

# YOUR GATEWAY TO EUROPE

A Borough of innovation and opportunity  
for lifestyle and investment



# 01

## Welcome to Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

**If you're reading about Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council for the first time, we're delighted to welcome you to your gateway to Europe.**

As a young, dynamic and fast-growing Borough located close to Belfast, we have already developed an enviable reputation as a great place to do business, for a number of reasons:

We have a highly educated and skilled young workforce, advanced infrastructure, a wealth of state-of-the-art business facilities, competitive operating costs (30% on average lower operating costs than the rest of the UK), and a convenient location that makes mainland Europe accessible within 24 hours.

**Already, we have 4,020 Vat registered businesses operating in our locality and over 80% of the working age in employment.**

Already, some of the world's leading companies, across many diverse sectors, realise the economic benefits of trading in a region that offers fast, easy access to two international ports and three airports (two in Belfast as well as one in Dublin).

Ours is a region of real opportunity – and with so much to offer businesses seeking expansion opportunities, whatever your industry happens to be, we're here to help you grow. We hope this booklet will give you a flavour of the many exciting benefits our region has to offer when it comes to business, infrastructure, education, people, and, of course, lifestyle.

*Our team at Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is always ready to welcome new businesses to our region.*

So, if you're ready to start on your journey - or you'd simply like to find out more about us and the great opportunities we have to offer - **please get in touch and together we'll get started!**



