

Port Erin

***Public engagement
results focused on
new public space***

Let's talk Port Erin!

Join us for a dialogue about Port Erin and its public spaces, streets or squares. To create inclusive spaces we need your ideas!

Pop-up at Port Erin Railway Station

28th February morning 9AM - 1PM
1st March afternoon 2PM - 6PM



If you cannot stop by at our pop-up please fill in our online survey (just take a picture of the QR code to get to the link)

Competition time! Port Erin

Have you ever wondered what it is like to be an architect or a designer? Now is your chance to try it out and design a perfect square for Port Erin.

- What** design a perfect square for Port Erin plan, map, detail of furniture, activities illustration etc.
- Entries** no limits when it comes to materials 3D cardboard model, a drawing, a digital artwork or a collage
- Who** everyone from 0 - 16
- How** in person to Port Erin Commissioners 12 Bridson St., Port Erin or email on competition@porterin.gov.im
- When** until the 28th April 2023
- Why** you have a chance to win Visit Port Erin vouchers will be featured in public exhibition in the Port Erin Railway Station and your ideas will be used as inspiration for the future of Port Erin.



You can scan this code for automatic email for when sending the proposals

Port Erin will have a new square! Help us design what it will look like

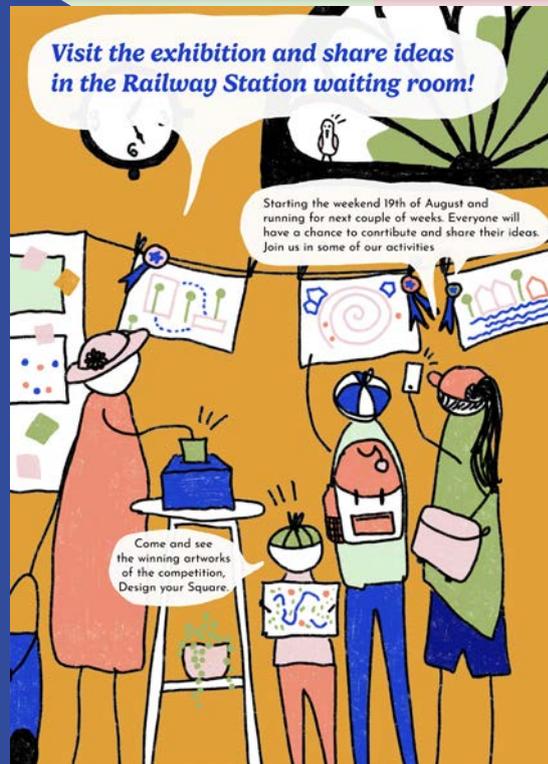
Place elements in the defined area of the future public space.
You can design mixed-use seating or a shelter.
Maybe you can come up with an idea for a program?
Do you need a place to hang out with your friends?
Or a place to hide or express your creativity.
Tell us all about it!



Visit the exhibition and share ideas in the Railway Station waiting room!

Starting the weekend 19th of August and running for next couple of weeks. Everyone will have a chance to contribute and share their ideas. Join us in some of our activities

Come and see the winning artworks of the competition, Design your Square.



Port Erin - new public space

This document is a result of a collaboration of Port Erin Commissioners and urban designer Betty Laurincova.

The area designated is between the Port Erin Railway Station and Droghadfayle Road. The future offers the potential to reorganise this rather vast area and make some of it into a public space for the benefit of the locals.

The following participation exercises tried to find out people's experiences and visions about public spaces in general and about this area in particular in the second phase.

The proposed activities were inspired by an exercise performed in Castletown in the previous year that helped define the strategy and program not only for Market Square but for the whole town.

The activities were the following: pop-up dialogues, online survey, children's design competition, pizza pop-up with a focus on teenagers, interactive installation and the following pop-up.

Right after the advertising of the first pop-up, we received many emails and messages from people wanting to get more engaged in the village. People active in the life of Port Erin, artists and some who just moved to Port Erin: all of them wanted to make it into a better place.

It is such a positive thing for a village to have people who care and are willing to give their time to volunteer. The enthusiasm can help this project get further and is a great starting point for many community activities such as community artwork etc.

Activities of this type are not one size fits all, and we were prepared to fine-tune some of them in the process.

This was a case of the design competition when we hoped for more teenagers to join. To reach out to them, we added one specific pop-up with free pizza to motivate them to talk about what they like to do in their free time and what they would like to see in Port Erin.

Another example was the installation, which did not receive such a good response as in Castletown. It could be because of the location but also more detailed topic. People are generally more sensitive to discussing a specific area than a generic image of a town.



On the following page, you can see the timeline of all the activities we did. We tried to create a visual identity for the initiative to connect it with the space and dialogue about public spaces.

The illustration above is an idea from a member of the initiative group. Some specific ideas are turned into visuals in this document. They serve as a light inspiration, not an exact plan. They are all to drive a discussion, not to offer a proposal.

Documents of this type help to form a brief for future design competitions or proposals. They show a bigger picture of the village or town and serve as inspiration for the general public or local artists who want to contribute.

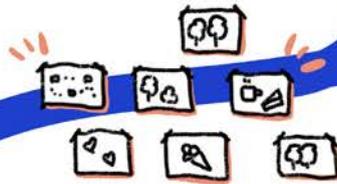
Start
December 2022



Online Survey
February - April 2023



Pop-Up
February 2023



Design Competition
April 2023



Pizza Pop-Up
July 2023



Installation + Pop-Up
August - September 2023



Whats next?

Pop-Up

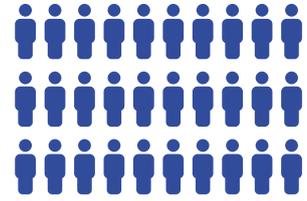
A street pop-up in front of Port Erin Railway Station was the first activity based on dialogue. It took place in the morning 28th Feb. and afternoon 1st March 2023.

We had two prepared activities and collected information from talking to people who joined. Some concerns and ideas were focused on the future public space, while others pointed out existing issues of Port Erin.

