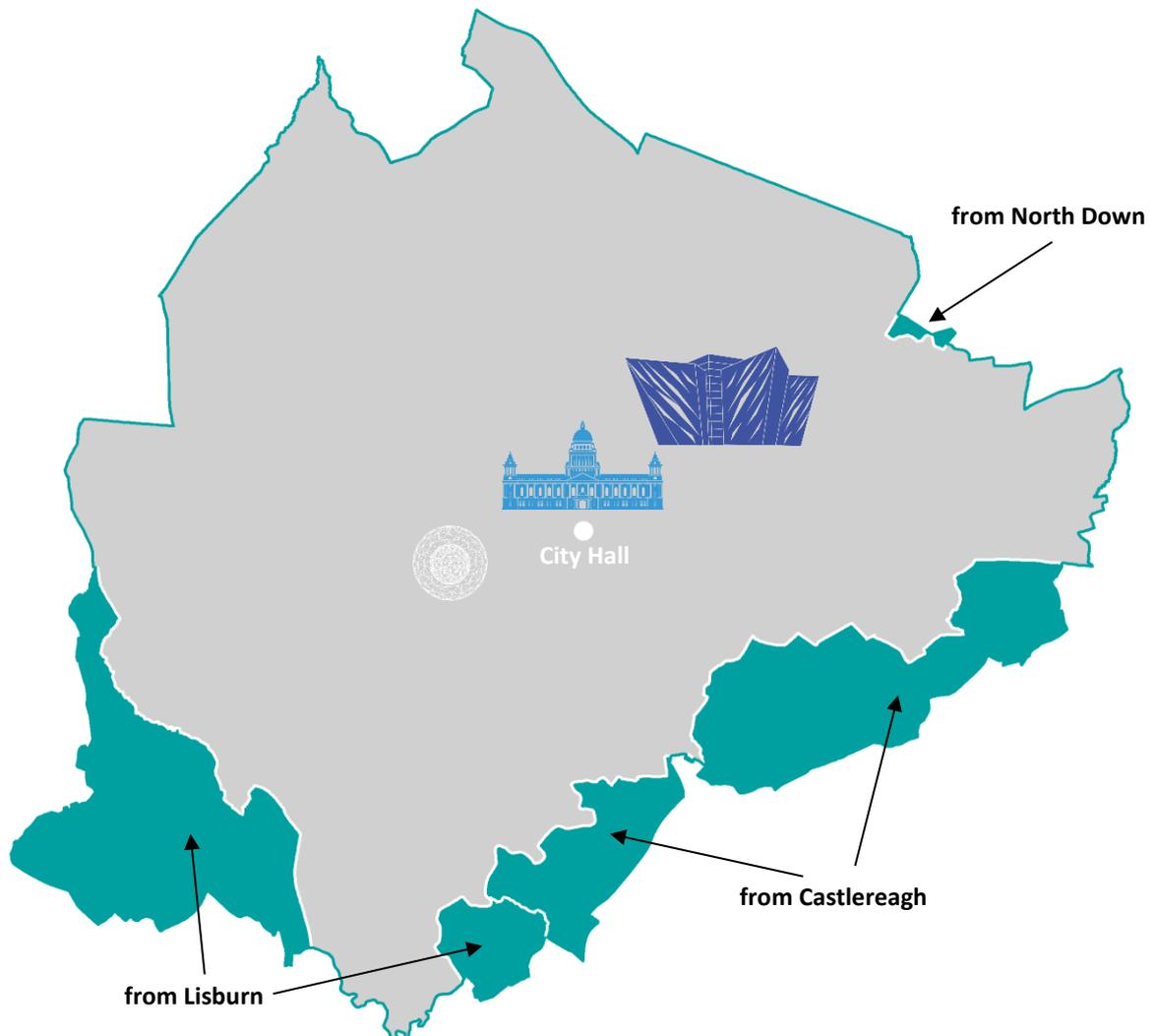


Population Change

- 4.5 In April 2015, the Belfast City Council Area boundary expanded to incorporate areas that were formally parts of Lisburn City Council, Castlereagh Borough Council and North Down Borough Council (see below figure 1). The new areas include the localities of Gilnahirk, Tullycarnet, Braniel, Castlereagh, Merok, Cregagh, Wynchurch, Glencreagh (formerly in Castlereagh Borough Council), Belvoir, Collin Glen, Poleglass, Lagmore, Twinbrook, Kilwee and Dunmurry, (formerly in Lisburn Council Area) and a small section from North Down Council.

- 4.6 In 2017, the new Belfast City Council Area had an estimated population of 340,220. By mid-2026, the population is estimated to have risen to 346,200, representing 17.8% of the Northern Ireland Population² The population increased in 2015 as the city boundary expanded to take in around 53,000 additional residents from areas that were formally parts of Lisburn City Council, Castlereagh Borough Council and North Down Borough Council. Belfast City Council Area is the largest of the 11 new Local Government Districts and has over 130,000 inhabitants more than the next largest new council area, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon.

Figure 7: Belfast District



- 4.7 Population does not remain static, and while the Census 2011 provides us with a wealth of data regarding the profile of the District at that time, it cannot be used in isolation to determine the future needs of the area. It is therefore prudent to consider both past growth rates and projections for the future.

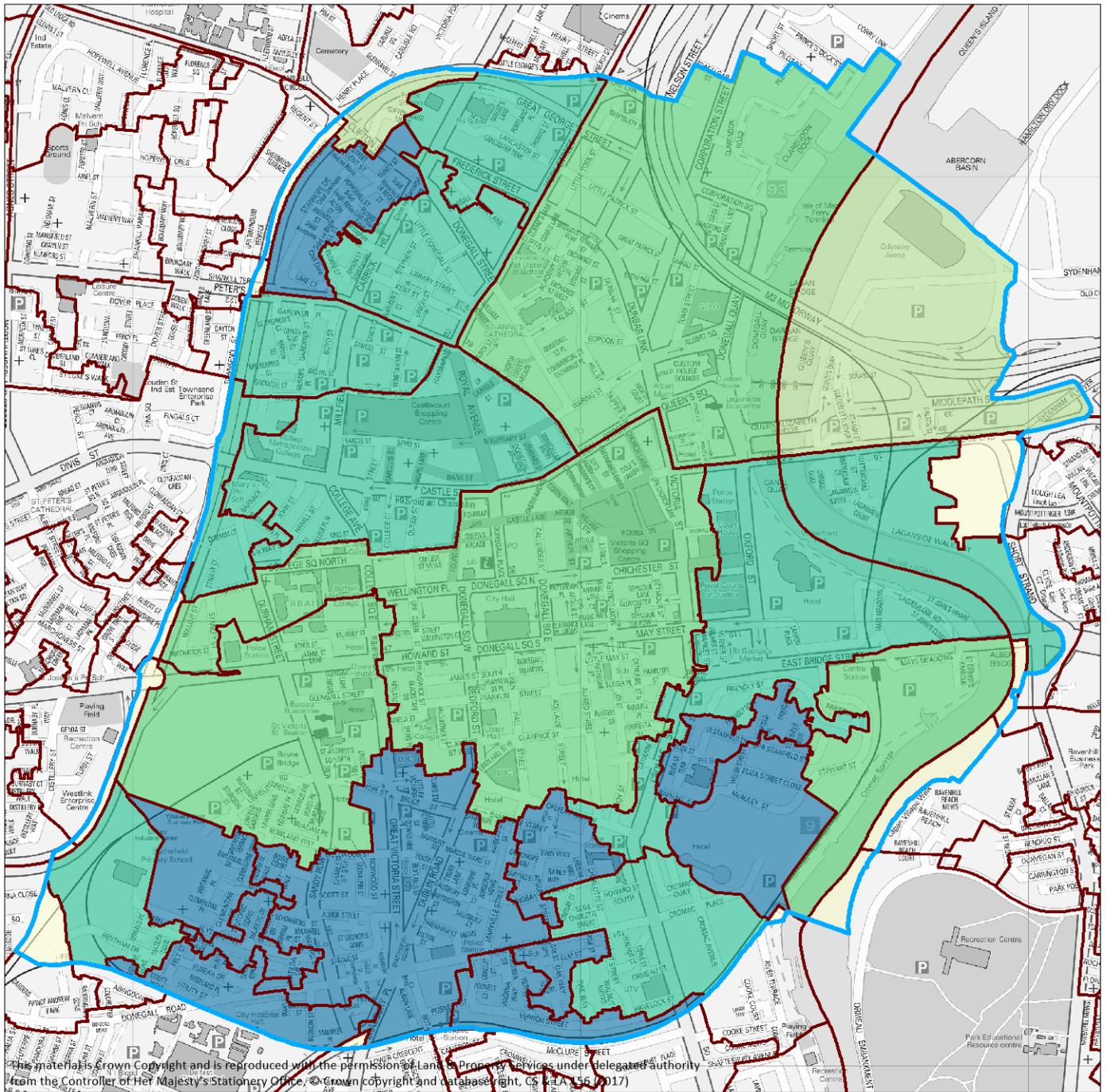
² NISRA: 2015 - <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/population/dataviz/finalIN.html>