**Jacqui Dixon**  
Chief Executive

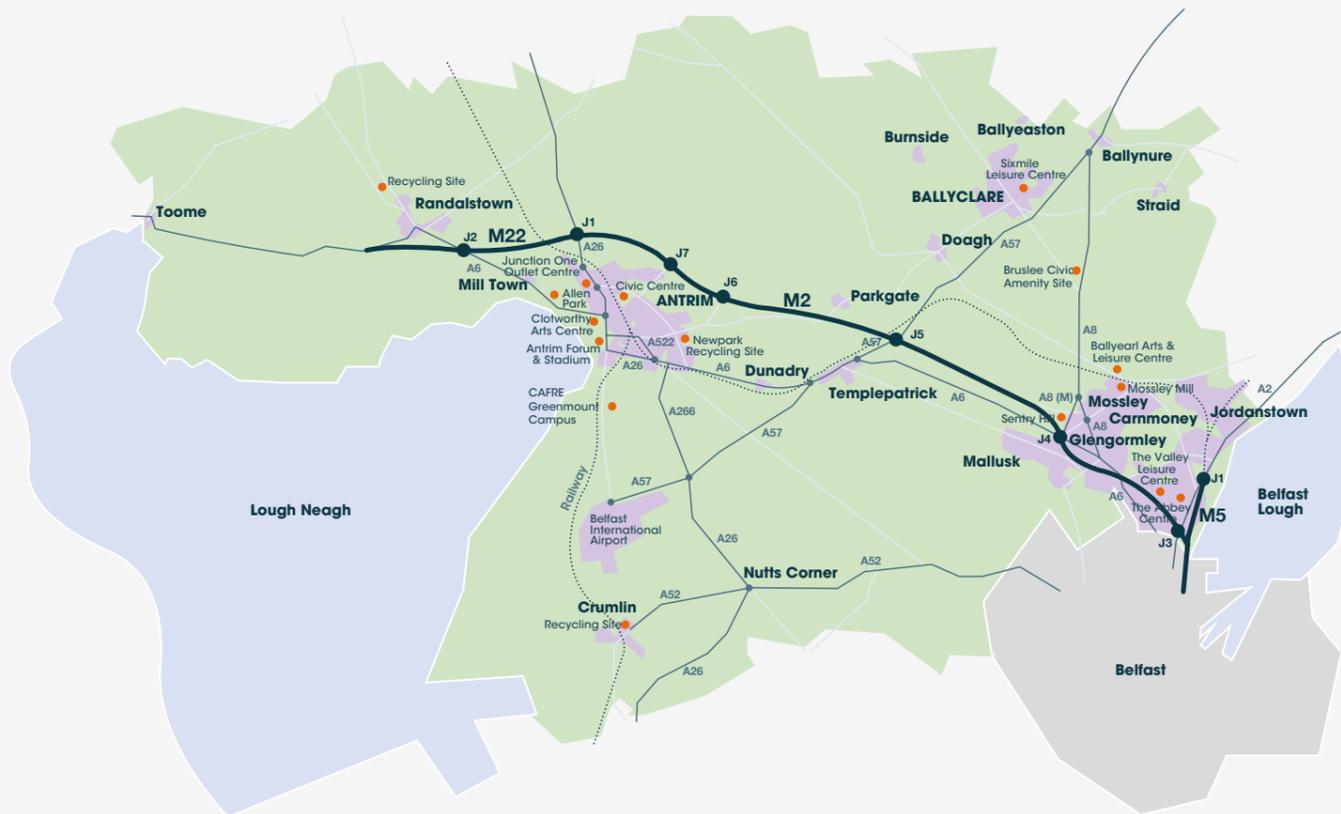


# 02

## Our strategic location...

Comprising 274 sq. miles, from the shores of Lough Neagh in the West to the shores of Belfast Lough in the East, our Borough occupies an important strategic position within Northern Ireland.

Our northern boundary with Ballymena leads to the stunning Glens of Antrim and the thriving Port of Larne, while to the south our Borough borders the bustling cities of Belfast and Lisburn.



# 03

## At a glance: Our region by numbers...

We have a Borough Population of

# 141,000



# 6,000,000

passengers per annum arriving and departing through Belfast International Airport - Northern Ireland's largest gateway

# 2

 other airports (George Best Belfast City and Dublin) accessible within 90 minutes, ensuring easy and direct access to over 180 destinations in 40 countries

# 3 HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES

3 higher education facilities with over 20,000 students



# 27%

 educated to degree level or above

# 400,000

annual visitors providing 3,400 beds in quality accommodation across the Borough

# 65,000



vehicles passing by each day on the M2 corridor (one of 3 major transport corridors through the area)

# 3

 theatres

# 2

 hospitals

# 3,000

 micro-businesses

# 4,020

 VAT registered businesses

# 30%

 30%\* lower operating costs than the rest of the UK \*(on average)

# 70%

 of the working age population employed in the private sector

## 04

## Our vision...

**Having a clear, focused and achievable vision is vital for any ambitious, strategic and forward-thinking organisation.**

That's why ours is simple, and 100% focused on making our area better for everyone who lives, works, invests and visits:

*'To create a prosperous **place**, inspired by our **people**, driven by **ambition**'.*

Place	People	Prosperity
A place where people take pride in their surroundings	Our communities will have access to high-quality services and facilities	We identify and support entrepreneurship, have a strong competitive advantage and are a centre of excellence for leading-edge companies
A place where people feel safe	Our community is inclusive and supportive and encourages a culture of tolerance, diversity and respect	We have a world-class infrastructure which attracts inward investment and supports productivity, exports and business growth
A place where people use or recycle their waste	We communicate clearly with our residents, listen to their feedback and respond to their needs	We stimulate business activity to sustain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities
A place where we protect and enhance, where possible, our natural habitat and built heritage	We will achieve excellence in customer and service quality standards, which will be recognised through accreditation schemes	We maximise tourism opportunities and have a strong arts and cultural economy

## 05

## Our mission...

**As with our vision, we wanted our mission statement to reflect our purpose: in other words, who we are and what our role is within the wider community.**

As a Borough Council, we realise that our achievements are never about us as an organisation: everything we do is on behalf of the people and interests we serve.

That's why our mission is "to meet and exceed the needs and aspirations of our people and be recognised for leadership and excellence both locally and beyond".

*"to meet and exceed the needs and aspirations of our people and be recognised for leadership and excellence both locally and beyond".*



# 06

## Our goal: Creating prosperity...

**Our commitment to prosperity as set out in our Corporate Plan 2015-2030, is that “we will encourage and support economic growth in our Borough to create a vibrant and prosperous economy, which is attractive to new, as well as existing businesses”.**

**Our goals for 2030 are to:**

- Identify and support entrepreneurship, maintain a strong competitive business advantage and remain a centre of excellence for leading-edge companies
- Support and develop a world-class infrastructure which will attract inward investment and support productivity, exports and business growth
- Stimulate business activity to sustain existing employment and create new employment opportunities



# 07

## Home to many large global businesses...

**With ready access to major ports and airports, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough is your ideal gateway to Europe.**

Why? Because as well as being home to almost 4,000 registered businesses, our region is also a major centre for companies operating in the **Advanced Manufacturing, Materials and Engineering, Construction, Life and Health Sciences and Digital and Creative sectors.**

**Our leading-edge companies include:**



## 08

## Turnover and employment by sector...

**With over 55,000 people employed in businesses across a diverse range of industry sectors, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council has to date attracted £64.3m investment from US companies.**

It also generates over £1.5bn annually for the Northern Ireland economy.