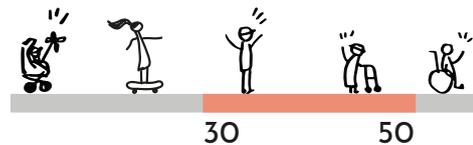


It was interesting to see that even though the average age of the participants was higher, they mentioned activities and places for the young or teenagers a lot. It is a fact that teenagers are generally an underserved group when it comes to planning, which leads to vandalism or other undesired behaviours.

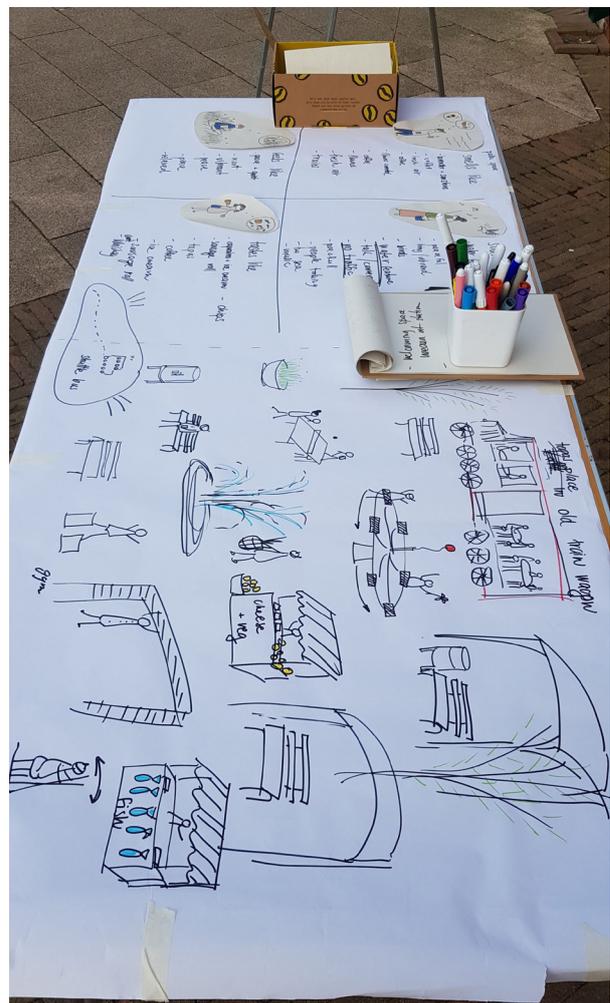
A public place for all generations is flexible and works as an event venue (bands, cinema, carnival, market) but is



~30 participants
age average 30 - 50 years



also a safe and accessible relaxing place where one can read a book in the sun. People see a public space as a colourful meeting place with benches and some sheltered areas to hide from the rain, wind and seagulls.





The text summarises the discussions with the participants and the above is a collaborative drawing of a good public space, it includes permanent features as benches, gazebos, greenery, amenities for various activities (playground/gym), community art work and a regular food market.

Many mentioned services and their opening times. People wanted cafes, particularly one that has a sea view. Regarding services, the most common complaint was early closing times and unreliable opening schedules.

Another topic was accessibility. Access to the beach seems problematic and impossible for people with limited mobility. To address this, many people mentioned a shuttle service around the village.

Other similar problems mentioned were narrow footpaths and lack of dropped curbs. It was nice to see people talking about pedestrianisation or paid parking

as options for the future since these topics often lead to complaints and arguments.

The third general topic was the presence of derelict buildings and empty sites that many described as eyesores. It is an islandwide problem that requires a complex and strategic solution.

lavender + sunshine
 fresh air
 coffee
 flowers
 trains



peace + quiet
 vibrant
 resort
 peace
 relaxed



cappuccino + ice cream
 tapas
 sausage roll
 coffee
 ice cream
 shot of whiskey
 sausage roll
 chips



water feature
 peaceful
 water feature
 birds
 peaceful
 the sea
 peoples chatter
 living + vibrant
 talk + conversation
 no traffic
 people talking
 music



Another exercise was about the senses. What do you smell, feel, taste or hear in a good public space?

Many connect a public space with coffee. Since there already is a coffee shop close by, one of the options is to have a pop-up coffee trailer during busier times. This principle can also work for other refreshments.

You can see the answers on the previous page. For many, the town square should be peaceful but vibrant.

Good public space people associate with the taste of familiar snacks. Many people

mentioned they want a place where they need to buy anything to use and sit down.

Sounds included a combination of people and nature. Hearing the sea, birds and people chatter is a great combination of vibrancy and peacefulness.

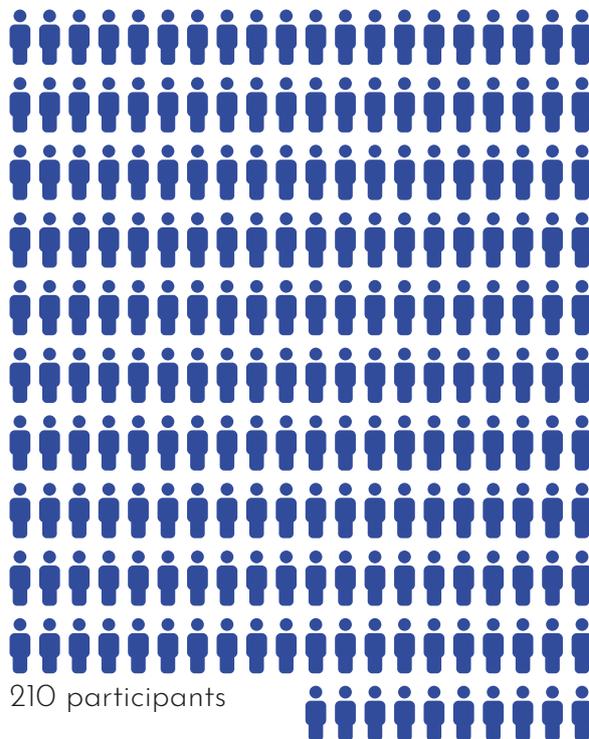
Many of these are true for a well-working, established public space. To achieve this, a new public space has to be activated with events and extra program. Once the area is established in people's minds, it will become this calm but lively space even during times without special programs.