- 4.8 In April 2018, NISRA published the key findings from the 2016-based national population projections, which replaced the previous 2014-based projections. National population projections provide an estimate of the future size and age structure of the population of Northern Ireland. Population projections are widely used in policy development in areas such as housing, healthcare and education. Population projections are also used as the base for other national statistics releases, such as household projections. However, it is important to note that these projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour.
- 4.9 The HGI's were calculated on the basis of the now superseded 2012-based dataset, (published in November 2013). That dataset is likely to have underestimated housing growth when compared to the 2014-based population projections. In addition, the HGIs provide an indication of housing growth to 2025, whereas the LDP will require housing need to be modelled over a longer period to align with the emerging plan period of 2020 – 2035. With these changes in mind, the Council commissioned a Population and Housing Growth Study, which was completed in October 2016. Details of this study are set out in sections 3.1 – 3.10.
- 4.10 There have been recent changes in trends as Belfast has seen sustained population growth since 2006, reversing the prolonged decline in population recorded over the last five decades. However, this period has continued to be characterised by a net outflow of people to other parts of NI, which though reducing in scale since 2008, has traditionally resulted in an outflow of younger working age residents. This was supplemented by a strong net inflow of migrants from Great Britain and internationally between 2006 and 2009, although migration – both internal and international – has been largely balanced over the past few years.
- 4.11 The official population projections continue to suggest slow growth in Belfast's population (only 3.9% to 2041). However, this will need to be accelerated if Belfast and Northern Ireland as a whole are to remain competitive. Allowing existing trends to continue in terms of slow population growth would not support the level of economic growth required to allow Belfast to drive the Region's economy without unsustainable levels of commuting into the City to service the employment opportunities created. The preferred growth option contained within the LDP should instead seek to secure an ambitious level of inclusive growth to enable the City to compete with similar sized cities elsewhere in the UK in terms of attracting investment, creating jobs and driving the regional economy.

City Centre Residential Population

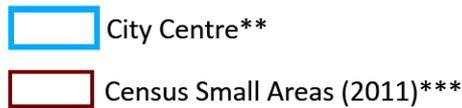
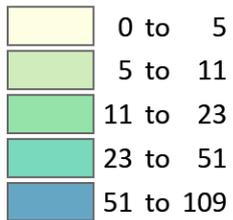
- 4.12 In comparing the growth aspirations of Belfast to other cities of a similar size elsewhere in the UK, the Housing Growth Options Report recognises that growth in the residential population of the 'urban core' or 'city centres' have played in population growth elsewhere. For example, the Newcastle Gateshead urban core is estimated to house around 23,000 people in 2015, whilst Manchester's city centre has seen the population grow from around

Figure 8: Belfast City Centre Population Density, Census Small Areas, 2016



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Small Area population per hectare*



Scale: 1:13,500



(Total estimated City Centre population = 9,334)

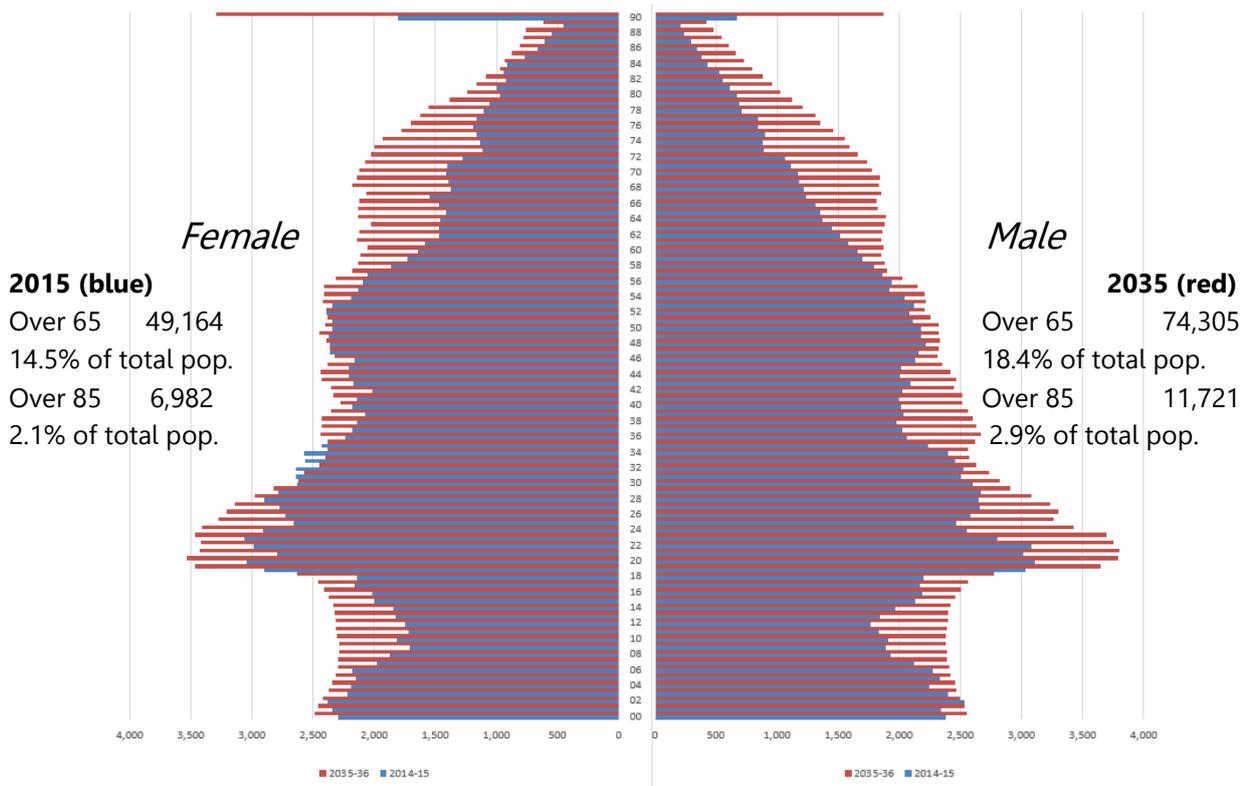
Sources: * NISRA Mid-year Population Estimates for Small Areas (Nov. 2017)
 ** Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
 *** NISRA 2011 Census Geography

90 in 1990 to 28,500 in 2015. Similarly, Liverpool had an estimated 33,500 people living in its city centre in 2015, which represented a ten-fold increase in the 15 years from 2001.

- 4.13 By comparison, whilst there are no precise statistics available for Belfast's city centre, analysis of small area 2016 mid-year population estimates and existing housing stock from NI Land and Property Services (LPS), suggest the population of Belfast's city centre is in the region of 9,300 (see map above). Even taking into account the total population of such comparator cities, this is considerably lower than the residential population living in city centres elsewhere in the UK and highlights the opportunity for significant growth in housing within the city centre.
- 4.14 This is particularly important in the Belfast context given the availability of a significant amount of land to accommodate housing within Belfast's city centre (see Housing Technical Supplement for more details). Comparisons to similar cities elsewhere suggest there is demand for city centre living and an expectation that Belfast's city centre population could double over the 15 year plan period, which could lead to around 14% of the proposed 66,000 new residents being housed in the city centre.

Ageing Population

- 4.15 An ageing population will continue over the plan period and beyond. The latest stats from NISRA outline that the population aged 65 and over in Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 25% between mid-2016 and mid-2026. Of note, NISRA also estimate that the proportion of the population aged 65 and over is projected to overtake that of children by 2028 (20.1% and 19.6% respectively). By this time, this will be the case in six of the 11 LGD's with the remaining five falling into this category by 2035 (end of plan period).
- 4.16 Figure 9 overleaf shows the change in population from 2015 to 2035, based on the population change modelled as a result of the preferred growth option (policies SP1 and HOU1 refer). The figures indicate a 51% growth in over 65's and 68% growth in over 85's.
- 4.17 The above evidence clearly reinforces the need to address the housing needs of older persons in the Plan. As the older population grows, so does the demand for facilities to cater for their needs. Many older people have to live on reduced incomes, have disabilities and reduced mobility. This influences not only the number of new houses required but also the design (e.g. suitability for disabled residents); the need for more retirement homes, nursing and care homes and the need for housing support services. Ease of access to community facilities, general recreation and shops will also be important.
- 4.18 An increase in pension age will increase the number of people of working age, resulting in the need for more jobs, particularly for women. The Plan should provide sufficient employment land to meet the expected employment needs.

