

Derry/Londonderry

County Derry/County Londonderry

'Mark Three' New Town – Designated 5 February 1969

Unlike Craigavon and Antrim, Derry/Londonderry was not designated to attract overspill population from Belfast but as a means of delivering economic and industrial development and reducing unemployment. Derry/Londonderry has had to cope with an inherent sense of physical isolation, as well as enduring 25 years of violence and civil unrest. Its strategic location on a river estuary in Ireland's North West has historically and geographically defined its role over the centuries as the principal city of the region. Today, Derry/Londonderry is a major service centre for the region. It has some pockets of severe deprivation and has suffered in the economic downturn, but is undertaking an ambitious regeneration programme to address its problems. It is a university city and was UK Capital of Culture in 2013.



Zoecreative (Wikimedia Commons)

Key facts:

- **Location:** 120 kilometres north west of Belfast.
- **2011 Census population:** 87,820, in 33,814 households.¹
- **Local authority:** Derry City Council, Department of the Environment Northern Ireland Executive.
- **Local Plan status:** Derry Area Plan 2011 (adopted 2000). Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland up to 2025. Regeneration Plan for Derry/Londonderry.

New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 5 February 1969.
- **Designated area:** 36,610 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 94,500 (population at designation: 82,000).
- **Development Corporation:** Worked to an Area Plan that was like a New Town masterplan but included both strategic and local objectives. Detailed plans for each area of the city followed. Development Corporation wound up 1 October 1973.

Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Derry/Londonderry that are owner-occupied (53.9%) is 4.8% and 9.6% lower than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively. 25.7% of households are in social rent – 4.3% and 7.7% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively.
- In the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010, Derry/Londonderry local government district ranks 3 out of 26 (1 = most deprived).
- The 2011 Census reported that 47.6% of Derry/Londonderry residents declared themselves to be in 'very good' health – in line with the UK average and 0.9% higher than the UK New Towns average. 29.4% declared themselves to be in 'good' health – a little over 4% lower than the UK New Towns and UK averages. 5.8% declared 'bad' health – approximately 1.5% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages. Around 0.4% more people declared 'very bad' health than the UK New Towns and UK averages.

Employment/economic profile:

- The city is a major service centre and provides shopping, educational and other services for its district and for the neighbouring districts of Limavady, Strabane and parts of County Donegal.
- The 2011 Regeneration Plan notes that the city sits at, or near the bottom of, the league table of UK urban areas in a range of measures, including the employment rate, the rate of youth unemployment, the economic inactivity rate, the proportion of the working-age population with no qualifications, levels of benefit dependency, resident wages levels, and the concentration of professional services employment. However, the Regeneration Plan is set to transform the city through a series of regeneration and investment initiatives.

Development Corporation legacy:

- A reference to 'planned settlements' as a built environment legacy is included in the 2011 Area Plan.
- Despite political instability, the thrust of the original Area Plan has been achieved on the ground.

Key issues for the future:

- Improving employment and the economy through regeneration programmes, and building on opportunities arising from the return of town planning powers and functions to local authorities in April 2015.
- Improving skills and employment and expanding the higher-education offer in the city.
- Building better communities through the Foyle Valley Gateway initiative and the regeneration of neighbourhoods and the public realm.
- Encouraging healthier lifestyles and health for all.
- Promoting sustainability by improving transport and promoting the green economy.
- Establishing a city development limit to prevent sprawl, using a Green Belt designation.

¹ Totals for the following wards: Altnagelvin, Ballynashallog, Beechwood, Brandywell, Carn Hill, Caw, Clondermot, Creggan Central, Creggan South, Crevagh, Culmore, Ebrington, Enagh, Foyle Spring, Kilfennan, Lisnagelvin, Pennyburn, Rosemount, Shantallow East, Shantallow West, Springtown, Stand, The Diamond, Victoria, Westland

Did you know?

The 17th century walls that encircle the old city centre make Derry the most complete walled city on the island of Ireland.