Online survey

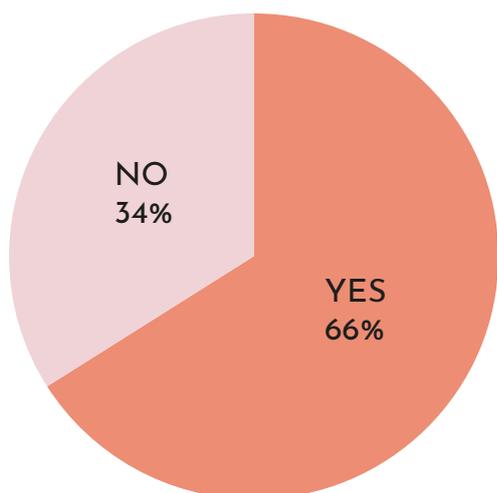
The first activity was the online survey. It helped us with designing and navigating the next steps. The survey was active from February to April 2023. We collected 210 responses, the most from the commissioner's posts and website. The survey link was posted on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and advertised.

The majority of people who joined the survey live in Port Erin, about 65%. Following are the responses and conclusions. Some answers are turned into a word cloud to give us an overview. If you wish to read all the individual answers, you can find them in the separate document.



Q1

Do you live in Port Erin?



Q2

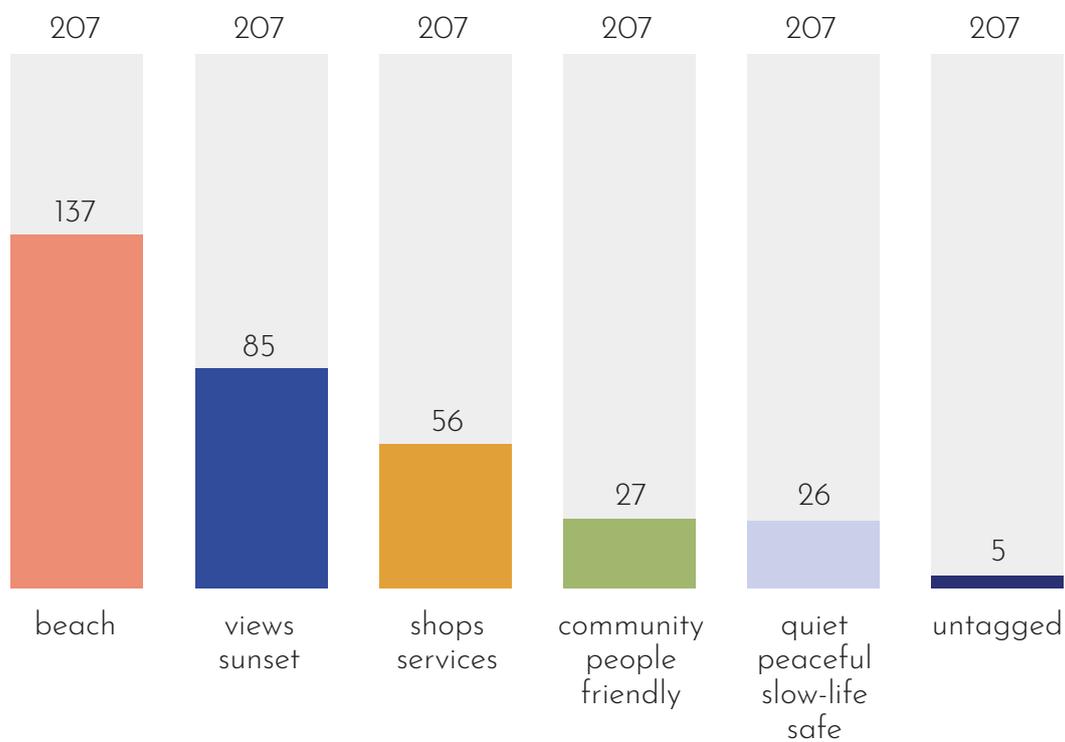
***What do you like about Port Erin?
Imagine you are telling someone
who has never visited the place.***

This was an open-ended question, but after reading the responses, we can see there are five categories that people mention the most;

- beach
- community/people/friendly
- quiet/peaceful/slow-life/safe
- shops/services
- views/sunset

You can see the representation of the categories in graph Fig.1 and the word cloud generated from the answers in Fig.2.

The answers were mostly positive, with many people pointing out existing qualities. These are something to build the future of the village on.



Q2 Fig.1 Representation of the 5 categories.



Q2 Fig.2 Word cloud created from the answers. Only words with 3 and more mentions are shown.

Q3

What is your favourite public space on the island? (a square, a street, a promenade, a town park... in any town or village)

We organised the answers for this question into a word cloud Fig.3 that represents the places that were mentioned the most.

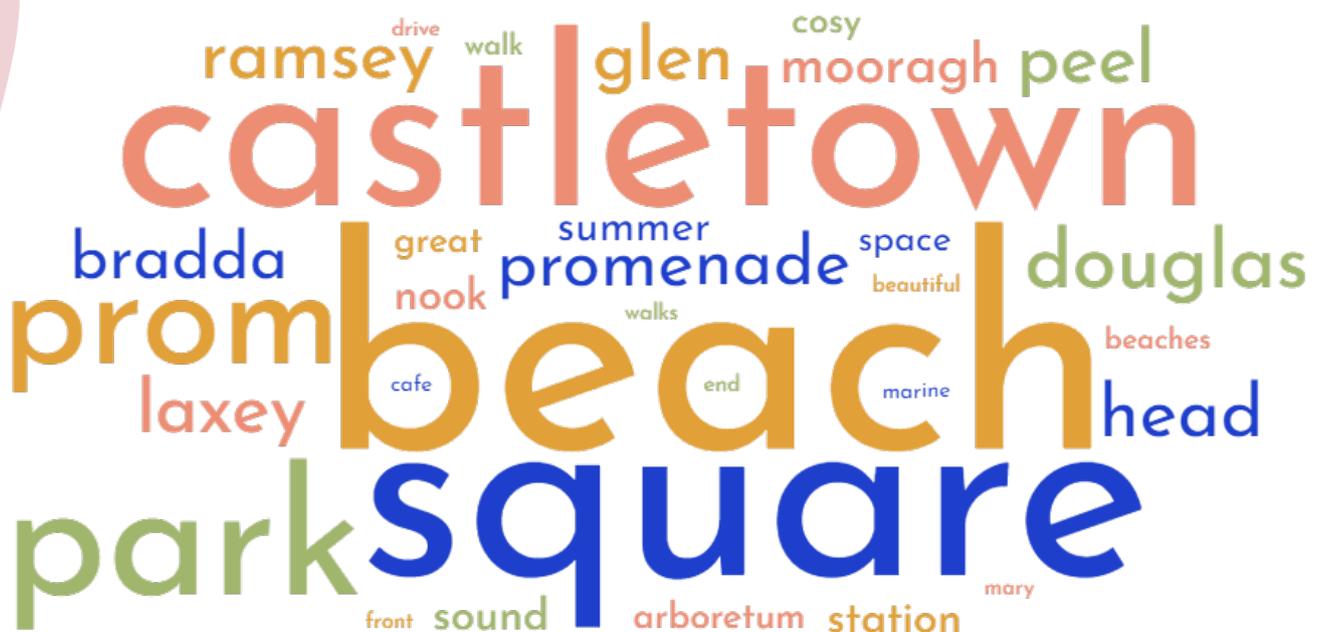
To summarize, most people talked about natural spaces, like the beach, glens etc. The beach in Port Erin was unsurprisingly most popular, many people pointing out the seasonality of it, lack of amenities and poor accessibility. There were some mentions of general accessibility of public spaces on the island, especially for wheelchair users.

