

# A Vision for Celbridge: Perspectives from Celbridge Community Council



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## Background

Celbridge Community Council's mission is to improve the quality of life for all community members across all stages of life. It supports community well-being through services that target the groups most in need, it promotes local initiatives and services and positively influences the future development of Celbridge. [Celbridge Community Council](#) (CCC) is a voluntary organisation made up of members of the local community.

We identified a need for a vision for the future of Celbridge, a vision that speaks to both community services and infrastructure development. The vision will influence CCC internally in the provision of services. It will shape the positions CCC takes on issues of Celbridge planning and development. It also forms a basis for conversations with the broader communities of Celbridge and the various stakeholders including elected representatives and state bodies.

In June 2023, we held a brainstorming session for Celbridge Community Council members, to gather input for the vision. A report is available outlining the process, the verbatim inputs, and outcomes from that session. With the support of CCC Executive, a smaller group of people further refined that input to create the vision outlined below. It was then considered and approved by a full Council meeting in February 2025.

The purpose of this document is to articulate both the high-level vision and to provide some additional explanatory material to expand on the concepts and thinking. We intend for it to be a starting point in discussions with the community of Celbridge and various stakeholders, rather than a finalized position. We recognise that others may have similar, differing or complementary views and we welcome discussion on these.

## Vision Summary

Our vision for Celbridge is one for a town and community where:

### Community

- Comprehensive social facilities, services and networks support wellbeing through all stages of life.
- Vibrant amenities underpin arts and leisure activities.
- We embrace our community identity and diversity, building on our culture and heritage.

### Locality

- The town centre is rejuvenated and people-focused with an inviting, historically sympathetic streetscape.
- The River Liffey and adjoining historical estates are utilised to their full potential for both the people of Celbridge and visitors.
- Active, accessible travel is encouraged through a sustainable local transport network.

Each of these statements is explored in more detail below.

## Social Supports

### Vision statement

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*Comprehensive social facilities, services and networks support wellbeing through all stages of life.*

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### Detailed view

One can judge a community by how it treats its most vulnerable. Celbridge should provide a series of supports for residents at all stages of life to aid them through life's challenges. We should create equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

This should be reflected in a full suite of services and infrastructure: a day centre for the elderly, youth services and facilities, a family resource centre. Provision for these is sporadic and should be built upon, along with more essential facilities, including (but not limited to) a completed education campus and an expanded primary health care centre. Persons with disabilities need modifications to existing services and amenities to provide full access.

### Related Initiatives

- [Parochial House](#) masterplan.
- [Celbridge Education Campus](#).

- Celbridge Community Council’s volunteer-based services for [the elderly](#), [mothers with babies](#) and [the youth](#).
- Existing social supports such as [Dara](#), In Sync, etc.

## Amenities for Arts and Leisure

### Vision statement

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*Vibrant amenities underpin arts and leisure activities.*

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### Detailed view

Despite strong community groups in both the visual arts and theatre, Celbridge has an unmet need for a theatre/performance space and dedicated visual art display areas.

Playgrounds and exercise areas need to be expanded for all age groups: only one playground is open to the public and provision for youth facilities is very low.

While there are a number of vibrant sports clubs, Celbridge currently lacks public playing pitches for team sports and a sport centre that can support a wider variety of sports, such as swimming, handball, squash, etc.

### Related Initiatives

- [Donaghcumper Estate](#) masterplan.
- [Parochial House](#) masterplan.

## Culture and Diversity

### Vision statement

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*We embrace our community identity and diversity, building on our culture and heritage.*

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### Detailed view

Celbridge’s rich and storied built heritage provides a strong basis for exploring and celebrating the underlying culture. Initiatives such as the Swift and Vanessa Festival should be nurtured and expanded upon. Celbridge should be promoted as a tourist destination alongside Castletown, in partnership with Leixlip and Maynooth.

Celbridge's people, of course, increasingly come from much further afield than the town, whether that be from other parts of Ireland or from other countries. We all bring our own narrative, our own history, our own cultural background and Celbridge should be a location where we feel that there is a welcome for, and interest in, these in all their diversity.

We wish to nurture a strong sense of community, where inputs and participation from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences are valued and celebrated.

## Related Initiatives

- Celbridge Heritage and Tourism Forum.
- Festivals such as the [Swift and Vanessa Festival](#) and the [St Patrick's Day Parade](#).

## Town Centre Rejuvenation

### Vision statement

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*The town centre is rejuvenated and people-focused with an inviting, historically sympathetic streetscape.*

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### Detailed view

Currently, Main Street and English Row has a heavy car presence, with two lanes, four regional roads converging on the bridge, and on-street parking on both sides of the street. Welcome improvements such as the undergrounding of cables on Main Street and the addition of two parklets, have begun to make for a more pleasant environment.