Industry	2015	%
Human Health & Social Work Activities	10,969	19.6
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles & Motorcycles	10,829	19.4
Manufacturing	7,370	13.2
Education	5,485	9.8
Transportation & Storage	5,240	9.4
Administrative & Support Service Activities	3,160	5.6
Accommodation & Food Service Activities	2,766	4.9
Construction	2,587	4.6
Public Administration & Defence; Compulsory Social Security	1,835	3.3
Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities	1,465	2.6
Information & Communication	981	1.8
Other Service Activities	982	1.8
Arts, Education & Recreation	660	1.2
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waster Management & Remediation Activities	559	1.0
Financial & Insurance Activities	473	0.8
Real Estate Activities	241	0.4
Electricity, Gas, Steam & Air Conditioning Supply	193	0.3
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	79	0.1
Mining & Quarrying	63	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,937</b>	<b>100</b>

## 09

## A highly skilled and cost-competitive workforce...

**Both our Borough and Northern Ireland as a region, offer extremely favourable economic conditions, including a young and highly skilled workforce, and one of the lowest cost bases in Europe.**

**On an international level,** Northern Ireland's reputation as a key European inward investment location is based on a number of important statistics:

- Its population of **1.8 million people** is one of Europe's youngest and fastest growing, with **53% of the population under the age of 40**
- On **GVA per capita** - a measure of the overall prosperity of our economies - Northern Ireland is achieving an **average of £19,352** compared with the **UK average of £25,593** (including London and the South East)
- Our education system has long been recognised as among the best in Europe; almost **20% of public expenditure is on education**, and Northern Ireland consistently outperforms all other UK regions when it comes to academic qualifications

**Within a Northern Ireland regional context,** latest available economic data shows that Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council exceeds the national average in a number of key areas:

- **80.5%** of the working age (16-64) population in our Borough are in employment: **over 6% higher** than the NI national average of **74%** (2016 figures)
- **£23,140** is the mean average earnings: **almost £2,000 more** than the NI national average of £21,268 (2016 figures)
- **76% of school leavers** progress to further and higher education, with 41.3% moving into higher education compared to the Northern Ireland national average of 42.9%

*“Even though Northern Ireland's average employment outputs are extremely cost-effective in comparison with other parts of the UK, our Borough still manages to out-perform our regional counterparts across a range of key economic indicators.”*

# 10

## Superb commercial property without the high costs...

### Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough offers exceptional property options for every type of business across all industry sectors.

As well as having an abundance of high-quality office, retail and industrial space at prices that compete favourably with any city in Western Europe, we also offer dedicated pioneering centres for companies operating in the technology, science, and digital/creative industries.

"Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough has an exceptional mix of commercial units to suit every type of business across every industry sector."

#### (i) Key Industrial Sites & Business Parks

- 1. Global Point, Newtownabbey:** 87 hectares of prime, developable land available zoned for industrial use
- 2. Belfast International Airport:** 400-hectare site available for development
- 3. Nutts Corner:** extensive lands available for development
- 4. Mallusk Industrial Estate, Newtownabbey**
- 5. Antrim Technology Park, Antrim**
- 6. Enkalon, Kilbegs Rathenraw, Steeple, Newpark and Springfarm Industrial Estates, Antrim**

#### (ii) Operating costs

Northern Ireland offers one of my most cost-efficient business environments in Europe, for the following reasons\*:

- Operating costs **average 20% to 30% less** than the rest of the UK and Europe
- Corporation Tax levels here are already the lowest in the G20, at 20% with plans to reduce to 12.5%
- Salaries are **56% lower** than New York, **30% lower** than London and **20% lower** than Dublin
- The overall tax burden in Northern Ireland is the lowest of all the major European economies

\* Source: [www.investni.com/invest-in-northern-ireland/competitive-operating-costs.html](http://www.investni.com/invest-in-northern-ireland/competitive-operating-costs.html)

#### (iii) Office rents

Prime office rents in Northern Ireland are amongst the lowest in the world; a prime office space in the greater Belfast area will cost as little as **£18 per sq. ft**, compared with **£51 per sq. ft** in Dublin, **£70 per sq. ft** in London and **£86 per sq. ft** in New York.