From the urban public spaces the most popular is Market Square in Castletown, especially after being pedestrianized. The Market Square was mentioned 28 times.

Other urban areas were squares and shopping streets around the island. Promenades and quays in Douglas, Peel, Laxey and Port Erin.

Many parks showed up in the answers, most popular the Mooragh Park in Ramsey praised for its accessibility and activity opportunities.

What this survey showed is lack of urban public spaces on the island and also general awareness of them.



Q3 Fig.3 Word cloud created from the answers. Only words with 3 and more mentions are shown.



Q4 Fig.4 Word cloud created from the answers. Only words with 3 and more mentions are shown.

Q4

Why do you like the place you mentioned in the previous question? (is it the accessibility, program, nearby services, atmosphere, etc.)

Most people mention and enjoy the natural areas, for their openness, scenery and esthetic qualities. They value these in urban spaces as well. Cleanliness and maintenance were qualities pointed out. The open space means flexibility and good orientation, visual connections to the surroundings, and these places are easy to navigate.

One of the most mentioned qualities was the overall liveliness of a place, choice of activities, place to meet people, sit and observe the life around, and available services such as cafes, pubs, shops and occasional events.

The most popular picks having this quality were Market Square in Castletown and Mooragh Park in Ramsey. People described them as places, where you go and know you will have a good time. You know you will probably meet friends or make new ones. These two places were also rated well for their accessibili-

ty and catering for all ages.

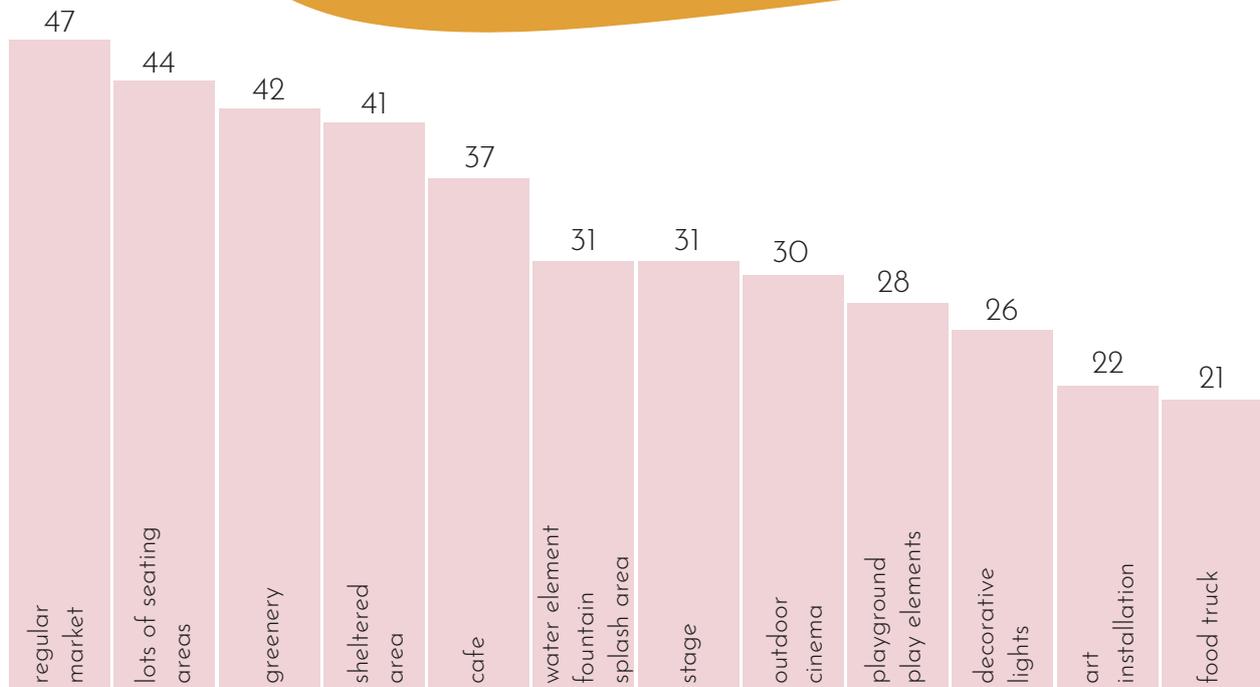
Almost none of the places described with these sought-after qualities was located in Port Erin, showing a good potential for opening a place like this in the village.

Another type of public place fulfilling the previous qualities was the promenades of Peel and Laxey and their good food and drink offer. Douglas Promenade was mentioned a few times for its landscape or design elements, art and sculptures.

Organised events and activities are a great way to bring people in, but really successful public spaces have things going on without external planning, just like Market Square and Mooragh Park proved to be.

People also praised elements such as greenery, benches for observing the life passing by, cafe culture, dog friendliness and low traffic.

I also found it surprising many people mentioned places that were far away despite them living in Port Erin, like Mooragh Park. It shows a real need for more accessible public spaces for all age groups around the island.



Q6 Fig.6 Elements in popularity order.

Q6

If you had a chance to design a new public space in Port Erin, what should it have?

