



MARITIME MILE

Marketing & Engagement Plan



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Executive Summary

The Marketing and Engagement Plan for the Maritime Mile, June 2020 to March 2023, is a blueprint developed to guide the area's communications and marketing programmes over the next 3 years. Aimed at boosting the Maritime Mile's brand awareness, visitation revenues and delivering a series of outreach initiatives, to stimulate curiosity, discovery and connectivity with local communities and Belfast's waterfront. The plan will be a key component of the Development and Animation Strategy for the Maritime Mile and serves as a roadmap for annually developed work plans that detail the specific tactics designed to advance the wider Maritime Belfast agenda.

The Maritime Mile is a curated experience that connects and celebrates Belfast's vibrant heritage waterfront for everyone. It can play a key role in supporting Belfast's recovery post COVID-19 and immediate short term initiatives are integrated into the plan. These will be kept under constant review as the current situation evolves.

Launching the vibrant new brand identity for the Maritime Mile is exciting, but there are challenges to overcome before the brand is adopted, used and loved.

This plan is designed to take a long-term brand building approach. Firstly, the plan aims to appeal to a wide audience with a mass targeting approach to raise awareness and communicate what the Maritime Mile is and why should people visit.

At the same time, it has a community marketing approach at its heart. Building from the ground up, working with local communities to create a sense of ownership for the Maritime Mile, connecting people from parts of the city that currently do not feel a connection to the area.

Employees have been identified as one of the key markets and they are crucial to the success of this plan. Every day, thousands of people arrive on the Maritime Mile and leave immediately after work, they will be the group that transforms how the Maritime Mile is seen.

Another key aim is to motivate stakeholders to engage with and to deliver this Marketing and Engagement Plan, to gain their commitment to the vision, to encourage adoption of high standards and innovation, and to strengthen participation in collaborative marketing, engagement and product development opportunities.

Background

In 2019, Titanic Foundation and Belfast Harbour Commission, in collaboration with Titanic Quarter Limited and the Odyssey Trust, completed a scoping study of the Maritime Mile - the stretch of water from Lagan Weir to the Thompson Dry Dock. The area covers one navigational mile of water and includes over 10km of accessible land-based waterfront, which is being regenerated through a series of masterplans and strategies. The Maritime Mile study recommended 17 projects that runs across all these strategies, ensuring a well-connected and uniquely curated experience across the city's historic waterfront (for further details [click here](#)).

It is an exciting period for Titanic Foundation and partners who are embarking on a new chapter as we begin to implement the exciting plans created for the Maritime Mile. The initiative will drive local community engagement, heritage interpretation and restoration projects, volunteer initiatives and promote the usage of Belfast's historic waterfront.

Attractions and venues along the proposed Maritime Mile currently receive in excess of 3 million visitors annually, and there are a number of key areas along the Maritime Mile that, if developed appropriately, will enhance the visitor experience, ensure connectivity and ultimately deliver an iconic waterfront destination.

To date our research has focused on the physical gaps and opportunities along the Maritime Mile, now is the time to focus on people and how best to engage and connect with our key audiences. This plan will include rolling out the Maritime Mile brand, strengthening partnerships with all the key stakeholders, developing new visitor experiences, and ensuring the destination is digitally enhanced.

Marketing Objectives

- To position the Maritime Mile as an accessible, seamless and vibrant heritage destination for residents, neighbouring communities, local people and visitors.
- Strengthen the shared vision, goals and set of values for all the stakeholders along the Maritime Mile
- To grow the Maritime Mile as a preferred destination across all seasons.
- Increase visitor dwell time and spend along the Maritime Mile.
- Development of networks developing “Seamless Visitor Experiences” through collaborative working.
- To brand, market and promote the Maritime Mile to increase awareness of and grow footfall along Belfast’s iconic heritage Waterfront.
- Build strategic alliances and relationships which enhance the area’s profile and its influence.
- To improve information exchange and ensure all partners have the knowledge to enable them to promote each other and the Maritime Mile.
- Promote the Maritime Mile as a place that is accessible by public transport (e.g. Glider), a place for walking and cycling.
- Promote the Maritime Mile as a place for events – interesting and surprising things happen here.
- Create a series of initiatives to ensure the Maritime Mile is digitally connected.
- Enable and support community activity - grassroots activity to connect people to the Mile.
- To develop a sustainable marketing model for the Maritime Mile through revenue generation activity and identifying opportunities to drive efficiencies through collaboration
- To implement the Maritime Mile brand and further develop the brand language, ensuring integration with the Tourism NI and Belfast Brands.

Key deliverables will be:

1. Direct traffic* to Maritime-Mile.com - target for 20% by 12 months post launch.
2. Search traffic* driving people to Maritime-Mile.com – target for Maritime Mile (or similar branded terms) to be in the top 5 terms driving traffic to the site.
3. Maritime Mile social media channel growth of 15% for Instagram and Facebook.
4. App downloads to reach 3,000 (approx. 10% of workforce) by the end of year 3.
5. Target of £30,000 revenue generation in 2021.
6. Increase in footfall across the Maritime Mile from 2019 benchmark (2020 stats will be affected by COVID-19).
7. Target for continued growth at events of 10% (for comparable events).
8. 10% increase in tourists visiting more than one attraction on the Maritime Mile by the end of year 3 (if this data is available).

*Measuring brand awareness is difficult to do without investing in research. A useful proxy for brand awareness can be found in Google Analytics and Google Search Console.

