



A Model of Consultation?

*Transformation and
Regeneration at
the Interface*

Community Relations Council



John Bell and Jenny Young

Community Relations Council



A Model of Consultation?

Transformation and Regeneration at the Interface

published by Community Relations Council
September 2013

Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background Context.	1
1.2 Methodology.	3
1.3 Structure of the report.	4
2. Consultation or Participation?	5
2.1 Relationships	6
2.2 Developing Learning	6
2.3 Youth	6
2.4 Inclusion	7
2.5 Process	7
2.6 Sustainability	8
2.7 Measuring Impact	8
3. Good Practice in Consultation?	9
3.1 Phase One: Pre-Consultation	9
3.2 Phase Two: Consultation/Engagement	13
3.3 Phase Three: Implementation	17
3.4 Phase Four: Aftercare	20
4. Case Studies	22
4.1 Alexandra Park	22
4.2 Creative Approaches: Draw Down the Walls	23
5. Summary and Conclusions	28
Appendix: Consultation Process and Key Questions to consider	31



A Model of
Consultation?

1. Introduction

The Community Relations Council commissioned the Institute for Conflict Research in December 2012 to review both past and current models of consultation and participation in relation to transformation and regeneration efforts on physical interface structures. This study highlights the key findings from that research and outlines a framework for community consultation with a particular focus on issues relating to the transformation or removal of interfaces in Northern Ireland.

The commissioning of this specific study has not occurred in a vacuum. Conversations on interface transformation and plans for regeneration are taking place through the Interface Community Partners and the Interagency Group, offering a vehicle for coordinated approaches, the sharing of information and good practice. Sustaining engagement through these mechanisms will most likely contribute to a more nuanced and informed understanding of community engagement around interface transformation in Northern Ireland.

1.1 Background Context

Although the first interface structures were built in 1969, initially as temporary measures under Special Powers legislation, it remains much more difficult to transform, reduce or remove an interface barrier than it is to put one up.

The drive and vision of the Department of Justice was the key change mechanism within Government to put interfaces firmly

on the agenda of the Northern Ireland Executive. The Department of Justice commitment in the 2011-15 *Programme for Government*; to ‘actively seek local agreement to reduce the number of *peace walls*’¹ was a turning point in Government’s approach to the issue. In order to take forward this commitment the Department of Justice agreed to create a standing Inter-Agency Group.

Subsequently, in May 2013, the First and deputy First Ministers published the *Together: Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy² which reflects the Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and building a united and shared society. A key headline action within TBUC is the removal of all interface barriers by 2023. Part of this process was the establishment of an all-party group to consider difficult issues preventing agreement between the five parties on key community relations issues. The all-party group are also expected to make recommendations on matters including parades and protests; flags, symbols and emblems and related sensitive matters stemming from the past.

In addition to TBUC, there are a number of other policies that refer either to interfaces explicitly or implicitly through the regeneration of areas of social need. These include the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, the Transforming Arterial Routes Strategy, the Department for Social Development’s Regional Development Strategy 2025, the Department Of Justice Community Safety Strategy, Belfast City Council’s Investment Strategy, and the Strategic Investment Fund. However, public knowledge of these policies is limited, and:

1 See, <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-2015-2015-final-report.pdf> Accessed 8th August 2013.

2 See, <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community> Accessed 6th August 2013.

...greater community consultation needs to take place so that all stakeholders are aware of the various options, both real and hypothetical, relating to what could/should/might happen to the peace walls. Community consultation is only successful when a community truly believes that it has something of value to offer the consultation process (Byrne et al. 2012: 16).³

One aspect of effective consultation on interface issues is to develop local knowledge to increase levels of engagement and create more informed decisions around options for regenerating or transforming interface communities. The move towards a statutory requirement for community planning through the long awaited Review of Public Administration will be an important opportunity through which statutory organisations and local communities can increasingly work together to prioritise local needs and develop the area based plans to transform interface communities.⁴ Community planning is to be based upon:

- The idea of developing a jointly owned vision of a locality;
- A belief that local authorities have a community leadership role which is crucial to facilitating (but not dominating) the community planning process; and

- A belief that ways must be found to enable communities to participate effectively in the process (Cave 2012: 11).

While it certainly sounds promising, it is too early to tell how effective the community planning process will be in terms of increasing engagement between local communities and statutory agencies in the context of interface regeneration.

However, there are several ongoing city-wide initiatives such as Belfast City Council's Interfaces Programme,⁵ the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Building Reconciliation in Communities (BRIC) Programme,⁶ and the International Fund for Ireland's Peacewalls Programme⁷ that are supporting local community efforts to transform interfaces across Northern Ireland. However, it is also too early to ascertain what impact these efforts will have on the future of the walls or on regeneration efforts in local communities.