#### (iv) Retail centres

With its small land-mass and excellent transport links, Northern Ireland offers a wealth of outstanding retail opportunities across its many towns and cities.

However, with a population of over **140,000 people**, and almost **400,000 visitors** annually, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council offers enormous potential for retail businesses seeking expansion opportunities.

We are home to **Abbey Centre Retail Park** and **The Junction**, two of Northern Ireland's best-known and most popular out-of-town retail parks:



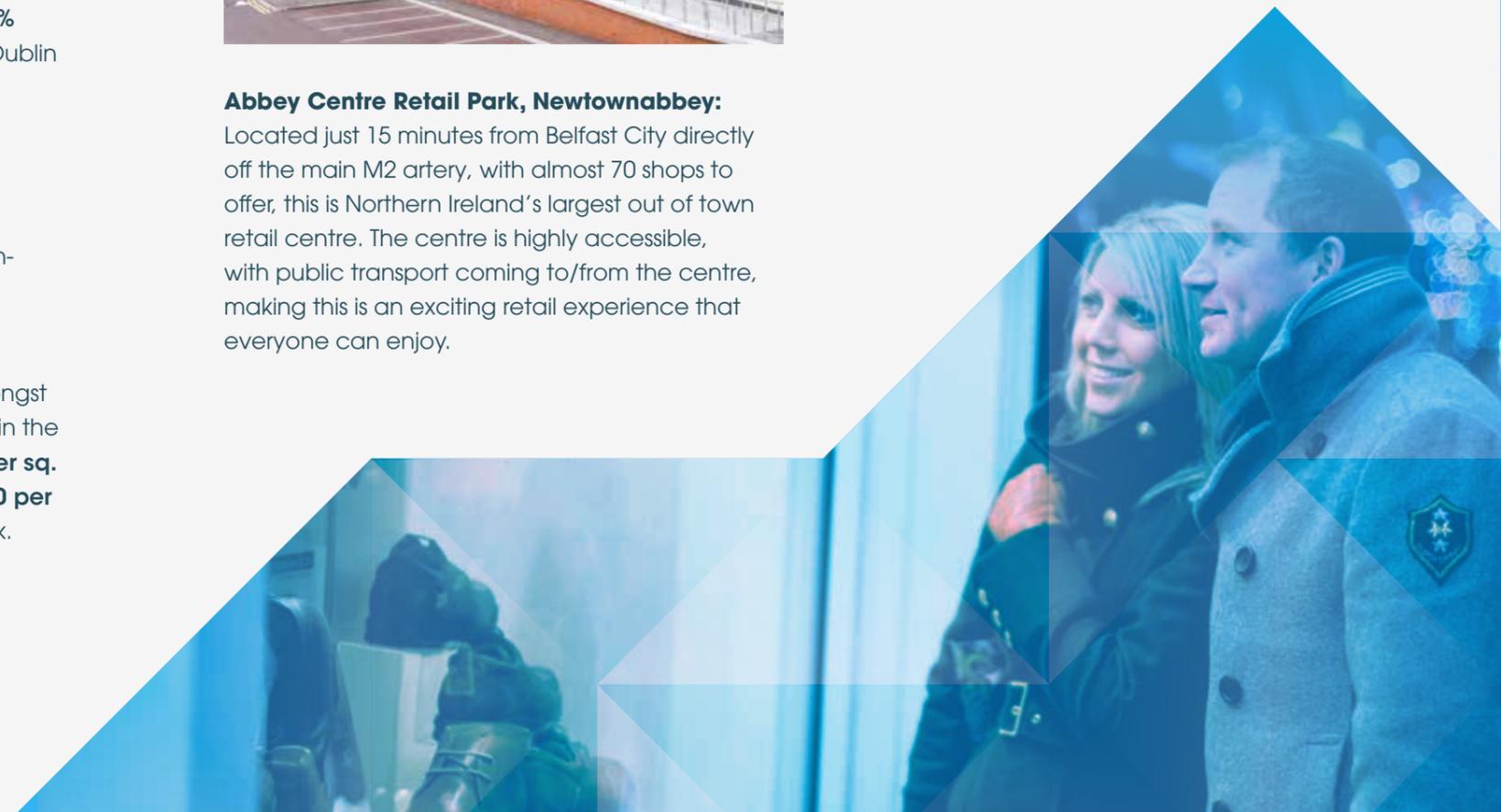
#### The Junction International Outlet Centre, Antrim:

Located just 20 miles north of Belfast (Junction 1 of the M2/M22), 20 miles from Belfast International Airport, and 20 minutes from Belfast City Airport, Northern Ireland's premier outlet centre has over 30 shops as well as a 10-screen cinema. The Junction is the ideal stop-off for visitors heading northwards en route to major tourist attractions such as the Giants Causeway.