Maritime Mile SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reputation of Titanic Foundation and plans for Maritime Belfast Trust. - BHC Strategy – iconic waterfront. - Investment to date – project success – Titanic Belfast, AC Mariott, Odyssey Complex, Titanic Hotel, Great Light - Hotel bed spaces growing - Food offering growing - Marina Development and Cruise Terminal - Links with local communities i.e. EastSide, Belfast Giants - Maritime Festival & large-scale events on slipways, SSE Arena and TEC - World renowned heritage Assets - Water based destination - Public realm improvements along riverfront - City Centre and Cathedral Quarter proximity - Attractiveness - Glider - G2 route - Titanic, SS Nomadic, W5, HMS Caroline, PRONI and other attractions - Strong operators within the destination - Relationship with Tourism NI - Current Footfall to Titanic Belfast and SSE Arena - Multiple stakeholders & Destination Forum – significant expertise at organisation and individual level - Volunteer programme - Belfast Met - Number of local businesses based on the Mile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non consistent in terms of attractiveness - Pockets where the Maritime Mile is not connected - Multiple signage / different looks - Lack of dispersed footfall - Fragmentation of so many stakeholders - Lack of awareness - Lack of joint ticketing - Lack of evening economy - Cycling infrastructure - Glider – only covers TQ - Lack of sheltered areas - Lack of on river animation - Lack of electorate to support political engagement
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple stakeholders, their marketing teams, and resources. - Sustainability policies / green tourism - New Brand - Develop new experiences - Future Cities – projects / HUB-IN 2020 - Maritime Mile website - Digital – innovation - Online ticketing - Collaboration with employers - Investment and development across the site – current and future e.g. City Quays, Odyssey, Hamilton Dock Hotel - Further investment on Belfast waterfront e.g. Sirocco works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COVID-19 and unknown impact on public confidence - Loss of visitors - Titanic Belfast closed along with other attractions - Future development conflicts with Maritime Mile / views, etc. lost, quality not consistent with brand - Competitive brands - City Centre and BID Areas compete for market share - Wider economic recession impacts waterfront developments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking & cycling is government priority – DfI new Cycling champion - BCC focus on health & wellbeing/ Back to the River - BHC transport study - Extending Volunteer programme - COVID-19 and importance of outdoor space - Green spaces – Million Trees initiative & BHC plans for Gardens / TQ plans - public spaces - Embrace the Giant Spirit - Space 	
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Target Markets

A research study has been undertaken by Thrive to identify the segments that are most open to visiting the Maritime Mile and have the most potential for growth. Tourism NI have developed segmentation profiles for visitors to Northern Ireland from the island of Ireland and Tourism Ireland has developed segmentation profiles for visitors from Great Britain and beyond.

The Maritime Mile segments include people that live, work, and visit Titanic Quarter, City Quays, and families visiting the city, whether as tourists or for recreation, and consist mainly of pedestrians and cyclists. The area can be accessed 24/7 in all weathers. This includes neighbourhood communities - Sailortown, Short Strand, Lower Newtownards Road and the Markets area – as these communities need to feel a sense of ownership of the waterfront.

The Maritime Mile is an experience which visitors will enjoy when they have arrived in Belfast and therefore a key priority will be to target visitors when in the city. This provides a clear distinction between the role of the Maritime Mile and attractions such as Titanic Belfast, who promote internationally to bring visitors here. Profiles on each market are detailed below.

Belfast Families

This market segment refers to families who travel with their children and want to chill out while keeping them entertained, 1 in 3 households in NI have a dependent child. They are looking for family friendly activities, play, nature (look out binoculars) and events, which are price sensitive. They want accessible meeting points, especially for buggies and wheelchair users, free parking and toilets are essential.

This segment can be reached through a range of digital platforms. Websites must be attractive and engaging. Parents will want to be reassured on the liveness, safety and value of the products and services that they are paying for. Social media is also an important aspect as it gives the parents an added insight into the product or service.

This segment rarely makes a buying decision without doing research and looking at reviews - TripAdvisor for restaurants, hotels and things to do in an area. Radio and PR campaigns are also a good way to target. Campaigns and initiatives for consideration include Maritime Mile Play, event programmes for families in partnership W5, Odyssey, Titanic Belfast, etc. Treasure hunts / wildlife trails, etc.

Neighbourhood Communities

Neighbourhood communities need to make the connection with the Maritime Mile as their local place. This will be done by working with the destination partners to maximise opportunities for local communities. These include Sailortown, Markets, Short Strand, East & North Belfast. Perceived issues include distance, not for locals, costs, connectivity, access.

This market segment is seeking experiences that are fun and stimulates curiosity and heritage and activities that link with the area's industrial heritage. They also want to discover what connects them with their local places and learn from and connect to, their experience.

They enjoy a variety of things from events, popups, wellbeing activities, walking tours, outdoor activities - gyms, festivals, evening entertainment (music & performances). They do not want to travel too far therefore, must be easily accessible and activities price sensitive.

Employees

This is a key segment, with a captive audience of 30,000 along the Maritime Mile. They love the positivity and warmth for the area, green spaces and waterside. They want walkable, amenity rich areas with lots of 3rd places (the place were unrelated people relate). This segment is already active in pockets on the Maritime Mile. They are social with a real community and team spirit.

Cyclists

This segment is made up of commuter cyclists, sports cyclists and casual cyclists. They require bike parking and sheltered rest stops. There are currently more male cyclists than female - women are interested but safety is a big concern. It is vital that the Maritime Mile is promoted as a cycle safe destination.

The most effective form of communications with this segment is targeting via local cycle groups such as TQ Cycling Club, Facebook groups, cycleni.com, cycle shops, Sustrans and cycle publications. It may be useful to organise PR fam trips for cycle writers and advertising on cycle routes. Campaigns could include incentivised food offers for local cyclists such as breakfast / coffee stops. There is potential to partner with Sustrans to offer cycling courses for women, especially on safety. Additionally, a popup bike repair shop / stops would be a welcome addition along the Maritime Mile.

Tourists

This group are made up of Culturally Curious, Social Energisers & Family Fun (TNI). They come from ROI, GB, US (90% of Titanic Belfast - outside NI). This segment want to experience a sense of discovery and take part in unique experiences, capturing that 'Instagramable moment' e.g. at the Titanic Sign, Maritime Mile benches, Great Light.

They are interested in storytelling, food, drink, cultural experiences and entertainment. Important factors are connectivity, accessibility, a connected experience, digitally enabled, Wi-Fi accessible zones and a safe environment. Platforms to target this group via TNI & TIL Campaigns, Titanic Belfast Marketing campaigns, tour operators / airports, Visit Belfast, PR

campaigns, organising familiarisation trips with travel journalists and targeted digital campaigns.