Undoubtedly, lessons will come from these cases which will assist in the further development of good practice around community engagement in Northern Ireland's interface areas, building upon this piece of work.⁸ As resources tend to be targeted through short-term funding cycles, capturing the lessons learned to promote effective working in the future will

³ Indeed, 63% of residents in Byrne et al's survey wanted to know more on initiatives around the peace walls (Byrne et al. 2012: 28).

⁴ Which can perhaps build upon local area working by statutory agencies through the likes of community safety and neighbourhood renewal partnerships. For more information on community planning see http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/local_government/local-government-legislation-2/reform_programme_legislation-2.htm Accessed 15th April 2013.

⁵ Which has a budget of £421,000, with a capital spend of £280,000. The project is targeting 14 interface barriers / gates across three cluster areas: Inner West, Lower North and Upper North (Belfast).

⁶ Working in 80 NIHE estates which includes work looking at the 19 interface walls owned by the NIHE as well as two other areas not owned by NIHE; these are Black Mountain Shared Space (working with Highfield and Springmartin groups) and Percy Street / Townsend Street / Northumberland Street.

⁷ In contrast to the Belfast City Council programme which has technical design, visioning elements and capital funding, IFI's programme costs approximately £4million and is looking at approximately 70 sites around barriers in Belfast, Derry Londonderry and Portadown and focuses on building confidence in the community through relationship building, training and advocacy workshops specifically aimed at local residents. Some of these sites are in close proximity to one another - for example there are ten sites alone in the Tiger's Bay, Newington, New Lodge areas in North Belfast. Included in the IFI programme is the Duncairn Community Partnership and the Twaddell, Ardoyne and Shankill Communities in Transition (TASCIT).

⁸ Indeed, there are several methods emerging from these projects that are using creative approaches to engage in a more sustained dialogue with interface communities regarding the future of interface structures.

maximise potential benefits. The 'success stories' to date, such as the opening of the gate at Alexandra Park, extending the opening times of the gates at Northumberland Street, and the *Ambulatorio* project at Flax Street, among other examples, have the potential to highlight important lessons for future working. A focus on the engagement processes employed across interface contexts for consulting with local residents is one such area of learning which this study has attempted to document.

1.2 Methodology

Our methods have included a desk-based literature review of issues relating to consultation and urban regeneration and semi-structured interviews with 30 key representatives in the community and statutory sectors. Discussions were held with nine representatives from community organisations including Lower Shankill Community Association, North Belfast Interface Network, Falls Community Council, Forthspring Inter-Community Group, the Peace and Reconciliation Group, Craigavon Intercultural Group and St. Columb's Park House.

Those interviewed have been engaged in initiatives to transform or remove interfaces and this report utilises and draws on their experiences, learning and knowledge.

Additional interviews were held with representatives from:

- Belfast City Council;
- Belfast Interface Project;
- Community Relations Council;
- Craigavon Borough Council;
- Department for Social Development;

- Department of Justice;
- Forum for Alternative Belfast;
- Golden Thread Gallery;
- Groundwork NI;
- International Fund for Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
- Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister; and
- Urban Innovations.

Interviewees were asked which interface consultation processes they either had knowledge of or had been involved in, and were then asked to reflect upon what had worked well and why in terms of consultation and engagement between the statutory and community sectors and local residents.

For the purposes of documenting good practice we have focused primarily on examples where there has been some form of process of consultation which has yielded an outcome as in the case of Alexandra Park, Brucevale, Newington Street, Northumberland Street, Edlingham Street, Henry Street and Flax Street among others.⁹ However, we have also held discussions with individuals currently working on either the BCC or IFI interface programmes to assess which elements of the process of engagement to date interviewees felt were working well.

While the focus is primarily on Belfast, we also sought to include the views of community and statutory representatives from Derry Londonderry, Lurgan and Portadown to assess whether there had been any attempts made in these locations to consult with local residents on interface barriers.

⁹ With regards the art display at Flax Street, three interface gates were opened for several weeks. The gates are now closed again, but it is the process of consultation itself which we are interested in.

1.3 Structure of the report

The following section of the report provides a brief overview of some of the key themes emanating from the literature on community consultation and engagement, while section 3 documents good practice in terms of a four stage process of consultation on interface regeneration/transformation. Section 4 provides an overview of the case studies of Alexandra Park and the use of creative and arts based tools as a means of promoting more effective engagement with local residents, and section 5 concludes the report with some final thoughts on implementing an effective consultation process on interface regeneration in local communities.