Figure 9: Ageing population

Spatial Deprivation

- 4.19 Planning is required to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations. An important means to promoting good community relations and equal opportunity is to tackle social deprivation and inequalities in the labour market and public health.
- 4.20 Spatial Deprivation studies have been undertaken in Belfast for almost four decades and all have shown certain places immersed in permanent deprivation. Indeed, in all regional deprivation research between 1994 and 2010 (1994, 2001, 2005 & 2010), around 40% of Belfast's wards (about 35% of its population) have been consistently in Northern Ireland's most deprived decile, even though the city contains only 17% of the regional population. Moreover, the 2014 expansion of the Belfast Council Area has increased the proportion of spatial deprivation as the new boundary now encompasses some of the region's most deprived Super Output Areas that were previously in Lisburn Borough Council (Op Cit).
- 4.21 As of April 2014, 113,960 people in Belfast claimed at least one of the main benefits. This is equal to 42.3% of the residents aged 16 years and over. A higher proportion of people aged 16 years and over living in Belfast claimed at least one benefit when compared to the Northern Ireland average of 39.3%. Belfast was the Local Government District with the second highest proportion of people aged 16 years and over claiming at least one benefit. The highest proportions of benefits claimants are located in wards in North, West and Inner East Belfast. This is to be contrasted with low levels of claimants in more suburban areas in the south and east of the city.

- 4.22 The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010 identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Northern Ireland. The NIMDM 2010 is constructed from 52 different indicators relating to seven types or ‘domains’ of deprivation: Income, Employment, Health, Education, Proximity to Services, Living Environment and Crime & Disorder.
- 4.23 Within the context of the rankings for the 11 new LGDs in Northern Ireland, Belfast is the worst performer as it contains the areas with the highest concentrations of multiple deprivation – refer to figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Multiple Deprivation Ranking (NISRA 2017)

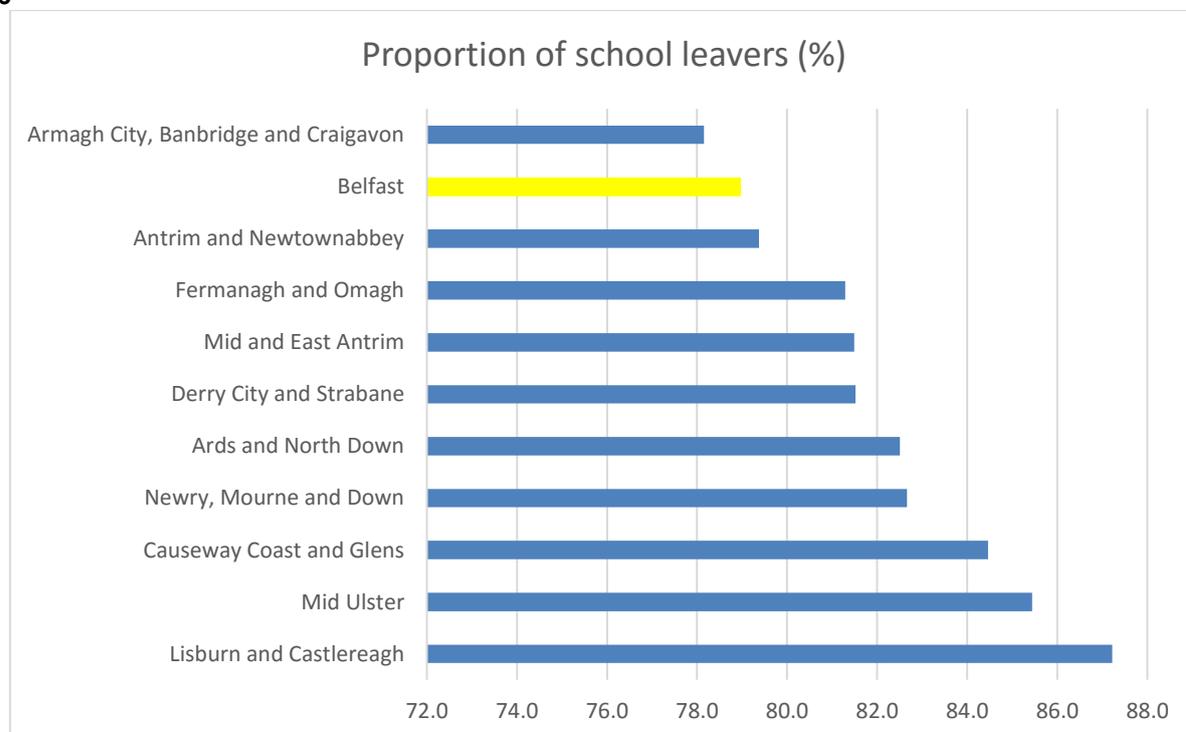
LGD	SOA total	Number within 100 most deprived SOA's	% SOA's within 100 most deprived	Rank
Belfast	174	50	29%	1
Derry City and Strabane	75	20	27%	2
Newry, Mourne and Down	84	8	10%	3
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	87	8	9%	4
Fermanagh and Omagh	49	3	6%	5
Mid and East Antrim	65	3	5%	6
Causeway Coast and Glens	72	3	4%	7
Ards and North Down	86	3	3%	8
Mid Ulster	59	1	2%	9
Antrim and Newtownabbey	72	1	1%	10
Lisburn and Castlereagh	67	0	0%	11

- 4.24 At Super Output Area level, the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017 illustrates the disparities within the Belfast Council Area – refer figure 1 overleaf. Belfast contains 5 of the 10 most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland with significant areas of multiple deprivation, particularly in West, North and inner Belfast. It also contains some of the least deprived SOAs, which are located in the South and East of the city (see also Appendix B and C).

measure. This measure aims to identify small areas experiencing deprivation in terms of the quality of housing, access to suitable housing, and the outdoor physical environment. The quality of housing measure is based upon the Decent Homes Standard, which considers state of repair, thermal comfort and how modern the facilities are. This measure may explain why areas of older housing, which are less modern and energy efficient, appear to be more deprived.

4.27 Research by Queen’s University Belfast on the changing demographic patterns shown in the 2011 Census states that “... *the spatial distribution of deprivation has not experienced major changes over the last decade. The same areas that were identified as being socially deprived in 1991 usually remained in roughly the same relative position by 2011, despite a succession of area-based policies by government through the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s that aspired to address their problems... These wards are also the most segregated; their populations have among the lowest life expectancy; have high morbidity characteristics; low levels of labour market participation and poor educational attainment. Especially in a deprived area like inner North Belfast, spatial segregation, in the form of a patchwork of small geographies dominated by either one of the main communities, is haemorrhaging the opportunities for prosperity. Yet, when looking at the GDP per head, Belfast council is one of the best performing sub-regions within the UK – between 6th and 7th of all UK NUTS III areas. That makes Belfast one of the urban powerhouses of the UK economy*”.

Figure 12: Proportion of School Leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs at Grades A* - C or equivalent, 2015/16



Source: Department of Education, Statistics and Research Branch

4.28 Education also has an important role to play in promoting economic well-being, improving social mobility and tackling multiple deprivation. Better education improves access to