Local Residents (Living on the Mile)

This segment is a passionate and positive group, with a real sense of Community, having some sort of ownership is key and they like to be made to feel special. Location is key, they always like to have things to do at the weekend and evenings. Important considerations are amenities, physical spaces for casual meet ups, they enjoy outdoor activities from cycling, walking to running. Key channels for targeting are social media channels / online campaigns. local publications and promotional materials in local shops, attractions and restaurants.

Maritime Mile Brand

The vision for the Maritime Mile is exciting and unique, as it connects and celebrates Belfast's vibrant heritage waterfront for everyone. Communication must be fun and inspiring, with a focus on growing and strengthening our communication so that people can find and engage with the Maritime Mile more easily.

Attractions and venues along the Maritime Mile currently receive in excess of 3 million visitors annually, and there are a number of key areas along the Maritime Mile that, if developed appropriately, will enhance the visitor experience, ensure connectivity and ultimately deliver an iconic waterfront destination.

Establishing a new brand requires a multi-year approach that will go beyond the end date of this plan. The Maritime Mile identity will help create positive, distinguishing associations for people, providing an immediate visual trigger to a set of emotions or ideas that put a place in the best possible light. They can capture the world's imagination, instill pride and a sense of place among its people and this is exactly what a great brand should do.

McCadden have developed a toolkit that details the brand identity standards and provides direction on the proper use of Maritime Mile assets. There are a number of elements that make up our identity. However, there are six core pillars (brandmark, colour, graphic language, typography, tone of voice and imagery) which, if utilised properly, will help promote a consistent brand for the Maritime Mile. Stakeholder brand guidelines can be downloaded [here](#).

Reference the Mile

Where relevant, and possible, it is important to state that our partners and their activities are located 'on the Maritime Mile'. This helps to build awareness of the area and creates a network of products and offerings across the area for the visitor/user.

Maritime Mile Map

A unique Maritime Mile map has been created to promote the area to visitors. It is a 3D illustrative map that helps the viewer to orientate themselves within the region. The map highlights attractions, food and drink venues, accommodation, public art and various transport options across the area. The map is not drawn to scale, however the relationship between buildings and infrastructure is accurate.



Website - Maritime-Mile.com

The new website will be mobile responsive, consumer facing, and the place to go to find information on what's happening in the area. It will be the main call to action for all marketing campaigns moving forward and will be launched in a phased approach during summer 2020.

Where Belfast Begins Strapline

Consideration will be given to incorporating a strap line to the brand. The inspiration for this came directly from feedback from one of the focus groups. Where Belfast Begins is a message that works on many levels: it's about recovery, it's about the future, it's about the past... it's about the Maritime Mile.

Over the next three years, Where Belfast Begins will be rolled out as a campaign, used to tie together activity. To bring the campaign to life, it is important to continue the brand building and add this to the artwork. The community activity would be expanded to continue to build the sense of connection and ownership.

This campaign line works:

- Geographically - sailing up the Lagan it's where the city begins.
- Historically - the history of Belfast is entwined with the rivers and the development of the Harbour.
- For the future - the industry that will power Belfast for the next 100 years are based around the Maritime Mile.
- For tourists - an exciting rallying cry that intrigues and captures hearts and minds.
- For recovery - Belfast will need to bounce back in a post-COVID-19 world and the line suggests renewal.
- Practically - PRONI is based on the Mile and it's where people come to trace their ancestors back to when Belfast was young.

Social Media

Following on from the brand recommendations, the following approach to social media will help build the brand and clearly communicate with the target markets.

Current Channel	New Name
TQEventsBelfast Facebook (16,414 followers)	Maritime Mile
TQEventsBelfast Instagram (2,299 followers)	Maritime Mile
Titanic Foundation Facebook (2,926 followers)	Merged with TQEvents before being renamed MM*

*Titanic Foundation Facebook – will be emerged with the TQEventsBelfast audience. This will boost the audience for the new Maritime Mile Facebook page. Each user will get a notification that the page names has been changed, allowing a boost in brand recognition at an early stage.

Social Media Content & Themes

The aim is to create clear guidelines for the brand on social media and to make Maritime Mile the go-to social channel for the destination.

Content	Themes	Stories
Events	People <i>Community</i> <i>Health and Well Being</i>	Content + Themes
Offers		
Guides	Places <i>Heritage</i> <i>Nature and Ecology</i>	
App promo		
Venues	Pretty special things to do <i>Curiosity and Investigation</i> <i>Technology and Innovation</i>	
Heritage		
Maps		

Creating content themes for social media is aimed at creating consistency in the messaging, while allowing flexibility to tell the relevant stories in an engaging way. The themes above reflect those identified in the Maritime Mile strategy.

As an example, the sharing of maps as part of the Maritime Mile is simply content. Rather than just sharing the newly designed map, various routes / itineraries will be plotted for visitors by local residents, which would bring the content to life in a richer way. The inclusion of a people theme allows more stories to be told and provide a human connection with the area.

In short, the *content* is the what and the *themes* are the how.

Content Frequency and Requirements

Setting targets for frequency of posts on social media can be a misleading metric. The focus on social should be on hitting agreed outputs (visits, sales, link clicks, etc.) rather than inputs (number of posts) – if posting less often is more successful, then why wouldn't that become a focus?

However, guidance is often required to understand the volume of work needed to launch a social plan, especially for new accounts and brands. Recommendations for content frequency is as follows:

Maritime Mile
Instagram feed – daily post
Instagram & Facebook stories – 3 posts per week

IGTV – 1 per week, with a regular date/time slot for the video dropping

Facebook – 3 posts per week

To bring the stories to life, there is a requirement for resource to be able to find and explore the people stories. With over 30,000 people working on the Mile and more living there, there is an almost endless supply of content to be tapped into. A freelancer will be considered for this element of the plan.

Social Content Tips

It should also be noted that social media algorithms are constantly tweaked and update. Advice that works today may be out of date tomorrow and the execution of this plan should be flexible enough to keep pace with the current trends.