#### Abbey Centre Retail Park, Newtownabbey:

Located just 15 minutes from Belfast City directly off the main M2 artery, with almost 70 shops to offer, this is Northern Ireland's largest out of town retail centre. The centre is highly accessible, with public transport coming to/from the centre, making this an exciting retail experience that everyone can enjoy.



## 11

## First class infrastructure...

**Northern Ireland has a high-quality transport and communications infrastructure which makes doing business here easier, more efficient, and a lot more cost-effective.**

**(i) Quality transport links**

- **Our first-rate road, rail and air networks** have minimal levels of congestion, and the European continent is accessible within 24 hours
- **Our 2 airports** service almost **8 million passengers** (6m through Belfast International Airport and 2 million for George Best Belfast City Airport) per annum:

**Belfast International Airport**, located just 20 miles from Belfast city centre, offers direct daily flights to the USA (New York and Boston), the UK, as well as to cities in France, Portugal, Italy and Spain.

**George Best City Airport** is also easily accessible to the Borough, offering direct routes to London and other major UK cities, as well as to destinations in mainland Europe, including the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

**Dublin Airport** is just 90 minutes by road and offers direct flights to over 180 destinations in 40 countries on 4 continents.

- **The 2 major ports of Belfast and Larne** are also within easy reach of our Borough, serving key ports in the North West of England and Scotland.

**(ii) World-class fibre optic broadband**

Northern Ireland's communications infrastructure is renowned as state-of-the-art. It became the first region in Europe to achieve **100% broadband coverage** and provides a fully digital, fully fibre-optic communications network.

Within a regional context, Antrim and Newtownabbey enjoys a high level of broadband connectivity relative to other parts of the country and is ranked **4th best** in the country.

Finally, the Borough has **direct access to a transatlantic fibre-optic cable that links North America to Europe**; this gives local companies access to the same international telecommunications services found in cities such as London, Amsterdam and New York.



# 12

## Quality education at every stage...

**At every stage of the education system - from primary to post-primary and all the way through to further / higher education institutions - Northern Ireland's education system is consistently one of the best-performing in the UK.**

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough has an excellent choice of educational providers offering a strong talent pool for investors, across a range of sectors:

The Borough is home to 53 primary Schools, 10 post primary and 7 special schools.



## And a great choice of Further Education (FE) & Higher Education (HE) learning options...

<b>Ulster University</b>	In the world's top 100 young universities A wide range of vocational, technical, professional programmes Intelligent Systems Research Centre is a globally recognised ICT research facility
<b>Queens University Belfast</b>	Top 1% of global universities Operates Centre for Secure Information Technologies (CSIT), UK Innovation & Knowledge Hub for Information security
<b>Northern Regional College, Newtownabbey</b>	Provides training to support the construction, engineering, and advanced manufacturing sectors
<b>CAFRE Agricultural College, Antrim</b>	A suite of courses in land-based studies, agriculture and horticulture
<b>Assured Skills</b>	A cutting-edge service that delivers tailored training for both existing firms and new inward-investing companies
<b>Skills Academies</b>	Bespoke training for companies across a range of disciplines including Data Analytics, Software Development & Testing, Cyber Security, Animation and Game Development



# 13

## A superb place to visit, stay and play...

**With its rich cultural and natural heritage,  
Antrim and Newtownabbey is a wonderful  
place to visit.**

With its ancient landscape, moulded by over 7,000 years of history, nestling beautifully between Belfast Lough and Lough Neagh, the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles, our Borough is perfect for thrill seekers, photographers, walkers, or families looking for the perfect day out.

*With 10 quality hotels providing 631 bedrooms and 1,295 beds, 32 additional catered accommodation providers, and 96 self-catering operators, our 400,000 annual visitors help to create and sustain local jobs and build a thriving economy for the future.*





If you like what you see and would like to learn more about how we can help your business, contact us.

**Economic Development**

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