This question starts with a disclaimer that it was designed and published with a mistake that was impossible to fix later. The question was supposed to be multiple-choice but only allowed the participants to select one option. This mistake possibly influenced the results. Most people pointed this out but did not get discouraged and listed the elements they wanted to vote for. Thanks to their answers, we could manually assign a rating to individual features. The overall rating is in the above graph Fig.6.

It was unexpected to have a regular market in the first place with the most points. Markets are currently very popular in placemaking around the world. On the island, the Douglas Foodie Market is a good example. It works well for its location but also because it offers only food and drink. There are stalls with fresh produce and takeaway food to enjoy on the nearby bench. In many European towns, markets are brought back to life and are a staple in weekend activities for many families. In comparison, the food

truck received minimum points, which might show that people are more interested in fresh produce than more takeaway options.

The highest ranks have the necessary elements for any public space, seating, greenery, and sheltered areas to protect from elements or seagulls. Despite the proximity to the beach, water elements and fountains were rated high. Some people explained this as a feature for the youngest children, a splash park.

Often mentioned were accessibility, good signage and cleanliness.

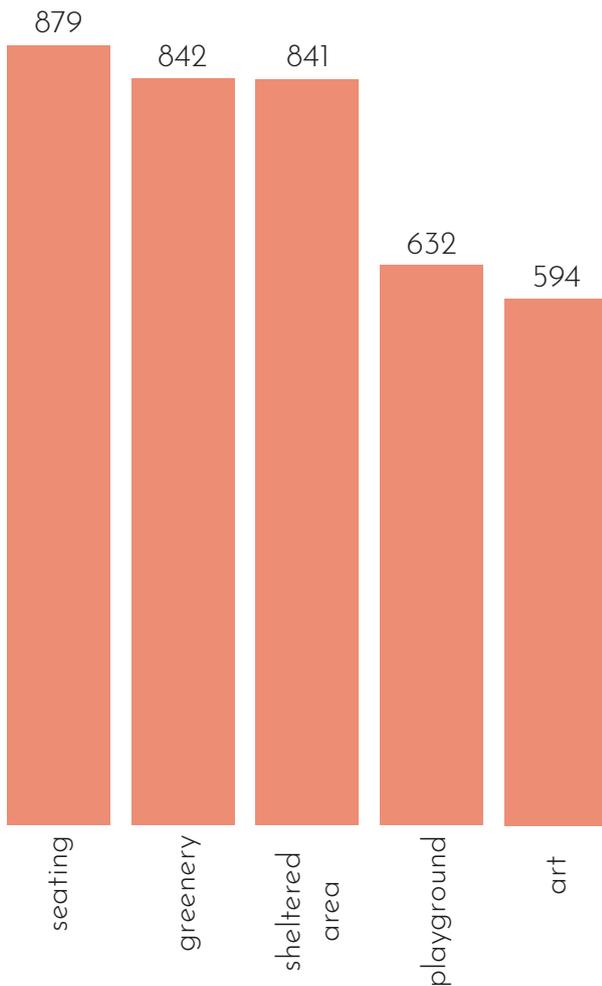
Some unique answers quoted;

- *More parking near sea front*
- *Car free promenade*
- *Make church street more vibrant*
- *Priority of pedestrians over cars*
- *I think there are good spaces for adults and families but I think teenagers are probably underserved.*
- *teenage play area*
- *Beach drop off points with parking limited to 10 minutes for unloading purposes.*
- *Something for teenagers!!*
- *Proper shopping street*

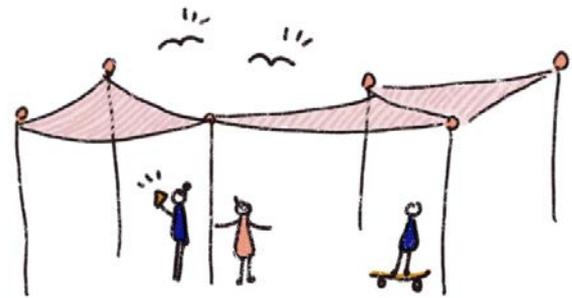
Q7

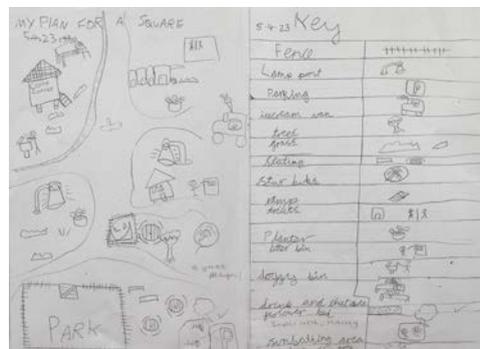
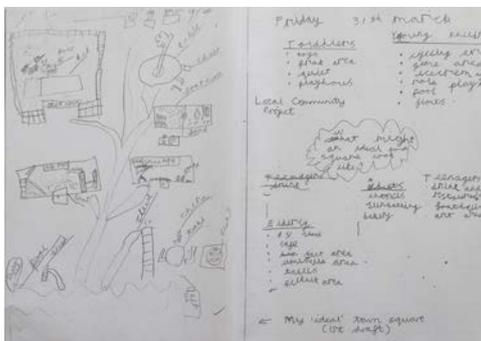
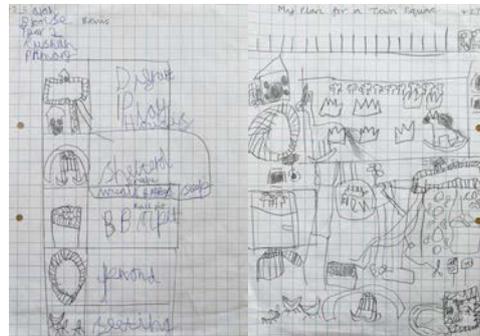
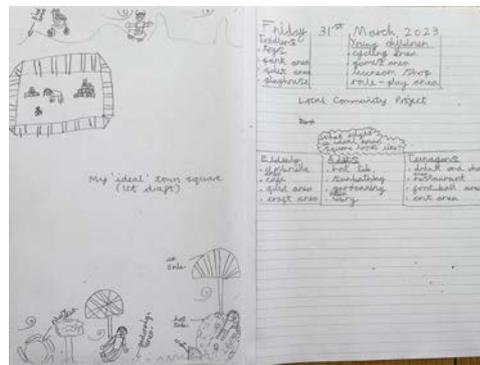
How important are these in a successful public space? (very important 5, not so important 1)

The last question focuses on rating common elements from traditional public spaces. These are usually permanent features. Participants rated the elements depending on their importance for a good quality public space. According to their rating, each got points. Five for most important and one for least.