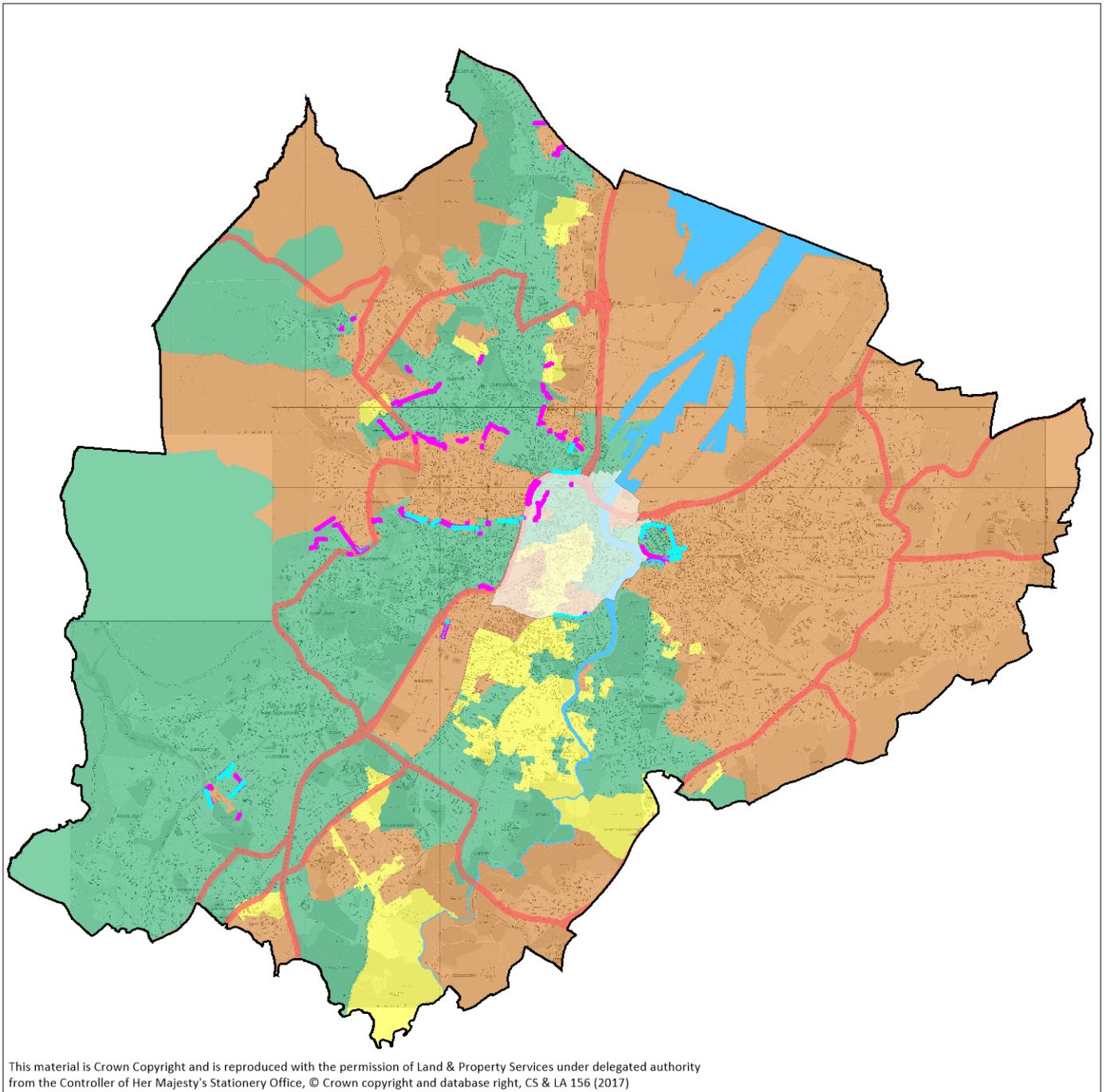
employment opportunities. It improves the quality of people's lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Education raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. In addition, it plays a very crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution.

- 4.29 Belfast has the second lowest proportion of school leavers achieving at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent when compared to other Local Government Districts (refer figure 12 above). In 2011/2012, there were 11,695 students from Belfast enrolled in higher education. This is equal to 4.3% of all residents aged 16 years and over being enrolled in higher education. A lower proportion of Belfast residents (aged 16 years and over) were enrolled in higher education in 2011/2012 when compared to the Northern Ireland average of 4.5%.

Community Cohesion

- 4.30 Belfast remains subject to segregation, with many citizens continuing to live segregated lives, those in working class communities experiencing higher levels of segregation. Figure 13 overleaf presents the spatial distribution of population by religious background (small area geography). It also shows the existing peace infrastructure. The Council recognise that the division and disconnection within the city can increase social exclusion and limit the potential for regeneration and transformation. Development which addresses socio-economic and spatial imbalances and which meets local needs whilst also having city wide benefit should be facilitated. Planning and regeneration processes offer the potential to reconnect the city and encourage the development of a shared urban environment to which everyone has access. In this context, the LDP could identify development land of strategic importance in inner-city areas that could contribute to enhancing spatial connectivity and community cohesion.
- 4.31 Encouraging development that contributes to an enhancement of spatial connectivity and community cohesion is important in reconnecting the city physically and socially. There are a range of measures across a number of LDP policy areas that can contribute to a more coherent urban form and improved community relations, such as:
- Establishing mixed-use developments and integrated, mixed-tenure housing schemes;
 - Delivering strong neighbourhood centres;
 - Facilitating temporary uses in interface locations;
 - Ensuring active street frontages; and
 - Providing buildings that house public services in neutral and accessible locations.
- 4.32 A joined up approach to issues of spatial connectivity and community cohesion, together with early consultation with communities likely to be affected by proposed developments, is important in contributing to reconnection of the city and encouraging good relations. This is of particular importance in relation to the Executive's goal for the removal of all interface barriers by 2023 and the need for the plan to consider the potential for utilisation of all land within the City. Developments within or near interfaces have potential to contribute to this long-term objective in addition to the local and city regeneration objectives.

Figure 13: Predominant religious background and peace infrastructure



Religious Background (2011 Census Small Areas)

- Predominantly Protestant or other Christian
- Predominantly Catholic
- Mixed Religious Background

DoJ and NIHE Peace Infrastructure

- Peace Barriers
- Interfaces

Belfast Interface Project (2017)

- Barriers

Road Infrastructure

Belfast City Centre (Shared Space)

River Lagan and Lough

Scale: 1: 90,000



Housing Mix

- 4.33 Household size is expected to decrease with more single and mature single formations, particularly with an ageing population. This will influence the number, type and size of houses needed. This is reflected within the findings of the Population and Housing Growth Study and its subsequent Addendum on Size and Type of Housing Needed (see Section 3.0). Housing mix is considered in more detail in the Housing Technical Supplement.

Health and Well-being

- 4.34 The SPSS sets out improving health and well-being as one of the core planning principles of the two-tier planning system. Overall, the health of the area is improving with people living longer. However, there are inequalities in health across the area with long-term disability a particularly pronounced problem in areas most affected by multiple deprivation. There is also evidence of overarching health and well-being policies being utilised elsewhere in the UK to ensure healthy and active lifestyles are considered and promoted in all new developments. This will be particularly important where new developments are based within or adjacent to areas with known health inequalities.
- 4.35 Draft strategic policy SP3 outlines that the Council will look to maximise opportunities to improve health and well-being and will not permit development where it will result in significant harm to life, human health or well-being. It is a strategic policy in the Draft Plan Strategy – delivery of the above objectives should deliver significant community health benefits.

Community Infrastructure

- 4.36 Belfast has significant issues in terms of its socio-demography with wards of high deprivation levels and health inequalities. The LDP will be a mechanism through which healthy social and physical environments can be encouraged through identifying sites of leisure, health and social care facilities to serve cross-boundary populations and support Belfast as a 'Healthy City'.
- 4.37 The Draft Plan Strategy sets out a specific policy on Community Infrastructure (CI1). The key elements of this focus on local need, appropriate and accessible locations, protecting residential amenities and the potential use of planning agreements. Ensuring an adequate supply and range of community infrastructure is of vital importance to the general health and well-being of local communities – this is outlined in more detail below.

Glossary

Relative poverty:

An individual is considered to be in relative poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalent income below 60% of UK median income in the year in question. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the population as a whole. In 2013-14, the relative poverty threshold for a couple with no children was an income of £272 per week (BHC) from all sources. For a couple with children the threshold would be higher and for a single person (without children) the threshold would be lower.

Absolute poverty:

An individual is considered to be in absolute poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalent income below 60% of the (inflation adjusted) median income in 2010-11. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms. In 2013-14 the absolute poverty threshold for a couple with no children was an income of £280 per week (BHC).

Appendix A: Demographic Profile and Equality Groups

- 5.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a statutory duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;
 - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 5.2 In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, public authorities are required to have regard to the need to promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 5.3 The principle of promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people is a key objective behind the plan and will be a central theme of the sustainability assessment. In land use planning terms, this means ensuring everyone benefits from quality housing, employment, and access to public services and recreation facilities. These themes will be addressed in more detail in later papers. However, this paper begins the process of identifying issues and needs facing different groups within the area over and above the general population, so that these can be considered at every stage of the plan making process. Among the aims of the plan is to help build a cohesive society – it must also be recognised that this can only be achieved by “sharing space” and “accessing opportunities”.

(A) Age Structure

- 5.4 The age structure of a population has obvious implications for planning. A growing young population will impact on the demand for and provision of childcare facilities, nursery, primary and secondary schools. A growing working age population would necessitate that planning provides adequate housing especially for those entering the housing market and employment opportunities. For a growing elderly population, adequate services and housing to meet their specific needs must also be considered.