There are some overarching tips to help improve social content.

Overall

- Reply to every comment and questions. Engagement builds more engagement.
- Obsess over the analytics - make weekly comparisons and measure post type to see which generates the best impact.
- Tailor the message for each platform.
- The picture and copy work together - both need to be brilliant to make an impact.

Facebook

- Video is the dominant format for engagement and every effort should be made to include video in the content output.
- Where video is not available, test the performance of photos made into a short video carousel and gallery formats.
- Data from the TQEventsBelfast page suggests 7am to 9am would be a good timeframe to post, as this is when the audience comes online. There is a marked drop off in the audience overnight. Test different posting times as the algorithm prioritises interaction not just recency.
- Mix up post types to include questions, calls to action and competitions to build engagement.
- Dwell time is thought to be a factor in ranking content – try long form writing on posts as well as shorter punchy posts to monitor which generate the best engagement.

Instagram

- Stories is a fast growing medium and more content needs to be pushed into this. It requires more content but allows for episodic story telling.
- Use stories to be less formal – add stickers, ask questions, allow the human side of the organisation to come through.
- For IGTV posts, decide on a rhythm for releasing new videos and stick to it. This could change over time (ie once per week in the summer and once per fortnight in the winter) but make sure people have an appointment to view. Promote this on other channels.

- IGTV videos under 5 minutes tend to perform better than those in the 6-10 min range. But test content as it varies.
- Use the teaser video in the feed to make 'the promise' – the feed video should be used as a hook to get people to engage with the rest of the video. Treat it like a trailer to a Hollywood movie: it is there to sell the main event, not tell the whole story.
- IGTV videos are asking people to commit time to watching them – the production values and message has to be worth their time.

Marketing Plan Overview

The COVID-19 crisis has caused a huge shift in thinking and behaviour. The lockdown has changed how people work, caused huge issues for company finance, and re-worked how people engage. A sense of normality will return, but it is difficult to predict when that will be and if people will change their behaviour towards certain activities, for example large scale gatherings.

There are benefits to the current situation. Advertising costs have fallen significantly. Data from Google and Facebook suggests their cost is down 9% to 12%, while anecdotal evidence of traditional media costs is down as much as 40%. This makes it a good time to be purchasing ads on most platforms.

The enforced shut down and slow lifting of restrictions also allows for some brand building to take place. This can work in conjunction with promoting any events or activities as part of the recovery phase, where limited events and activity will take place.

As highlighted earlier, the launching of a new brand takes time to bed in with the public and while attentions are not drawn in other directions, there is an opportunity to get a head start. Year 1: The launch of the recovery phase can work in tandem with the brand building activity. The brand building is classic top of the funnel awareness activity, while the recovery events and projects are bottom of the funnel conversion. Key priorities will be launching a new Maritime Mile website and associated social media platforms.

For brand building a mass targeting approach is required, focusing on a consistent branded push for the Maritime Mile. This needs to communicate the rational (where the Mile is) and the emotional (what the Mile stands for).

Year 2: As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, the community-based activity swings into action, working with small groups and individuals to create a sense of belonging within the Maritime Mile. This will help the communities of the area feel connected and involved in the place making. Combined with a wider campaign to generate revenue and create buy in across Belfast, the aim is to build from the top down and the ground up. This is an ideal opportunity to develop and launch a travel campaign, aimed primarily at commuters, to improve travel habits and promote the destination as a place for walking and cycling.

Year 3: The approach is about creating consistent activity over a multi-year timeframe, so that the brand and campaign can develop a frequency and resonance with the target markets. Continuing with the brand building and developing themes into campaigns, the aim for these campaigns is raise the profile of the Maritime Mile by connecting people to the area, making it the 'place to go'.

With the return of overseas travel to the Belfast market*, tourists in the area/in the city take on a greater focus, with the aim of keeping them on the Mile for more than just a visit to Titanic Belfast.

*See year 3 for more details.

Year 1 Marketing

With the situation outlined above, the objective for year 1 is to launch the Maritime Mile brand and position it within the hearts and minds of the public in Belfast. There is a top down and bottom up approach to marketing, with brand building messages pushed from the top and Post-COVID recovery and community activation coming from the bottom up.

Brand Building

Significant work has been done on customer personas. The focus for Year 1 will be on a more generic Greater Belfast to communicate the brand, incorporating a family friendly approach to support post COVID recovery and connect with local communities.

It is important not to push too many messages when communicating the brand, clarity and consistency is key. The aim of year 1 is to build an emotional rather than a rational connection with the Maritime Mile (although both will be used) and ensuring the message is noticed. The primary aim of brand building is to raise awareness, not just of the name Maritime Mile, but also of what is included and creating an association of what it means to people. **The beauty of a new brand is having the opportunity to shape what it means to the community and that emotional message will be the core of year 1.**

The strategy for year 1 is to invest heavily in brand building utilizing 50% - 60% of the budget. It is a bold move, but with a diminishing events calendar, there is space to make it happen. Focusing on visual and online media, the aim is to reach the audience with a high frequency and create that crucial emotional connection. A key priority will be the launch of the Maritime Mile website and rebranding all social media platforms.

The branding must be physically pulled through onto the Maritime Mile using destination maps, hoarding and public realm dressing, to reinforce the message on arrival.

Recovery initiatives will reinforce the brand, e.g. a family orientated Maritime Mile Trail will be developed to tell the story of the Maritime Mile and encourage local people to explore it.

There will be a focus on key influencers to endorse the Maritime Mile through social media and more traditional PR platforms

Community Marketing

The remaining budget will be used to engage with local communities to activate the campaign and build a connection to the new name for the area. This will be aimed at local communities and residents.

This is an important group. The feedback from focus groups is that many locals don't use the area often and don't feel connected to it and yet those that do use it, love it. This has already been identified by Titanic Foundation and its commitment to become the Maritime Belfast Trust with additional purposes to advance citizenship and community engagement. By continuing to work on a micro level with the communities - being active on the ground - a

connection can be built between the communities and the Maritime Mile, while still remaining a neutral space for all.