Q7 Fig.7 Elements in popularity order.





The winning submissions showcase various qualities. In some it is teamwork, attention to detail, use of unusual material, different approach in the concept (designing activities according to age groups) etc.

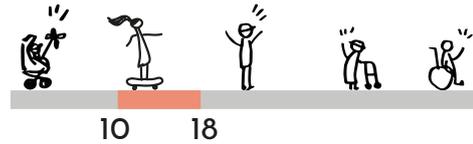
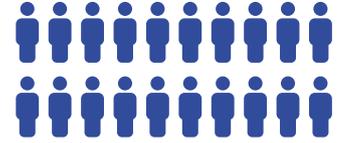
Some proposals feature floor paintings, including own designs and maybe even names. Floor paintings are a good first step to defining the area and creating a sense of ownership. Lot of these ideas were put into some illustrations in the back of this document. For all competition submissions follow the QR link;



Pizza Pop-Up

The competition collected ideas from younger children, but we wanted to gather information from teenagers as well. Inspired by successful consultations in many European cities, the main attraction was food. In this case, pizza.

Altogether, we talked to about 20 teenagers and older children.



We talked to about 20 teenagers





It was a successful exercise with many clear outcomes.

Respondents talked about places where they could meet up with their friends, a place that would be meant for them. Many came from the park, where they like the swings and different play elements.

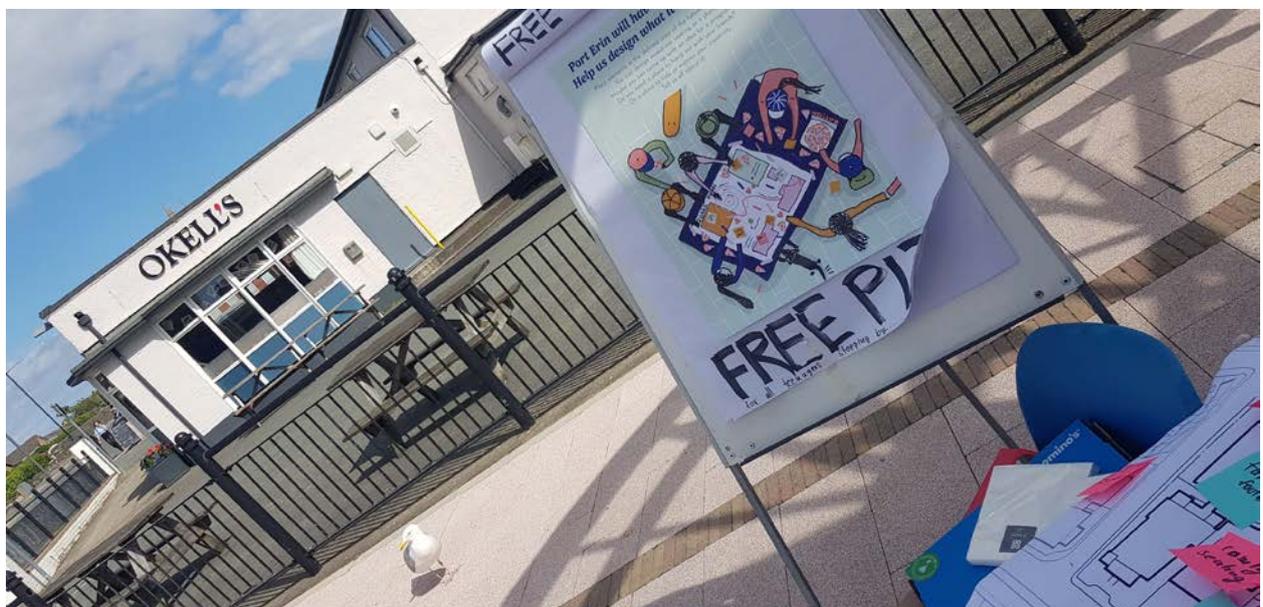
These provide the opportunity to be restless while having a conversation with your friends.

Large swings or hammocks are becoming very popular in public spaces for adults or teenagers.

Usually, we see swings and play features in areas meant for children, but they are great features for all ages.

It was nice to see that during the pop-up attended by the older generation, many people mentioned amenities for teenagers, and teenagers also mentioned calmer places for older people.

They also wanted the option to have some privacy when talking to their friends, so division features could be a good way to define the space.



The map on the next page shows some of the ideas.

We can see a lot of post-its with swings and different activities. Turning the place into a skatepark might not be the most inclusive idea, but providing some active elements, such as climbing blocks that function as seating or fixed tables with board games, could be an option.

One of the ideas, colourful blobs as asphalt art, is an inspiration for the graphics of this manual. Brightening the space with colour and painting paths or games can be one of the low-budget first steps.

Asphalt art is a popular community activity, bringing people into the space and claiming it by painting the ground.

Another creative idea for a mural painted on the depot door came from one of the girls we spoke to. She was curious about what was behind the door and came up with a fun idea that a mural of an alien would add a touch of mystery to the place. She drew the alien, and you can see it edited and used in the illustration below.

Creating art with input from future users strengthens a sense of pride and ownership of the new public space.

A UK charity, Make Space For Girls, provides many resources on designing for teenagers based on their research among teenagers in the UK.

Visit www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk for more info and the resources.

Illustration showing potential outcome of collected ideas.

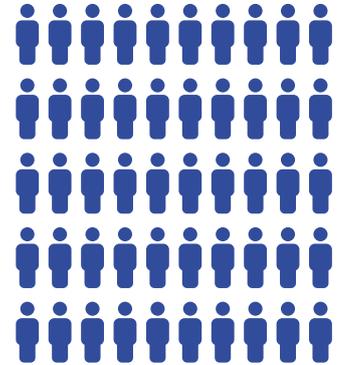


Interactive installation and Pop-Up

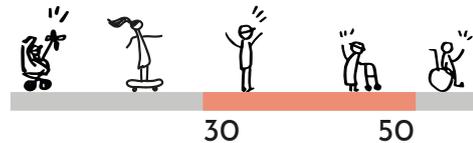
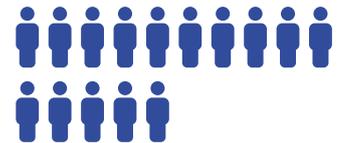
The last activity was similar to the interactive installation we did in Castletown the previous year.