Figure 14: Age Structure of Population 2016

District	All persons	Persons 0-14 years	Persons 15-29 years	Persons 30-44 years	Persons 45-59 years	Persons 60-74 years	Persons 75+ years
Northern Ireland	1,862,137	365,605 (19.6%)	361,163 (19.4%)	363,545 (19.5%)	377,149 (20.3%)	262,979 (14.1%)	131,696 (7.07%)
Belfast LGD 2016	339,579	63,231 (18.6%)	78,074 (23.0%)	68,750 (20.2%)	64,028 (18.9%)	41,598 (12.2%)	23,898 (7.04%)

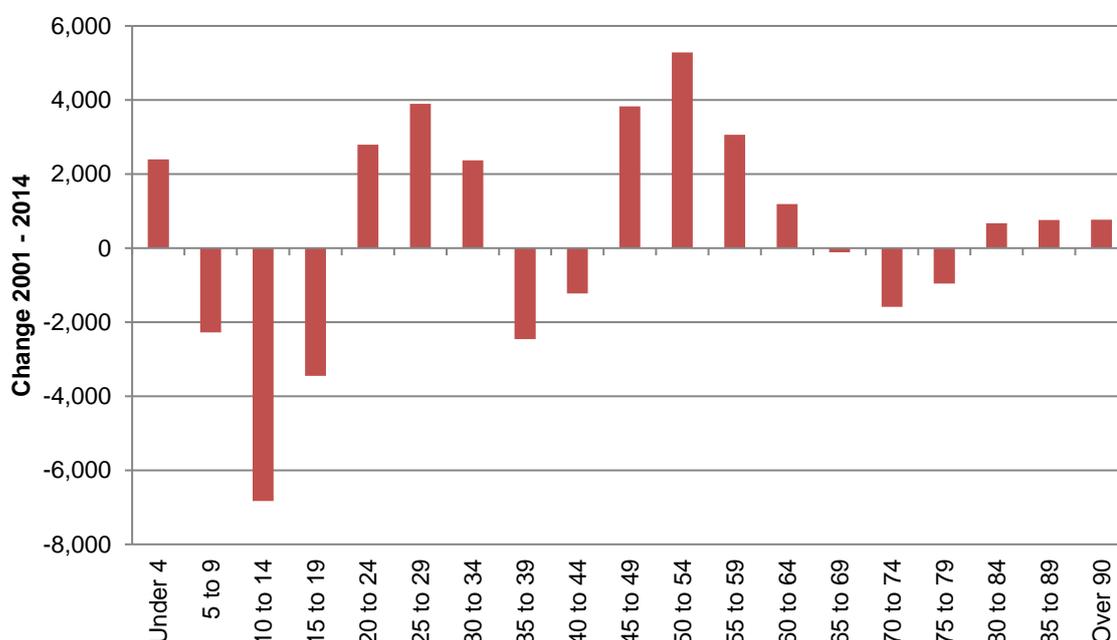
Source: NISRA Population Estimates Broad Age Bands 2016 (Administrative Geographies)

- 5.5 On Census day 2011, the median age of those living in Belfast in 2011 was 35 years, which was lower than the Northern Ireland average (37 years) (BCC City Profile 2015). NISRA estimate that in 2025, 18.7% of the Belfast population will be children aged 0-14 years,

which will be just lower than the Northern Ireland average of 18.9%. In 2016, those over 60 made up 19.2% of the Belfast population, again lower than the Northern Ireland average of 21.2%.

- 5.6 Over the decade 2014-2024³ the population of Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 5.3 per cent (i.e. 98,217 people), reaching 1,938,715 people in 2024. While the overall population of Belfast increased between 2001 and 2014, several age groups declined in size during this period – refer figure 15 below. This includes younger people aged 5 to 19, residents aged 35 to 44 and those aged 65 to 79 years old. The strongest growth occurred in those aged 50 to 54 over this period, but comparatively strong growth was also seen in the age groups around this cohort (45 to 64) and the younger working age population (20 to 34).

Figure 15: Change in the Age Profile of Belfast 2001 – 2014



Source: NISRA, Turley 2016¹

- 5.7 Population growth is expected for each of the 11 new local government districts over the decade, ranging from 1.4 per cent (Derry and Strabane) to 10.4 per cent (Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon). Based on these projections, Belfast’s growth of 3.3 per cent is the fifth highest out of the 11 Local Government Districts.
- 5.8 In Belfast, the number of people of working age (as defined in April 2010, consists of the male population aged 16-64 and the female population aged 16-59) is projected to increase marginally from 94,357 people in 2014 to a projected 96,453 people in 2024 (2.2% increase). In contrast the number of people of pensionable age (pensioners as defined in

³ **NB.** The Belfast City Population and Housing Growth Study completed on behalf of the Council in October 2016 is based on the 2014 population estimates and 2014-based population projections, being the most recent data available at the time.

April 2010 (males aged 65 and over and females aged 60 and over) is projected to increase from 33,779 in 2010 to 36,647 in 2025, an increase of 8.4%.

- 5.9 Closer examination of the Super Output Areas (SOAs) within the new council area indicates that some have slightly older populations than the district average and some have much younger populations. A higher proportion of children under 16 years can be found in areas such as Whiterock 1, Cliftonville 1, Legoniel 1, Ardoyne 3, Ballymacarrett 2, Falls 2 and Shankill 1, which all have children as over a quarter of their populations, whilst a significant proportion of the SOAs around Queen's University in Stranmillis and Botanic have under 10% of their populations as children. In contrast, the proportion of the population aged 65 and over is significantly higher than district level in areas including Upper Malone 1, Cherry Valley 1, Crumlin 1, Stormont 1, Fortwilliam 1 and Andersonstown 1 & 2, which are all over a quarter over 65. These areas are contrastable with the SOAs near Queen's University with SOAs at Botanic (1-5), Windsor (2, 3 & 4) and Stranmillis (2 & 3) all having less than 7% over 65s.
- 5.10 These variations between areas will require more targeted responses with regard to the type of services needed. The growing number of elderly people is a key factor in declining average household size. This has been taken into account by DRD when formulating the Regional Development Strategy 2035 Housing Growth Indicators. A Local Development Plan has a role in providing development land to meet these indicators (which will be discussed in the housing paper) and facilitate housing units to meet the needs of the elderly, particularly nursing homes, sheltered accommodation and smaller sized units. It also has a role in ensuring such units are accessible. The Development Plan housing zonings need to ensure that all housing, including for the elderly, is sited where it is accessible to local services and transportation. These services include health and other community facilities together with recreation and shops. A rising elderly population will also increase demand for health and community services, the development of which will also need to be accommodated.
- 5.11 In 2011, around one fifth of the population was under 16. Children are also a vulnerable group. In 2014/2015, approximately 109,500 children (25%) in Northern Ireland were in relative poverty before housing costs. This is two percentage points higher than 2013/2014 and 5 percentage points higher than 2012/2013. Young people can be particularly vulnerable to the vehicular traffic; therefore, safe and sustainable access to community and recreation facilities, including play parks and sports grounds, must remain high on the agenda.

(B) Gender and Life Expectancy

- 5.12 The usually resident population in Northern Ireland and the Belfast LGD is broadly split on a 50/50 basis between men and women with slightly more females in 2016 in both, as shown in figure 16 overleaf.

Figure 16: Gender balance of Belfast Population - 2016

Sex	Belfast LGD (%)	N.Ireland (%)
Male	48.40	49.15
Female	51.60	50.85

Source: NISRA Population Totals (LGD2014)

- 5.13 Life expectancy continues to improve for both males and females. Between 2000 and 2010, life expectancy for males improved at a slightly faster rate than for females, reducing the gender gap to females. Belfast continues to have a life expectancy of slightly more than two years less than the NI average. Belfast has a larger differential between male and female life expectancy than the NI average with females having a life expectancy of five years more than men born in the same year do.
- 5.14 In the UK, life expectancy at birth is expected to increase by around five years between 2012 and 2037 (Office of National Statistics, 2013) for both men and women and it is therefore anticipated that life expectancy will similarly increase in Belfast.

Figure 17: Life Expectancy by Gender at Birth in Belfast: 2000/02 – 2011/13

	2000-02		2011-13		% Change	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
NI	75.25	80.17	78.10	82.42	3.79%	2.81%
Old Belfast LGD	73.20	78.80	75.40	80.60	3.01%	2.28%

Source: NISRA Demography Life Expectancy at Birth

(C) Marital Status

- 5.15 The marital status of the population influences the composition of households and therefore the demand for housing. Since 2001, there has been an increase in the percentage of divorced people, a decrease in the percentage of people married and an increase in the proportion of single people in N. Ireland. In the new Belfast City Council Area, the 2011 census data shows that in the new Belfast Council Area there is higher proportion of single people, 45.32% of over 16s, than the Northern Ireland (NI) average (36.14%). A lower proportion of the adult population is married (35.57% compared with a NI average of 47.56%) and a marginally higher proportion are divorced (6.17% compared with the regional average of 5.45%).

