

Project 24 is an innovative project which has brought vibrancy to Queen's Parade in Bangor. The project has created footfall and enhanced a once derelict area.

Who

Project 24 allows artists to work, showcase, sell and engage with the public, creating activity on Queen's Parade. The hub has created a shared space for the community to come together to enjoy a variety of events.

Why

With current economic challenges in town centres and stalled private sector investment, it was proposed to initiate a partnership programme of work to stimulate business, particularly footfall, enhance the local environment and lay down the foundations for future partnership and investment. A board was developed to investigate, develop and implement the project. This project cuts across the themes of economic development, tourism, arts, culture, marketing and community development.

The project proposal encompassed the need to increase footfall in the area with the concept of having Artists in residence in yearly phases.

The proposal sought to pull together a series of themes that collectively contribute to regeneration (short and medium term).

Project 24 is a unique temporary art project at Bangor seafront. It includes 12 artist studios which are open to the public, an event space, youth activities, a performance area and projection space. The project also houses a community garden and landscaped areas. All of the pods are lit up at night and are open for the artists to work anytime within a 24 hour day.

The project's aim was to address the derelict site on Queen's parade and through regeneration create a better experience for visitors and residents. Equally by creating temporary businesses the project sought to support business development. The project aims to build on the town's vibrant art and craft scene by creating a new space for artists to work and display their craftwork. The project involves:

- Six colourful bespoke pods that will provide 12 mini studios for local artists (after two years the pods will be relocated to another site(s) within the town to sustain the venture). Each Pod is fully fitted with water, power and heat and will house two artist studios where the public can view the artist's work.
- Landscaping of the area around the pods to create seating and performance space for events and displays.
- Creating a new community garden offering local people the opportunity to grow plants and vegetables.
- Rolling out a series of events and business support programmes

Where and When

Project 24 was opened to the public in April 2013. It has created a vibrant visitor attraction on Queen's Parade. The project has also helped develop artists' careers and create new businesses in the borough.

Themes

Project 24 has helped with sustaining tourism, enhancing the economy and creating social impact. By developing derelict land between Main Street and Pickie Funpark the visitor experience has been enhanced. The family events at the hub have also created footfall and helped with resident and council relations and brought customers for local shops and cafes.

Sustainability

Project 24 is an excellent example of sustainability as it embodies the three pillars of sustainable development.

Economic Sustainability – Project 24 helps to create new markets for artists to be able to sell their products to. It includes increasing the skills and business management of artists so that they can use these skills to better manage their businesses and increase their future economic sustainability. As Project 24 bridges a once derelict gap between Main Street and Pickie Fun Park, this offers the visitor a better experience in Bangor and more opportunity to contribute to the local economy.

Social Sustainability – Project 24 provides a much needed green space in an urban environment. The landscaping of the area enables people to sit and enjoy the area while interacting with other people. Well-being is improved by local communities being able to enjoy the fact that a derelict site and its associated anti-social behaviour has been transformed into a vibrant, well-utilised and safe space. A knock on social impact of the project has included additional spaces in the Queens Parade vicinity also being cleaned up and being used in an urban art scheme.

Environmental Sustainability – Project 24 has resulted in the creation of an urban habitat in the form of a community garden. This environmental aspect of the project has involved planting a community garden that includes bee friendly species as well as space for fruit and vegetables to be grown.

Impact within Town Centre

Project 24 has raised the profile of Bangor Town Centre bringing economic benefit. A safe, attractive and enticing place for the local community to visit, enjoy and learn. Encouraging connection and interaction with the Artists, the pods are open to the public at all times.

Project 24 will be transferable to alternative locations within the Borough, thereby creating a sustainable art space elsewhere, continuing the longevity of the project and continued support for the community.

Project 24 does not restrict development and the long term regeneration proposals have not been compromised.

The Project has halted the spiral of decay at this prime seafront location and utilises the vacant land between Bangor Town Centre and an important visitor attraction, Pickie Fun Park. It promotes the use of arts and cultural activities to stimulate town centre footfall and improved consumer loyalty.

Project 24 is a focal point for art exhibitions, sculpture exhibitions and visual art displays, increasing footfall and visitor numbers.

Local community and visitors have the unique opportunity to learn a new skill, whilst meeting and engaging with the Artists and the Artist community. A diverse range of workshops are available, offering involvement and providing personal accomplishment.

Project 24 creates varied experiences for the community, creating lasting memories. Capturing imagination in a range of forms and creating opportunities.