While some of the activity and work with communities will be picked up as part of the ongoing work of the charity, it's important that it is referenced in the marketing plan. Community activity is a crucial pillar of this plan and essential to embedding the Maritime Mile brand in the Belfast story. Key priorities in Year 1 will include:

- Local people will be invited to tell their stories on the Maritime Mile website – My Mile
- Tailored tours will be organized for neighbourhood communities
- Volunteer opportunities will be further developed including Friends Along the Mile campaign

Year 2 Marketing

Year 2 is about building. Building on the 'Where Belfast Begins', building on the recovery plan, building on the brand and building on the events that will be back in Q2 and Q3 of the year.

As mentioned previously, the job of having the Maritime Mile known and loved as a brand will take many years, so this activity needs to keep rolling.

Community Development

It can't be stressed enough how important it will be to engage with the communities in the Maritime Mile to help make this brand stick.

The Maritime Mile is a neutral space that means many things and can be shaped to be for everyone. But it also means no one feels a connection with the area, therefore it is vital to reach across boundaries to build this support from the ground up. Making people feel an ownership of the Maritime Mile but more than that, feel a pride from it.

Currently the feeling amongst some communities is that they are being left behind. The shipbuilding jobs that once kept the working-class communities in employment have gone and been replaced by high skilled, technical jobs that they feel locked out of. Although the nature of the business community on the Maritime Mile can't be changed, it can be ensured that the local communities feel part of the future of the area, not just its past. It will be important to build relationships with local communities across Years 1, 2 and 3.

Business Community

The business community offers the chance for a quick win in terms of building ongoing engagement and starting to develop a sense of community. This audience visits the area regularly and for long periods of time but leaves almost immediately after work. COVID-19 will have long lasting impact on how people work and working from home will continue to be an attractive option. However, the social interaction with colleagues will be the motivator to get back to work, as well an attraction environment. The Maritime Mile has an important part

to play. A comprehensive database of businesses on the Mile must be developed and business champions identified. Relationship building will be critical to understand the needs to businesses and their employees.

By focusing on the business community, there is an aim to spread the benefits of having thousands of people on site each day and by extending their time on the Maritime Mile. To do this, there is a recommendation to launch an app for this group.

Apps work well for building loyalty but can be difficult for recruitment as the steps to adoption put off many users. With the employees becoming regulars on the Maritime Mile, the app will become essential for them, giving them a compelling reason to download it and an ongoing reason to continue using it.

Travel Campaign

Raising awareness about sustainable travel is key, with this in mind, a quirky travel campaign will be created. Encouraging people to leave their cars at home, with the focus on a range of other transport modes including the Glider, bikes, trains, taxis, the Wee Tram, walking, scooters, buses, etc. The campaign will also help towards reducing the congestion impact at key times. In due course (and hopefully with some development by years 2 & 3), it is envisaged that more transport will also be offered on the river through water taxis services, which will provide a unique opportunity for the Maritime Mile.

The approach would be to use multiple avenues to bring this to life and believe that this should be a collective campaign with many partners. *Move on the Mile* could be used as a more effective name, as it is a simpler message and could bring a more casual user.

As outlined above this partnership should, at a minimum, include Belfast Harbour, Titanic Quarter Limited, Translink and Belfast Bikes. As well as working with a wider group including Sustrans and the taxi firms including Uber, Fonacab and Value Cabs. There will be major investment into the transport infrastructure with new access roads and cycling paths being delivered over the next 2-3 years. This is an important £multi-million development to allow the wider regeneration of Titanic Quarter and Belfast Harbour Estate. It will be important to feed into these plans and align messaging when possible.

This approach would launch with traditional promotional activity – promotional activity via email, posters displayed in workplaces, flyers/brochures to drive up take of alternative forms of transport.

To continue to promote the ongoing usage of sustainable transport, the app could be used to incentivise this. Better offers for cyclists or people showing bus/train tickets could help to drive this forward.

For key events, this activity should be folded into the event marketing plan. Depending on the time of year and the number of people expected at an event, the campaign should be replicated in advance of an event.

Year 3 Marketing

The best estimations for the impact of COVID-19 are for overseas travel to be impacted, a recession to hit the UK and government spending to reintroduce austerity to pay for the increase in spending in 2020. Therefore, the marketing and engagement plan must be agile enough to react to the world around it.

The overarching strategy will not change for year 3. There will be a continued focus on building the Maritime Mile brand, ongoing community work to connect the people who live on or near the Mile and activation work to bring it to life.

In their research on marketing effectiveness in the digital age, Field and Binet find that this long-term / short-term approach is the most impactful. Matching long-term brand building with short term activation and memorable creative is the best way to create recall and choice in customers.

The investment in building the Maritime Mile brand continues to be 30% of the available budget, with a further 30% continuing to support grassroots activity and the final 40% for activation.

Targeting

The most important part of targeting is understanding that not every group can be targeted simultaneously. There must be a focus on certain groups when activating campaigns. Over the course of the three years, the focus will be as follows

Target Markets – Priorities for Years 1-3 (Ranked 1 or 2 in order to priority to help attribute resource allocation)

	Belfast Families	Neighbourhood Communities	Employees	Cyclists	Tourists	Residents
Year 1 - Launching Brand Recovery after Lockdown	1	2				2
Year 2 - Building on Brand Growing the Maritime Mile Community	1	1	1	2		1
Year 3 - Sustaining Brand Welcoming international visitors back - A place for local people and visitors	2	1	1	2	1	2

Campaigns

The 'Where Belfast Begins' campaign line needs to be a multi-year campaign. It should evolve in year 3, with a greater focus on tourism, as Tourism Ireland and Tourism NI predict a rapid growth in tourism numbers.

The campaign can tie in nicely with the visitor attractions and events calendar, bringing the area to life with people curious about the history and future of the area. The campaign line encourages curiosity, and this can be used to help the tourist market explore beyond Titanic Belfast.

While not essential, if the ambition of a visitor pass for the destination could be developed, that would be a strong part of any campaign.