Figure 18: Marital Status - 2011

	All People ≥ 16	Single (never married) %	Married ⁴ %	Divorced %	Widowed ⁵ %
NI	1,431,540	36.14	47.56	5.45	6.78
Old Belfast LGD	269,654	45.32	35.57	6.17	7.46

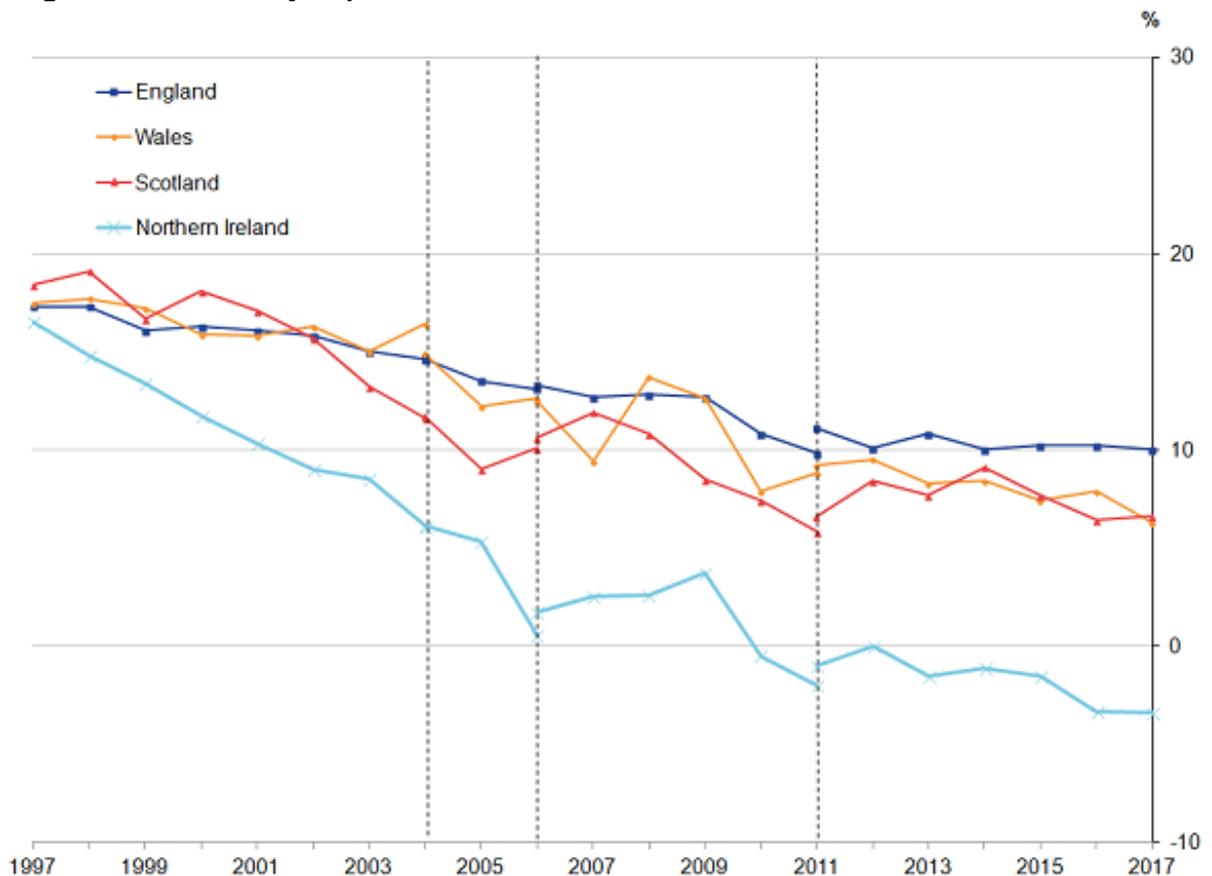
Source: NISRA Census 2011

⁴ Married – This includes people who were remarried; those who are separated but still legally married; and those in a same-sex civil partnership.

⁵ Widowed includes surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership.

- 5.16 The role for planning is to adequately provide for appropriate housing to meet the needs of the population. There will need to be units provided for single people. It is reasonable to assume that many single wage earners will not have the same purchase power of a double income household. Single people also have different social needs to those who are married and have families. Young, single people are key to the economy of any town centres, providing a significant part of the market for pubs, clubs and restaurants. However, this can mask the feeling of social exclusion experienced by many single people, particularly the elderly, disabled and single parents. Single parents remain one of the most disadvantaged groups with over half falling within low income groups and over half of lone parent families not having access to a car (Poverty site, 2010).
- 5.17 There are key differences between the sexes in that women tend to take on the role of carer whether it be for children or aging relatives. The traditional gender pay gap (i.e. the difference between men's and women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings) based on median gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for full-time employees has reversed in Northern Ireland as women are now higher earners than men – see figure 19 below. This is, in part, due to a higher proportion of public sector jobs here than in the rest of the UK. There are more women employed in this sector than men and these jobs tend to be higher paid, in general, than in the private sector (Op Cit).

Figure 19: Gender Pay Gap 1997-2017



Source: Office of National Statistics 2017

- 5.18 This figure is based on full time work. It therefore masks the fact that in NI there are more women in part-time work (167,000 women compared with 64,000 men). DETI's 2014 Annual Survey of Hours and Earning by contrast shows that the median gross annual pay for women is almost 2/3 of what men are paid (£14,871 compared with £22,327). Refer figure 20 below. This is exacerbated by a decrease in the median figure for females of 0.9% when male median wages increased by 2.4%.

Figure 20: Gross Annual Pay (£) for all Employees (who had been in the same job for 1+ years), NI/UK 2014

Description	Northern Ireland		United Kingdom	
	Median (£s)	Annual percentage change 2013-14	Median (£s)	Annual percentage change 2013-14
All	18,764	1.6	22,044	0.9
Male	22,327	2.4	27,162	0.0
Female	14,871	-0.9	17,103	0.8
Full-time	24,020	0.3	27,195	0.7
Part-time	8,624	4.7	9,000	1.6
Public Sector All	23,105	2.1	24,302	1.2
Private Sector All	16,375	3.5	21,259	0.9
Public Sector Full-time	29,658	3.6	29,785	1.0
Private Sector Full-time	21,345	3.7	26,000	0.8

a Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS

(D) Households with or without dependent children

- 5.19 A "dependent child" is defined as 0-15 or aged 16-18 who is a full-time student and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s) (Census 2011). In both Northern Ireland and Belfast, the proportion of households (including lone parent households) with dependent children has declined since 1981.

Figure 21: Percentage of Households with Dependent Children – 1981, 2011 & 2016

Households	N. Ireland	Belfast
% with dependent children 1981	45.98%	37.30%
% with dependent children 2011	33.85%	29.74%
% with dependent children 2016*	29.61%	27.61%

Source: NISRA and Census 2011

* 2016 figures are 2012-based projections

- 5.20 A closer examination of the Super Output Areas within each district reveals that many have much higher proportions of households with children than the district level including Whiterock 1, Glencolin 1, Cliftonville 1, Upper Springfield 2 and Legoneil 1. At the opposite end of the scale, other SOAs around Queen's University (Botanic 1, 2, 3 & 4 and Windsor 2, 3 & 4) are those with the lowest proportion of households with dependent children as all are less than one in eight households.

(E) Racial Group and Ethnicity

- 5.21 The 2011 census data showed that 96.69% of the population of the new Belfast Council Area are white. Whilst this represents the vast majority of the population, Belfast is also the most ethnically diverse council in Northern Ireland. The main minority ethnic groups in Belfast are Chinese (0.71%), Indian (0.70%), Other Asian (0.61%), Mixed (0.48%), Black African (0.32%), Irish Travellers (0.08%) and Pakistani (0.08%).
- 5.22 In the new Belfast City Council Area (from Census 2011), 5.97% of the resident population were born either in the European Union (EU) (2.58% - 0.67% pre-2004 accession states and 1.91% post-2004 accession states) or outside the EU (3.39%). It is unlikely that the Local Development Plan will have a particular impact on these groups; however, it is important to monitor changes over time as this may have implications particularly in relation to equality of access to homes and jobs. The housing needs assessment undertaken by the NIHE addresses the distinct needs in terms of Irish Travellers.