2. Consultation or Participation?

Encouraging positive action for continued change and regeneration of interface areas is crucial. Including those most affected by conflict into the process for transformation is a central principle which guides conflict transformation work and peace-building internationally (Reimann and Ropers 2005: 39). Those in close proximity to interfaces statistically suffer disproportionately from conflict related trauma and the legacy of high levels of multiple deprivation (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006), so finding ways to promote community participation and engage meaningfully with local residents living in interface areas is of critical importance to transformation initiatives.

Local residents are the 'expert witnesses' in consultations around the transformation of their areas. It is therefore crucial that those organising the consultation ensure that all residents in the area being reviewed are given all the relevant information to help increase their understanding. Therefore, if they do wish to become engaged in the process they can engage fully in reflection and debate and explore the opportunities for positive change.

Although consultation is an integral part of policy development, it is often the case that effective community engagement can be difficult to sustain and suspicion or weak consultation may even be damaging to the relationships between stakeholders and decision-makers. As such, it is important to find meaningful methods of communication between those most impacted by potential changes to policies and programmes and those with the power to make changes.

Consultation is a 'two-way relationship' whereby decision makers and stakeholders interact before the development of a new policy or a change in practice. The power dynamics in a consultative relationship are differential in that the stakeholders do not usually have the power to determine the outcome of the process, although there is an expectation that their feedback is taken into consideration. The methods and purposes of consultation may be wide-ranging, but in essence they focus on the following three activities:

- Information sharing;
- Communication; and
- Joint assessment.

Typical methods of consultation usually involve:

- Requesting written or oral submissions from organisations on a specific theme and within a limited timeframe (usually within 12 weeks);
- Liaising with community/organisational representatives on the viability of a proposed policy;
- Distributing flyers and holding public meetings to more widely engage with local residents; and
- Conducting door-to-door discussions or surveys to statistically document local opinion.

It is possible to have a meaningful consultation where new information is exchanged between the decision makers and key stakeholders. However, it is equally possible for consultation to be used as a 'tick-box' exercise, where the voice of individuals or the community has little or no impact on any final decisions made.

While there is debate over the potential for community participation to promote change, it is widely accepted as an essential element in international regeneration models and particularly in the case of conflict transformation. If the process of consultation is legitimate, then community engagement can revitalize a culture of participation that may develop a project for change into a reality. The link between balancing outcomes and developing relationships will be a key consideration in the discussion of community participation, particularly in the case of the transformation of interface barriers and the regeneration of interface areas.

2.1 Relationships

The relationship between statutory and community authority is a recurring theme in the literature on community participation. There is a necessity for joint working between statutory agencies, political representatives and the community for successful community development that 'attacks more than one problem at a time, and that fosters citizen efforts and citizen influence' (Florin 1990: 42).

As Cleaver (1999) warns, it is important that citizen participation not mark a shift from 'we know best' to 'they know best' – in other words placing the onus for action on the community themselves. A prerequisite for approaching a legitimate process of engagement and consultation is the use of evidence upon which to base decision making.

2.2 Developing Learning

In treating participation as an interactive learning process, groups gain greater control and increased capacity, which will ultimately contribute to more successful projects and more sustainable futures (Cornwall 2008). This type of participation will not always be the most appropriate

form of engagement; however, it may be an important consideration in a wider regeneration initiative. In cases where funding and timescales may be restricted, incorporating an ethos of learning for community representatives may provide a benefit to engagement that could be carried into future projects.

2.3 Youth

In making the participative process as inclusive as possible, it is essential to pay attention to marginalised voices such as those of young people. As 'youth are both vulnerable to and contributors to violence and troubles' it is essential they comprise a vocal element in post-conflict transformation (Baizerman 2007: 2). In the case of interface issues in Northern Ireland, there appears to be a tendency to not fully include them in discussions on regeneration as local residents and users of public space. This was referred to in research on young people living at eight Belfast interfaces which was launched in the summer of 2013:

...while the vast majority of young people were keen to be involved in discussions around regeneration and transforming the interface, there was general consensus throughout the research that their views were rarely sought by adults, and that they were often viewed as a 'problem' rather than as part of the solution to improving relations between communities (Bell 2013: 26).

The Participation Network has produced a user friendly 'youth pack' which presents the main research findings and poses key questions to consider when trying to engage with young people on issues relating to the interface such as security, community relations, cross-interface relationships, policing, politics and

regeneration.¹⁰ Indeed, it is hoped that such a pack will prove useful as when young people are involved in wider discussions they tend to have dynamic and wide-ranging views related to the future of the walls, just as adults would (Leonard and McKnight 2011). The inclusion of young people in decision making is of considerable importance internationally (UN 2003).

2.4 Inclusion

Arising from the debate on the effectiveness of community participation is the recurring theme that including communities is central to community development and regeneration. The principles of community development which include social justice; self-determination; working and learning together; promoting sustainable communities; encouraging participation and engaging in reflective practice (TWICS 2007), are compatible with engaging in issues around the transformation and regeneration of interface communities.