If the campaign activity in year 2 proves to be successful, this should be repeated in year 3 – especially the direct mail. Randomly selecting a different group of 46,000 households to receive the sampling maildrop and more activity to encourage travel to the area by different forms of transport should continue.

These can be brought to life across a number of different mediums as outlined in the calendar detailed on pages 27 and 28.

Revenue Generation

The impact of COVID-19 on corporate budgets is currently unknown, but it is expected to impact them negatively. The predicted recession that will follow the lifting of restrictions will also squeeze budgets, meaning that there needs to be a more creative way to work in partnership and to attract finance.

There is still a place for traditional revenue generation of splitting costs for promotional destination campaigns. However, there may be more creative ways of generating revenue, outlined below.

Mail Drop

A mail drop has many benefits over using a media partner to reach the local market - especially as sales of physical papers have dried up during COVID-19. Numerous options are available for this, the reach is around 45,000 homes. There is scope for two mail drops during the year, with one targeting families and another targeting local communities – working with the Maritime Mile cluster group to develop a series of incentivized offers and experiences.

Maritime Mile Cluster Group Ideas

There are lots of opportunities for the Maritime Mile Cluster Group to look at joint promotional activity to grow audiences, while at the same time being revenue generators.

The following could be explored:

- Radio campaign / competitions funded through partners – where for example the Q-Radio Super bus broadcasts from a series of venues across the destination.
- Billboard block booking – billboards that are bought for an extended period of time attract huge discounts.
- Maritime Mile seasonal campaigns - opportunity for partners to avail of advertising space across social media, website and print materials.

Partnerships

There is a potential partnership with transport providers that is mutually beneficial for all parties. A regular discussion feature in the workshops was the issue of access and exit from the Maritime Mile area. While solving this is not in scope for the plan, brand partnerships and campaigns can help to alleviate some of the issues.

The approach to this activity is outlined in Year 3's marketing plan.

Brand Partnerships

Building from the VIP Experience above, there may be an opportunity to create deeper partnerships with corporates to generate more income. This market will be impacted by the reduced budgets likely to impact companies post COVID-19 period, but this should be seen as an opportunity. As companies pull back from expensive partnerships, such as those with sports teams, they may be looking for better value in the market.

What benefits could a partnership with the Maritime Mile offer? Access to data, branding opportunities, VIP events, website and social content. The key is to bundle benefits and charge a premium price.

Marketing Calendar

Note: Budget for Facebook and Google ads is to be used collectively, with the budget being moved between the channels to focus on what's working. This area of budget has been left out of the investment section as it can be flexible depending on the total annual budget amount.

YEAR 1

Programme / Action	Activity	Measures	Timescale	Budget
Website launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new Maritime Mile website Google My Business listing - photos, videos and events plus contact details Tech SEO (robots.txt, sitemap, submit links to Google) Google ads based on branded keywords (Maritime Mile and similar) and event-based keywords (e.g. Drive-In Cinema, Things to do in Belfast) Change social media accounts to reflect the new Maritime Mile brand (note – Facebook can be slow with changes) 	<p>Site ranking in top 5 for brand keywords within 3 months of launch.</p> <p>Appearance of knowledge panel on Google search.</p>	July / August 20	£15,000
Maritime Mile Brand Building Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Visit Belfast stand in welcome centre and rebrand maritime mile / photographic space and Discovery Point in Titanic Belfast to promote wider destination to local market. 	Awareness of Maritime Mile captured in Visit Belfast / Titanic Belfast surveys	August 2020	£13,350
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand materials developed – Maritime Mile Map, Flags & Bunting 	As above	April - September 2020	£10,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand Toolkit developed and communicated to stakeholders 	Number of Stakeholders actively using the 'On the Maritime Mile' brand	July 2020	£1000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise Social Media Platforms to drive traffic to the website: Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Google Ads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search Marketing – text adverts on the Google search results pages, targeted using highly relevant keywords e.g. Maritime Mile, Things to Do in Belfast Display Advertising – High impact ads shown to users via the Google Display Network (GDN), targeted across NI to all adults. (Placement - Banners, skyscrapers, MPUs and other visual units to boost awareness) Facebook and Instagram ads targeted at all adults 16+ in NI (the algorithm will ensure efficient delivery) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 second video ads on Facebook and Instagram Multiple carousel ads with multiple images allowing all stakeholders to be featured Promoting people posts to page fans to boost early engagement – aim for boosting each people post with a budget of c£10 only to page fans and their friends. SEO Optimised Blog Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a monthly blog based on top keywords (e.g. Top things to do in Belfast, Family Day out in Belfast, etc.) and focus on key areas and activities along the Mile. 	<p>Growth in direct traffic to the website</p> <p>Monitor click through rate (CTR) to website. Aim for 1%</p> <p>Monitor click through rate (CTR) to website using Google Analytics. Monitor keyword usage, more use of phrase 'Maritime Mile'</p> <p>Growth of page likes</p> <p>Monitor Google ranking (aim for top 5 web listings)</p> <p>Monitor page visits & time spent on page. Monitor CTR when shared across social.</p>	<p>Coincide with website launch.</p> <p>Digital campaign could last until the end of 2020</p>	£12000

Recovery Phase Campaign August to March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint approach to TNI & TIL recovery campaigns - 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' etc • Key focus on outdoors and health and wellbeing - walking cycling, Titanic Taster Tours - photography, art, running, glass of thrones, animation days and treasure trail. 	Deliver 2/3 campaigns. Establish baseline for first campaign impressions		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tours and events – focus on health, walking and cycling 	5 x tours	Sep 20 – March 21	£5,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animation Days 	5 x days	August 20 – March 21	£10,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritime Mile Treasure Trail 	18 stops 5000 maps published 10000 participants	August to September with possible roll out to March 21	£5000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail drop to 45,000 homes around Belfast to communicate what is happening, that it is safe to visit and the new website – co-funded by the cluster group. 	45,000 homes	August – September	£5000 - £10,000
Content Creation and working with influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bank of high-quality images and videos are required for this campaign to run. Work with creators and professionals to capture the Maritime Mile – budget to cover two or three influencer style shoots with different creators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Influencer style shoots ○ Brand overlays ○ User Generated Content (during COVID-19) of people stories ○ Professional photography in addition 	N/A	June / July	£10k for influencer work £3k for professional shoots
Community Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends for Miles - Buddy system to connect people across the communities (and ages) and learn about life by the river. Build on COVID-19 spirit • Volunteer Programme rebranded and training sessions on Maritime Mile • My Maritime Mile - under the people theme of social content, capture the stories of the residents living as part of the Maritime Mile. • Tailored, targeted tours at harder to reach groups 	25 buddy meetings across the first year of the programme	Oct / Nov 20	£10,000
PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching PR relationship to build the reach of the activity in the local media and on digital publishers 	Agree coverage output as part of tender process	Immediate	£15k