(F) Sexual Orientation

- 5.23 Sexual orientation is the only equality strand on which the UK census does not collect information⁶. However, several UK and NI based studies have attempted to quantify the number of people who identify as LGB. Estimates for LGB population range from 0.3-10% using different sources. A commonly used estimate of LGB people in the UK, accepted by Stonewall UK, is approximately 5-7% of the population.⁷
- 5.24 A growing body of research indicates that LGB young people are more likely than their heterosexual peers to experience bullying, exclusion and intimidation in the educational institution. This can lead to higher rates of depression, suicidal ideation, self-harm and other risk-taking behaviours amongst LGB&T young people⁸. Young LGB people are 5 times more likely to be medicated for depression, 2.5 times more likely to self-harm and 3 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual counterparts. Further to this 28.6% of young same sex attracted men showed signs of a mental health problem compared to 10.2% of those who were attracted to the opposite sex.⁹
- 5.25 One of the key issues for LGB people is the promotion of community safety across the city to reduce both homophobic hate crime incidents and fear of crime. Research by the Rainbow Project in 2009 found that 21% of gay and bisexual males and 18% of LGB females had been victim of one or more homophobic hate crimes or incidents in the previous three years and 30% of these incidents resulted in physical injury. In addition, 13%

⁶ <http://www.ark.ac.uk/pdfs/policybriefs/pbso.pdf>

⁷ *Through Our Eyes, The Housing and Homeless Experience of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people in Northern Ireland, NIHE, 2015*

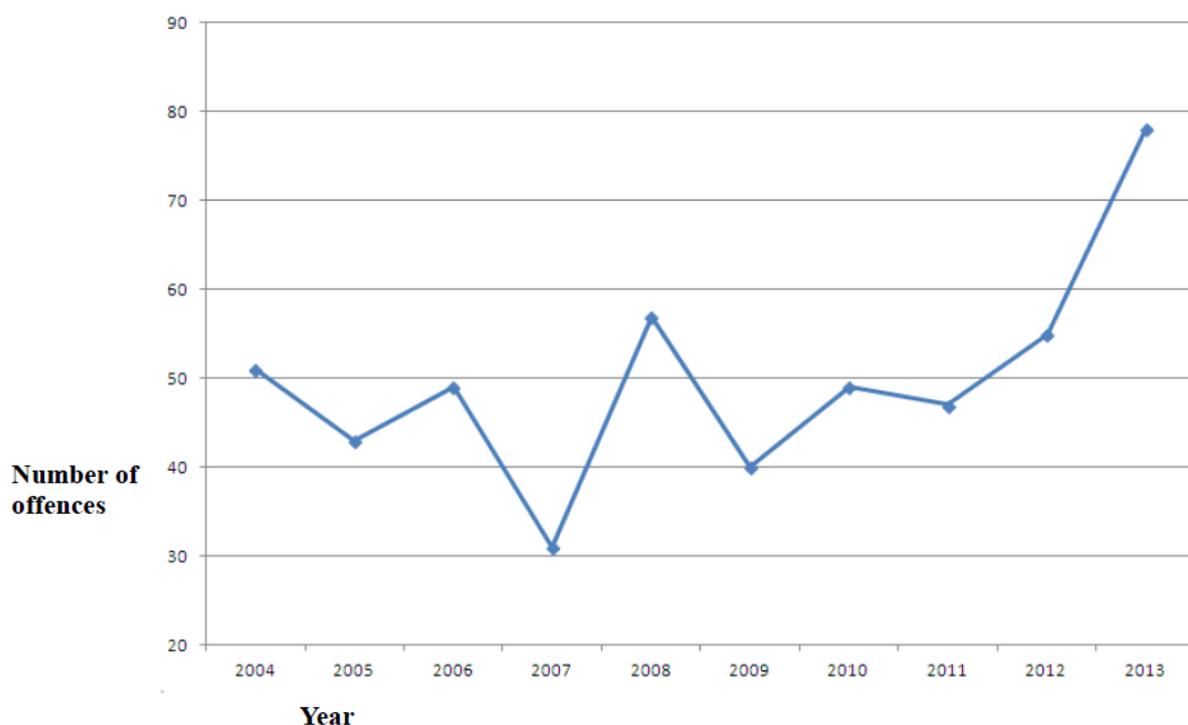
⁸ *OUTstanding in your field: Exploring the needs of LGB&T people in rural Northern Ireland, The Rainbow Project, 2016*

⁹ *Inequalities in Health: A Strategy for the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, The Rainbow Project, 2010*

of LGB people felt that harassment/attacks on people because of their sexual orientation in their neighbourhood was a problem.¹⁰

5.26 The PSNI Annual Bulletin “Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police” shows that in 2014/15 there 126 incidents with a homophobic motivation recorded in Belfast, an increase of 11 incidents (9.6% increase) from the previous year (figure 22). This represents 37.7% of all incidents with a homophobic motivation recorded in N Ireland in 2014/15 (334). The Bulletin also reports that there were 82 recorded crimes with a homophobic motivation in Belfast, an increase of 9 recorded crimes (or 12%) from the previous year. This represents 39.2% of all recorded crimes with a homophobic motivation across N Ireland in 2014/15 (209 recorded crimes in NI with a homophobic motivation).¹¹

Figure 22: Hate Crimes Offences Recorded with a Homophobic Motivation



Source: NISRA

5.27 Whilst the plan is unlikely to bring forward specific proposals and policies for this group, it is anticipated that many of the measures in a Local Development Plan, aimed at providing a range of house types, creating employment and accessible services as well as improving safety and security, will benefit this group.

¹⁰ *Through Our Eyes: Perceptions and Experiences of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People towards Homophobic Hate Crime and Policing in Northern Ireland, The Rainbow Project, 2009*

¹¹ *PSNI Annual Bulletin “Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police”, August 2015*

(G) Disability and Health

5.28 In February 2014, there were 55,480 people, or 16.6% of all residents, in receipt of at least one disability-related benefit in Belfast. Belfast had the second highest proportion of disability-related benefit recipients (Belfast Profile 2015). Belfast's disability-related benefit claimant level is above the Northern Ireland average of 13.9%. The highest concentrations of disability related benefits claimants are located in areas of North and West Belfast. This is to be contrasted with some areas in the South and East, which have some of the lowest levels of disability related benefits in Northern Ireland (see figure 23 overleaf).

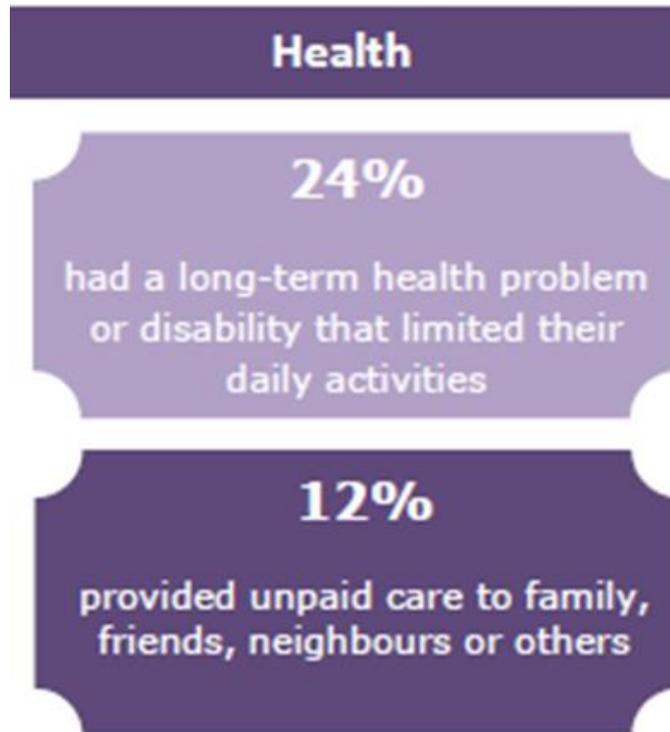
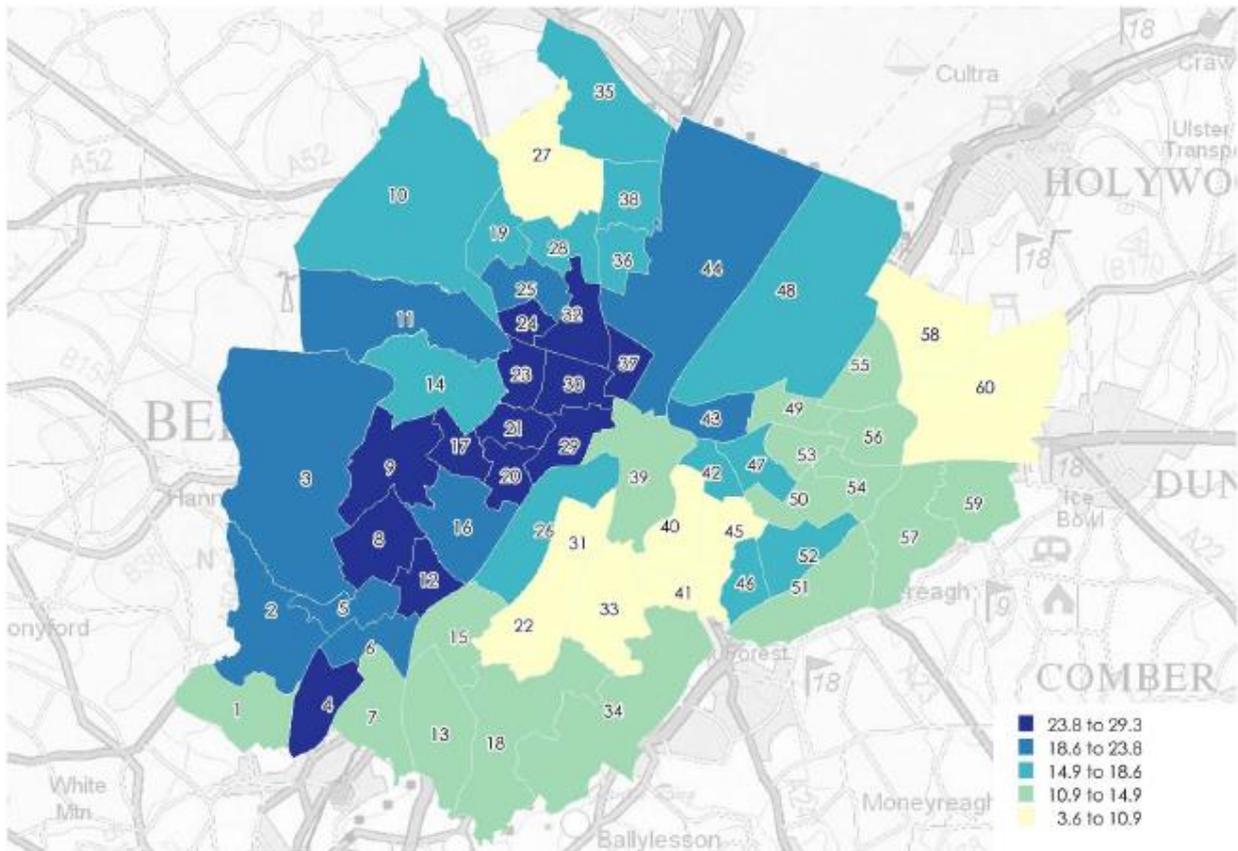