Further improvements are needed to make Main Street more pedestrian friendly. Completion of the cable undergrounding and the removal of unnecessary signage would enhance the ambiance. Enhancements such new artwork should be explored. Ultimately, with other infrastructure such as the second bridge in place, reductions in vehicular traffic on Main Street will increase the space available to non-motorized traffic and increase attractiveness to pedestrians.

The retail offering on Main Street should be strengthened, to become a self-sustaining shopping area. A new retail strategy is needed, addressing store mix, scale, and accessibility (both for pedestrians and car parking).

### Related Initiatives

- [Celbridge Town Renewal Masterplan](#)

## Orientating Celbridge towards the River Liffey

### Vision statement

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*The River Liffey and adjoining historical estates are utilised to their full potential for both the people of Celbridge and visitors.*

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### Detailed view

Public access and the public realm alongside the Liffey are largely confined to north of the town centre, in Castletown, and to the south, in the Abbeyfarm residential estate. Between these two, the public has very limited or no access to the River Liffey. Essentially, the town faces away from the river.

The vision here focused on the idea of opening up more of the riverbanks to the public and developing these as amenities, bringing elements of river life to Celbridge. These could be additional parks accessible to the public along the Liffey, the occasional café or restaurant facing such a space, a pedestrian route through the heart of Celbridge away from busy roads, and so on.

There are significant challenges and opportunities in realizing such a vision. There is the question of preservation of heritage, both historical and natural. Only some of the key properties are in public ownership. Even where land is publicly owned, coordination is needed between key stakeholders such as the OPW, KCC, and the local communities generally.

However, this is the one item with high potential to transform how we experience and perceive Celbridge, from a vehicular-dominated Main Steet and English Row, to a town centre with a pedestrian-focused river lifestyle.

### Related Initiatives

- [Liffey Valley Park strategy](#)
- [Donaghcumper Estate](#) master plan (and any tie-in to Castletown)
- [Celbridge Town Renewal Masterplan](#)

## A Sustainable Local Transport Network

### Vision statement

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*Active, accessible travel is encouraged through a sustainable local transport network.*

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## Detailed view

We envision a large modal shift away from private motor vehicles towards public transport, cycling and walking, both within the town and between Celbridge and Dublin and other local towns.

Improved connectivity with Hazelhatch train station is needed, to take advantage of existing commuter and future DART+ services. Similarly, improved connectivity to Lousia Bridge train station would benefit the northern sections of Celbridge. Bicycle storage facilities need to be improved.

Significant investment in segregated cycleways is needed and these should connect to evolving greenway trails, e.g. along the Grand Canal. Delivery of key road projects such as the second bridge can aid diversion of motorized traffic away from pedestrian and cycling routes. Most pedestrian arterial routes leading to the town centre face the challenge of poor accessibility and close proximity to heavy vehicular traffic.

## Related Initiatives

- Celbridge-Leixlip [Area Based Transport Assessment](#) (ABTA)
- Existing infrastructure projects including [DART+](#), the [second bridge](#) and the [active travel bridge](#).
- [Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan](#)
- Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029: [Sustainable Mobility & Transport](#).

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## About Celbridge Community Council (CCC)

Celbridge Community Council's mission is to improve the quality of life for community members across all stages of life by

- supporting community well-being through services that target the groups most in need;
- promoting local initiatives and services; and
- positively influencing the future development of Celbridge.

It has a long tradition of providing services for older people in Celbridge. These include the Seniors Alert Scheme (on behalf of Pobal), Meals on Wheels, Care & Repair and Befriending schemes. CCC also runs the Celbridge Youth Café and the Celbridge Mum & Baby Group. Celbridge's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is also organized by CCC.

Celbridge Community Council has a long history of advocating for appropriate and sustainable development in Celbridge across many dimensions. The organization has wide representation from many areas of the town and aims to consider and represent the interests of the whole of the town. In the last ten years, CCC has made over 25 submissions on a wide range of planning and development related topics including:

## *A Vision for Celbridge*

- Local development plans including the Celbridge Local Area Plan, the Celbridge Town Renewal Masterplan, and the Kildare County Development Plan
- Strategic Housing Development Applications to An Board Pleanála
- County council road and greenway proposals
- Transport planning such as the NTA's BusConnects network redesign plan
- Relevant national and regional strategic frameworks such as the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for Eastern & Midlands Region.

For a comprehensive list of CCC's submissions, please see

<http://celbridgecommunitycouncil.ie/planning-development-submissions/>.

Celbridge Community Council is structured as a voluntary, not-for-profit charity.