YEAR 2

Programme / Action	Activity	Measures	Timescale	Budget
Maritime Mile Employee Segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • App Development - Daily offers provides incentive to download and use it. This creates a platform for communication with 30,000 daily stakeholders • Download campaign – street team, flyers, targeted social media advertising, posters in buildings and shops • Offers – build a pipeline of offers to share with the users • Email marketing – while working to promote app downloads, collect email addresses for workers to build a direct communication with them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start with a monthly email highlighting what’s on in the forthcoming month, a people story from social and popular social post ○ Monitor interaction and engagement 	<p>1000 App downloads in first year of launch</p> <p>Aim for database of 1,000 within 3 months</p> <p>Open rates of 20%</p>	<p>Launch in August 21</p> <p>Tied in with app launch</p>	<p>App budget still to be scoped</p> <p>Mailchimp will be free at this size</p>
Maritime Mile campaign – Where Belfast Begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still tilted towards brand, but with more inclusion of events and activities on the Maritime Mile. Partnering with cluster partners to create action-based campaigns. Not just the hero image, but focusing on a destination/location and showcasing that (revenue generation activity) • Outdoor media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bus advertising (street liners) ○ 48 sheets around Belfast • Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Google Ads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Search Marketing – text adverts on the Google search results pages, targeted using highly relevant keywords e.g. Maritime Mile, Things to Do in Belfast ○ Display Advertising – High impact ads shown to users via the Google Display Network (GDN), targeted across NI to all adults. (Placement - Banners, skyscrapers, MPUs and other visual units to boost awareness). Rotate creative to include events and WBB campaign message • Facebook and Instagram ads targeted at parents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 30 – 60 second video ads on Facebook and Instagram ○ Multiple carousel ads ○ Promoting people and event posts to page fans to boost early engagement – aim for boosting each people post with a budget of c£10 only to page fans and their friends. • Mail drop to 46,000 homes around Belfast to communicate what is happening, it’s safe to visit and the new website – co-funded by the cluster partner • Radio competitions - To get people to ‘sample’ the area, work with a radio station to create a competition to find something on the Maritime Mile in return for a prize. Aim to generate buzz and footfall to the site during the holidays 	<p>Growth in direct traffic to the website</p> <p>Include campaign code/promotion on / ad track usage</p> <p>Monitor click through rate (CTR) to website. Aim for 1%</p> <p>Monitor keyword usage, more use of phrase ‘Maritime Mile’</p> <p>Growth of page likes</p> <p>Aim for million impressions and improve click through rate from year 1 by 15%</p> <p>Footfall on site for activity. Social impressions / use of #tag</p>	<p>Launched at Easter running until Halloween</p> <p>Easter for radio sampling</p>	<p>£15k outdoor/posters</p> <p>£15k digital</p> <p>£12k for maildrop</p> <p>Upto £10k radio comp</p> <p>Revenue generating opportunities in this section could improve or reduce these budgets</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEO Optimised Blog Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a monthly blog based on top keywords (e.g. Top things to do in Belfast, Family Day out in Belfast, etc.) and focus on key areas and activities along the Mile. 	<p>Monitor Google ranking (aim for top 5 web listings)</p> <p>Monitor page visits & time spent on page. Monitor CTR when shared across social.</p>	Ongoing monthly basis	
Community Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends for Miles - Buddy system to connect people across the communities (and ages) and learn about life by the river. Build on COVID-19 spirit • My Maritime Mile – under the people theme of social content, capture the stories of the residents living as part of the Maritime Mile 	25 buddy meetings across the first year of the programme	October 20	£4k
PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching PR relationship to build the reach of the activity in the local media and on digital publishers. 	Agree coverage output as part of tender process	Immediate	£15k