Figure 23: Proportion of people in receipt of at least one disability-related benefit at Ward level, February 2014



1	Lagmore	23	Woodvale	45	Ravenhill
2	Poleglass	24	Ardoyne	46	Cregagh
3	Collin Glen	25	Cliftonville	47	Beersbridge
4	Twinbrook	26	Blackstaff	48	Sydenham
5	Stewartstown	27	Cavehill	49	Connswater
6	Ladybrook	28	Chichester Park	50	Orangefield
7	Dunmurry	29	Falls	51	Hillfoot
8	Shaw'S Road	30	Shankill	52	Merok
9	Turf Lodge	31	Windsor	53	Bloomfield
10	Legoniel	32	Water Works	54	Sandown
11	Forth River	33	Stranmillis	55	Belmont
12	Andersonstown	34	Belvoir	56	Knock
13	Finaghy	35	Bellevue	57	Shandon
14	Ballygomartin	36	Fortwilliam	58	Garnerville
15	Musgrave	37	New Lodge	59	Gilnahirk
16	Falls Park	38	Innisfayle	60	Stormont
17	Ballymurphy	39	Central		
18	Upper Malone	40	Ormeau		
19	Ballysillan	41	Rosetta		
20	Beechmount	42	Woodstock		
21	Clonard	43	Ballymacarrett		
22	Malone	44	Duncairn		

Source: NISRA

5.29 In 2012/2013, 12.05% of all usual residents in the old Belfast council area provided some unpaid care to friends, families and others. The proportion of unpaid carers varies between Belfast Wards from the low proportions found in the South Belfast Wards of Botanic, Windsor, Ballynafeigh and Stranmillis (all less than 10%) to the highest proportions in the West Belfast Wards of Andersonstown, Ladybrook, and Falls Park (all over 14.5%). The differentials within the city are not particularly pronounced.

5.30 The link between health and wealth is well rehearsed, as is the relationship between mobility and health. Therefore, as with other groups, planning has a role in accommodating accessible housing, employment and services. Planning also has a role in helping to improve the health and well-being of people by avoiding development which would result in a deterioration in air or water quality; safeguarding and facilitating open space, sport and outdoor recreation; managing the adverse impacts of noise and nuisance by influencing the location, layout and design of new development. Planning also has a role in recognising and facilitating development to meet the needs of carers, by facilitating houses for those with special circumstances or extension of homes to include “granny annexes”.

(H) Religious Belief

5.31 The designation of settlements and provision of development opportunities needs to be carefully considered against the needs and spatial distribution of people of different religion or political opinion to prevent prejudice of any religious or political group and thus meet the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.

5.32 The 2011 census detailed that 48.8% of the Belfast population belong to or were brought up in the Roman Catholic religion; 42.5% belong to or were brought up in a ‘Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religions; 1.6% belong to or were brought up in other religions; and 7.1% belong to or were brought up in no religion.

Figure 24: Percentage of people & Religion belonging to or Religion in which they were brought up - 2011

	Roman Catholic (%)	Protestant / Other Christian (%)	Other Religions / Philosophies (%)	No religion / None Stated (%)
N. Ireland	45.14	48.36	0.92	5.59
Belfast (LGD 2014)	48.82	42.47	1.57	7.14

Source: NISRA Census 2011

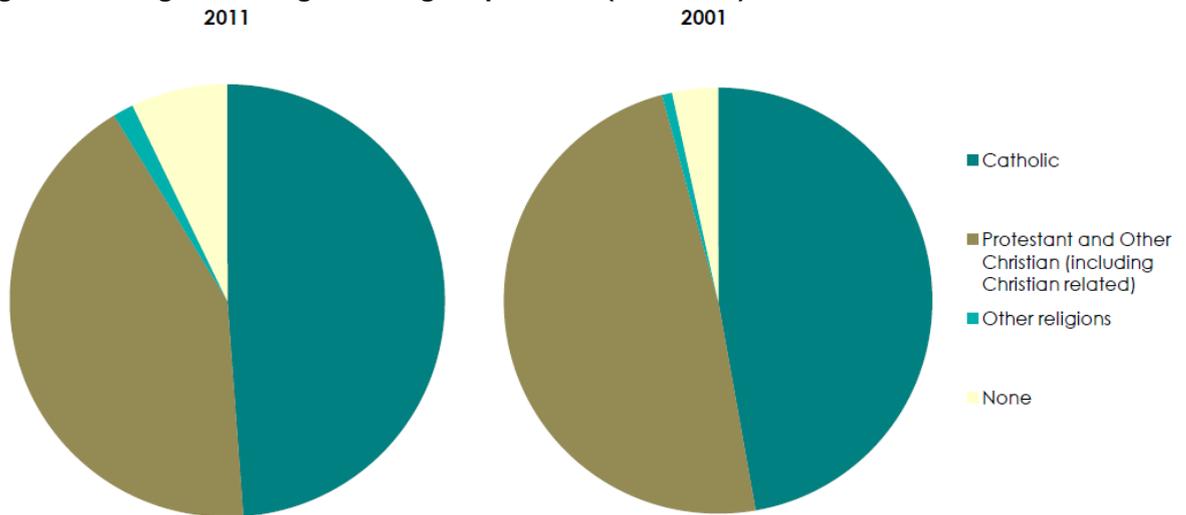
5.33 Since the 2001 Census, the proportion of the Belfast population that belong to or were brought up in:

- No religion has more than doubled with an increase of 3.7 percentage points from 3.4%;
- The Roman Catholic has increased by 1.6 percentage points from 47.2%;
- Protestant and Other Christian have decreased by 6.1 percentage points from 48.6%; and
- Other religions have doubled, growing by 0.8 percentage points from 0.8%.

5.34 Research by Queen’s University Belfast on changing levels of segregation as indicated by 2011 census states the following: “Northern Ireland, as a whole, has experienced a fall in residential segregation between 2001 and 2011. It is likely that Belfast has shared in this

trend with the rest of Northern Ireland. However, it is likely that the decrease between 2001 and 2011 is a result of the demographic balance of some areas being changed by immigration, by changes in the way in which people describe their religion in the Census, to local differences in births and deaths between Catholics and Protestants, and to genuine mixing in some areas.”

Figure 25: Religion or religion brought up Belfast (LGD 2014) – 2011



Source: NISRA Census 2011

5.35 The SPSS recognises that the planning process has an important role to play in the delivery of good quality housing that supports the creation of more balanced communities. Balanced communities can contribute positively to the creation and enhancement of shared spaces and vice-versa.

(I) Political Opinion

5.36 In May 2014, 60 councillors were elected to represent the people of Belfast in the expanded city. The council is divided between the predominant political groupings found in Northern Ireland, with 26 Nationalist councillors (Sinn Fein and the SDLP) and 24 Unionist councillors (DUP, UUP, PUP and TUV). This leaves the balance of power with the non-designated councillors from the Alliance Party, Green Party and People before Profit.

Figure 26: Number of Political Party Representatives on Belfast City Council

Sinn Fein	SDLP	Alliance	Green	People Profit	Before	DUP	UUP	PUP	TUV
19	7	8	1	1	13	7	3	1	



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