This installation was held in the waiting room of the railway station and had a map with post-its, markers and colouring sheets, posters to vote on different entrances to the selected area, a suggestion box and an exhibition of winning proposals from the design competition.

The venue was not ideal, and many posters fell because of the draft. We decided to turn the same materials into a pop-up event and dialogue.



Estimated 50 people attended the exhibition and 15 joined the following pop-up.



Because of the problems with the installation, we will focus on post-its and suggestions in the box. The map was full of notes after the first few days. These were all collected and later divided into categories.

Some discussed the given area, but many talked generally about Port Erin. The lido: many people wanted to build on the existing qualities of Port Erin, mainly the beach. A sea pool or more accessible lido for all generations could enhance what the area already has. Regarding the beach and its accessibility, there were again mentions of problematic paths to the beach, not for people with mobility aids.

Another briefly mentioned topic was green space. This connects strongly with the existing orchard that many consider the ideal place for the future square. While the orchard can become a public space, it has more potential to become a park with minimal intervention.



The orchard is also a part of another popular topic: derelict buildings and empty properties. While safety is always a priority, these work as voids in the flow of good streets and spaces. They break the perception of safety and vibrancy of the village.

As in the previous pop-ups, there was a big interest in discussing potential activities for the area. Some mentioned the existing park is not very inclusive, especially for younger children and is often occupied by teenagers. Having a multifunctional flexible space (modular seating turned building blocks turned climbing playground etc.)

One element that has been mentioned often, just like swings, is trampolines. Public trampolines are common play elements in many Scandinavian public spaces and serve all ages.

You can read more about individual post-its in the back of this document.

Regular events are also an activity to help any public space; markets, concerts, live screenings, or DIY workshops can bring the community together.

Infrastructure and parking are topics that always get a lot of traction. In communicating new public spaces, it is always important to highlight that making them pedestrian-friendly does not automatically mean removing cars or parking. These two coexist in vibrant areas.

Without good pedestrian infrastructure (cut curbs, wide sidewalks, pedestrian priority zones, public transport), there is no intention to reduce the amount of parking spaces.

It was positive to see opinions supportive of lower traffic concepts. Research proves that walkable places are more popular, busier and perceived as safer and better.

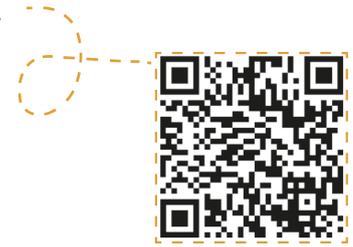


Walkability is a strategic change started with small interventions such as already mentioned curbs etc. A common misconception is that removing parking will stop visitors from coming. It might be true with insufficient public transport, but people follow attractions (beach, event, unique shops), not parking availability.

It is also important to note that focusing on visitors is not a recipe for a vibrant

town. When a place serves well its current inhabitants, visitors come as well.

To see all the responses check the appendix on page 30 or link at QR code for better resolution.



Design a square for Port Erin



Port Erin - conclusion

While the general attitude towards making the specific area into a public space was not too positive, it should not be a discouragement.

There is a lack of urban public spaces, and the island could definitely benefit from more. The important thing we learned is that people do not have experience with local urban public spaces.

There are many natural areas, where you go for a calm walk, but places where you bump into people are missing. There are very few places like this on the island because of the mass motorisation of our towns in the last century. Just as in many other towns, this approach does not benefit them, and they are not resilient to changes.

It was nice to see people pointing out some urban qualities of Port Erin, the quirky shops or cafes and the sense of community. This is a great start to give Port Erin a public space for locals of all ages.



A good starting activity for the concrete area would be a community asphalt painting. It can help slow traffic and reclaim some places for seating, greenery or activities.

Some respondents mentioned their worry about the tyres next to the garage, and these can be used as a building element to separate some places and create seats or flower pots. These ideas are temporary and low-cost, so they can be done quickly and also removed in a possible change of plans. Opening the new brewery will bring people in and get them used to this space as a first spark.

The existing pub, The Haven, is surrounded by large property that can open towards this space, turned into a beer garden or outdoor movie theatre.