YEAR 3

Programme / Action	Activity	Measures	Timescale	Budget
Maritime Mile Employee Segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive downloads of the app by the workforce and make the offer unique and compelling. The offers need to give people a reason to open the app and talk about it with colleagues. Focus on simple and impactful offers. Targeted download campaign of social ads, emails and work with employers – key times of year when money maybe tight - post Christmas and post holidays in August. Offers – build a pipeline of offers to share with the users. Email marketing – while working to promote app downloads, collect email addresses for workers to build a direct communication with them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start with a monthly email highlighting what’s on in the forthcoming month, a people story from social and popular social post Monitor interaction and engagement – if people stories capture all the clicks, include more of them. 	<p>Ultimate target of 10% of workforce downloading the app</p> <p>Aim for database growth of 25% year on year</p> <p>Open rates of 20%</p>	<p>January and August</p> <p>Monthly</p>	<p>App budget still to be scoped</p> <p>Mailchimp becomes paid for at 2,000 contacts</p>
Where Belfast Begins campaign	<p>Year 3 sees the campaign move to supporting events in a more traditional way. The sign offline becomes part of the wider events marketing – the secondary focus of any ad activity rather than the hero of it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus advertising (street liners) 48 sheets around Belfast – with a skew towards travel hubs (Lanyon Place and GVS to capture tourist arrivals) Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Google Ads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search Marketing – text adverts on the Google search results pages, targeted using highly relevant keywords e.g. Maritime Mile, Things to Do in Belfast Display Advertising – High impact ads shown to users, targeted across NI to all adults. (Placement - Banners, skyscrapers, MPUs and other visual units to boost awareness). Rotate creative to include events and WBB campaign message Remarketing – Introduce Display Remarketing adverts which appear to ‘follow’ a user around the internet after they express an interest in Maritime Mile, encouraging a visit to the Mile with tailored offer. Facebook and Instagram ads targeted at Belfast families and overseas tourists. Facebook allows targeting of people based on where they are, not where they live. By targeting those from outside NI but currently in Belfast, we can target visitors to the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 – 60 second video ads on Facebook and Instagram Multiple carousel ads with multiple images allowing all stakeholders to be featured Promoting day trips to the Maritime Mile and things to do. 	<p>Increase in footfall at major events.</p> <p>Include campaign code/promotion on ad and track usage</p> <p>Monitor click through rate (CTR) to website. Aim for 1%</p> <p>Monitor keyword usage, more use of phrase ‘Maritime Mile’</p> <p>Growth of page likes</p> <p>Aim for million impressions and improve click through rate from year 1 by 15%</p> <p>Footfall on site for activity.</p> <p>Social impressions / use of #tag</p>	<p>Launched at Easter running until Halloween</p>	<p>£15k outdoor/posters</p> <p>£15k digital</p> <p>£12k for maildrop</p> <p>Upto £10k radio comp</p> <p>Revenue generating opportunities in this section could improve or reduce these budgets</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEO Optimised Blog Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a monthly blog based on top keywords (e.g. Top things to do in Belfast, Family Day out in Belfast, etc.) and focus on key areas and activities along the Mile • Mail drop to 46,000 homes around Belfast to communicate what is happening, it's safe to visit and the new website – co-funded by the cluster partner • Radio competitions - To get people to 'sample' the area, work with a radio station to create a competition to find something on the Maritime Mile in return for a prize. Aim to generate buzz and footfall to the site during the holidays • Social media competition – an extension of the radio mechanic, inviting people down to find something on the Mile with clues to help them track it down. Anyone who finds the treasure will win a prize. • Posters around toilets in venues across the Maritime Mile – not just destinations, local pubs etc. Builds consistency in the campaign. • Blogger fam trip – working with Tourism NI to generate the relevant travel bloggers from key markets, a fam trip for bloggers should be organised to showcase the Mile's unique attractions. 	<p>Monitor Google ranking (Aim for top 5 web listings)</p> <p>Monitor page visits & time spent on page. Monitor CTR when shared across social.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier – agree creative outputs in advance. Pre, during and post + rights to use all content for future promotion</p>	<p>Ongoing monthly basis</p> <p>Easter for radio sampling</p> <p>Halloween 20 for content to be released over the winter and influence advance bookings</p>	
Community Activity	<p>It's worth flagging that these projects will be 2 years old at this stage and may require a refresh / refocus depending on how they are performing. Some projects will continue to deliver for many years, while some will fizzle out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends for Miles - Buddy system to connect people across the communities (and ages) and learn about life by the river. Build on COVID-19 spirit • My Maritime Mile – under the people theme of social content, capture the stories of the residents living as part of the Maritime Mile 	25 buddy meetings across the first year of the programme	October 20	£4k
Travel Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to year 3 so it can take advantage of the app being used by employees. • Working in a consortium with Belfast Harbour, TQ Ltd, Translink, Sustrans and other partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ App notifications pushed to users to provide better offers for using sustainable transport ○ Digital advertising using geo-targeting to focus on key messages of leaving the car at home and highlighting other options 	Reduction in rush hour traffic coming on the Maritime Mile by end of year 3	April 21	£12k - £15k
PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching PR relationship to build the reach of the activity in the local media and on digital publishers 	Agree coverage output as part of tender process	Immediate	£15k

- **** TV & Youtube Advertising – There is value in TV advertising but need to ensure it reflects the product on the ground as the Maritime Mile is under development. TV will work best when we know the product and experiences are constant and there is a critical mass of activity to promote and will be delivered on the ground, meeting the audience's expectations. The same can be said about YouTube Advertising. Once the Maritime Mile offering is further developed, Youtube advertising can be introduced - targeted at Northern Ireland, with different ad creatives focused on the key target markets such as Belfast families. This will include 30-60 second pre roll (skippable ads) featuring video of the area and 6 seconds un-skippable bumpers (on Thursday and Friday for families planning weekend activity)**

Resources

Some elements of this campaign should be outsourced to specialists. This is to allow for cost and efficiency savings - freeing up time and budget to focus on other activity.

Recommendations for potential partnerships and training opportunities are outlined below.

Traditional Ad Channels - Kennedy Mort

Kennedy Mort have provided the pricing for the traditional media elements of this campaign it is recommended using them to book all the elements (door drops, TV, radio, press ads and outdoor).

Video Creative – Various

It may be worth investing in separate digital specific video. As outlined above, the influencer style content will play well across social and it's a good opportunity to work with local creators to capture the feel for the Maritime Mile. Recommendations include [Soarscape](#), [Dillon Osborne](#) or [Dan Smyth](#)

Facebook advertising - Training

There will be a webinar with Gil David, Ireland's leading Facebook ads specialist likely to take place summer 2020. The 3-hour webinar will cover intermediate to advanced Facebook and Instagram ads and can upskill the team to manage this in house. Eximo Marketing will cover the cost of this webinar for the team and as many of the team can join as required.

Google Advertising - Outsource

Google Ads is a skill that requires a specialist. While it can be managed in house, the level of management, tweaking and understanding of Google products means significant money can be wasted if the campaign isn't managed by an expert. There are a limited number of good specialists in the Belfast area and running a short recruitment process would be recommended, inviting [Codefixer](#) (small agency) and [Colin McKee](#) (freelancer) to be part of the pitch process alongside any other agencies worked with previously.

Social Stories

While most short form social content can be created in house, the telling of the stories of the individuals who are part of the Maritime Mile (see social content section) will require additional resource. A social freelance with experience of long form content is recommended – Heather McGarrigle is a potential recommendation.

maritime-mile.com