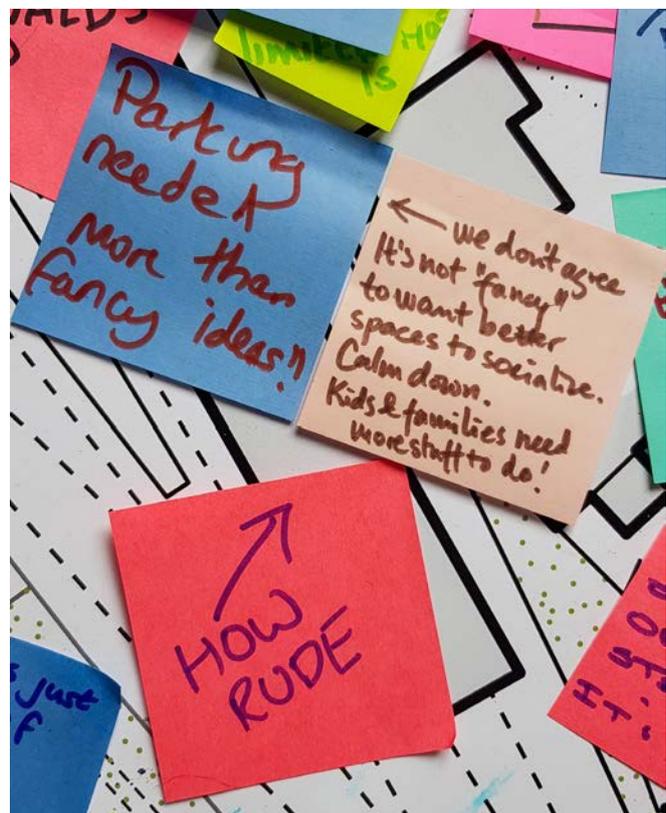
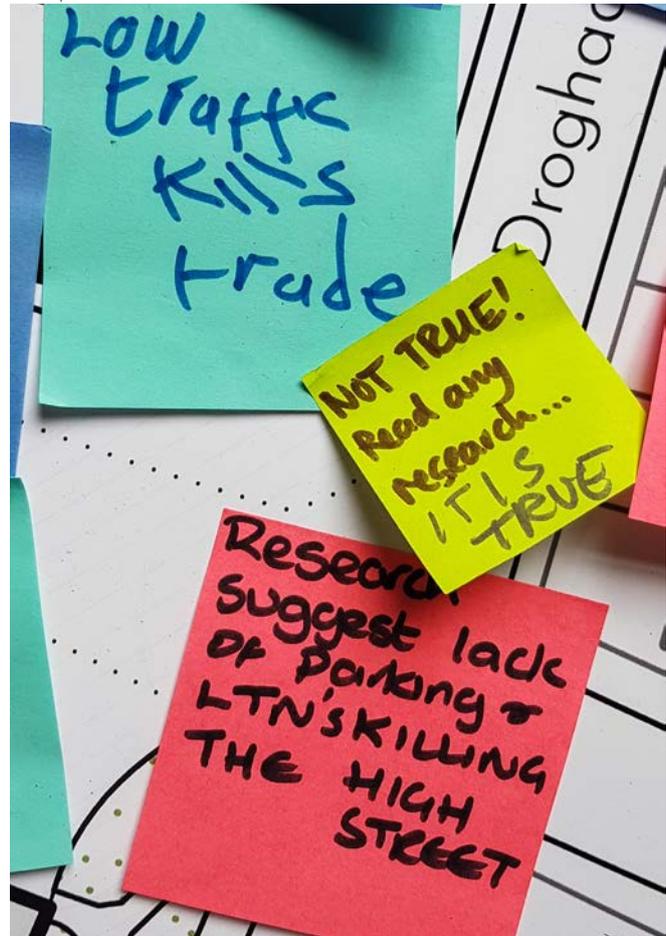
We attach pages 36 - 42 with references from around the world to serve as an inspiration.

Thank Port Erin Commissioners for initiating this engagement exercise, as any changes in the future should start with a public dialogue.

results from the interactive installation



some intriguing dialogues on the post-its



results from the interactive installation

Entrance 3

This place in the future can be one of the main entry points to a pedestrian environment. How you have a chance to make it attractive and useful for the community.

What would catch your eye in this place? Use stickers from our reference boards or use post-its anywhere on this poster. Every idea counts!

Feel free to post stickers and post-its onto the photo or the illustration!

How often do you walk past this place?
(tick a relevant colour circle and place it in the bubble)

Feeling super creative overthinking with ideas? Take one of colouring sheets on the table and draw your vision. Post it on walls with #SquarePuzzle or on our blue wall for everyone to see. We will be monitoring the wall in the process on our idea in fact. You can download the black colouring sheet on link below for the digital tablet version.

Entrance 4

This place in the future can be one of the main entry points to a pedestrian environment. How you have a chance to make it attractive and useful for the community.

What would catch your eye in this place? Use stickers from our reference boards or use post-its anywhere on this poster. Every idea counts!

Feel free to post stickers and post-its onto the photo or the illustration!

How often do you walk past this place?
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Entrance 5

This place in the future can be one of the main entry points to a pedestrian environment. How you have a chance to make it attractive and useful for the community.

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Entrance 1

This place in the future can be one of the main entry points to a pedestrian environment. How you have a chance to make it attractive and useful for the community.

What would catch your eye in this place? Use stickers from our reference boards or use post-its anywhere on this poster. Every idea counts!

Feel free to post stickers and post-its onto the photo or the illustration!

How often do you walk past this place?
(tick a relevant colour circle and place it in the bubble)

Feeling super creative overthinking with ideas? Take one of colouring sheets on the table and draw your vision. Post it on walls with #SquarePuzzle or on our blue wall for everyone to see. We will be monitoring the wall in the process on our idea in fact. You can download the black colouring sheet on link below for the digital tablet version.

Entrance 2

This place in the future can be one of the main entry points to a pedestrian environment. How you have a chance to make it attractive and useful for the community.

What would catch your eye in this place? Use stickers from our reference boards or use post-its anywhere on this poster. Every idea counts!

Feel free to post stickers and post-its onto the photo or the illustration!

How often do you walk past this place?
(tick a relevant colour circle and place it in the bubble)

Feeling super creative overthinking with ideas? Take one of colouring sheets on the table and draw your vision. Post it on walls with #SquarePuzzle or on our blue wall for everyone to see. We will be monitoring the wall in the process on our idea in fact. You can download the black colouring sheet on link below for the digital tablet version.

ideas from the suggestion box

(some have the same handwriting as they were written by Betty during discussion with visitors)

- dropped curbs
- more lights
- pedestrianise Church Rd.
- water features
- keep parking regenerate existing
- piece garden - with water
- St. Cathrines church garden → for people ...
- public BBQ places ...
- derelict sites to be fixed and used...
- plans for site after demolition condition to make pleasant
- use of solar energy → panels as roofs
- annual light show
- I think there should be a electric tram way to the beach from Port Erin station
- art on Church Rd to bring people in
- area for motorhomes
- flowers shrubs small trees
- Tramoline
- make a litter play area
- to support businesses
- bus to Sound
- e-bike rental
- adaptable places day - families night - youngs
- sculpture park/expo

Colour

Asphalt art, murals or colour coded areas, navigation elements, seating etc.



Shelter

If you are hiding from the rain, sun or seagulls, you should not stop chatting to your friends



Seating

Flexible, mobile and adjustable seating for all.



Swings

...for all ages
For the restless who can't sit still.
Either classical swing or a hammock to chill, or
multiple to talk with your friend.



Lighting

Light that makes the space safer more legible, can add atmosphere or be an art piece on its own.



Greenery

Trees, blooming baskets or patches of wild flowers for the bees. Maybe even community garden to pick some herbs or fruits? Plants that crawl or hang all are welcome.



...and more

Random elements inspired by the consultations





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