Indeed, the ethos of promoting community development is one highlighted by the Department for Social Development under their 'Urban Regeneration and Community Development' policy framework which was published in the summer of 2012. This framework commits DSD to 'an outcomes focused approach' using community development principles to enable people to come together to:

- Influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and affect their lives;
- Define needs, issues and solutions for their community; and
- Take action to help themselves and make a difference (DSD 2012: 11).

¹⁰ Packs are available from the Community Relations Council.

¹¹ However collaborative planning at contentious areas can at times also feed in to a 'zero-sum' mindset with regards to the community divide in Northern Ireland (McQueen et al. 2008: 20).

This builds on findings from the Dunlop Report (2002), which argued:

There is little chance of improving people's standard of living and overall quality of life, in a sustainable way, without their collaborative participation in planning processes. This requires community capacity building leading to empowerment (NBCAU 2002: 12).

Increasing community participation also means providing local residents with the space to develop their view of what they want their area to look like, in the short, medium and long-term. The success of this 'sustainable place making model' is judged on the integrity and transparency of the approach and the process of engagement, rather than on the traditional 'inputs and outputs' model of engagement (DPI 2006). Arguably, the attachment of residents to where they live can help to inspire action because people are motivated to protect and improve places that are meaningful to them which is linked to the concept of place and attachment (Manzo and Perkins 2003). Approaches to regeneration which include the local community can help build self-esteem and enhance residents' sense of community (McQueen et al. 2008).

2.5 Process

The foundation of a community based approach to neighbourhood regeneration includes enabling communities to be at the heart of the decision-making process, to benefit from investment through jobs and of community ownership of assets. This is a turn to 'collaborative' or 'communicative' planning which prioritises community participation rather than the 'technocratic approach' adopted during the conflict which often ignored issues associated with sectarianism (McQueen et al. 2008: 19).¹¹

This requires a range of capacity building initiatives which are viewed as an integral part of the regeneration programme. Duncan and Thomas (2000) argued these should include:

- The development of community visions and action plans;
- Resourcing and supporting community involvement in partnerships;
- Developing the strength of community organisations with the aim of managing and/or owning the projects and assets created by the programme;
- Developing an infrastructure to support community organisations in the longer term;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress, including the recording and dissemination of good practice (Duncan and Thomas 2000: 9).

2.6 Sustainability

There are two further critical factors in achieving sustainable community-led area regeneration which is sustainable in the longer term. The first is involving communities at an early stage; the second is enabling and empowering those communities that want to lead the succession strategy and take over the responsibility for long-term development and management from statutory agencies. However, in most examples of community and statutory partnership approaches to regeneration, professionals prepare the bids and delivery plans at the outset and the exit strategies at the end which means that community involvement tends to start and end in the middle of the process (Duncan and Thomas 2000: 11).

Not all communities will want to or be able to sustain this level of involvement.

But, they argue, where communities want to take the lead throughout and beyond the regeneration process, they hold the key to the sustainability of their neighbourhoods (Duncan and Thomas 2000: 13). Support will be required for the community actors in this regard, this needs to be much more than money; it requires training, equipment and space in which to carry out activities. The commitment of time from professionals, acting as enablers, appears to be particularly important in the early stages of community support (Duncan and Thomas 2000: 23), where the long-term goal of transformation is to validate and build on people and resources within a community setting (Lederach 1995).

2.7 Measuring Impact

Measuring the success of a consultation process around regeneration and community development can be complicated. While the consultation itself may be measured by the level of community engagement and diversity of participation, the objectives surrounding regeneration will also be a variable in measuring success. A community development framework focuses on a holistic measurement that takes into consideration traditional economic indicators alongside social considerations such as sustainability and local capabilities (Salway Black 1994: 4). Assessment and evaluation of conflict work internationally can become overly technocratic with a great deal of emphasis placed on meeting outcomes (Reimann and Ropers 2005: 40). In assessing consultation practice in Northern Ireland, it will be crucial to consider best practice in this more rounded sense where the integrity of the process of consultation is as important as the practical outcomes.

3. Good Practice in Consultation?

Given the nature and sensitivities around relationships within and between interface communities, a 'traditional' formulaic approach to consultation which is used for other areas such as health, education and so on is not necessarily the most appropriate method. Often these methods are predicated on asking for organisational submissions to a proposal. A much more nuanced, practical and multi-faceted approach is required when dealing with issues relating to interface regeneration and transformation.

Bearing this in mind, a number of themes appear to provide guidance and best practice for others seeking to engage in consultation processes around interface regeneration or transformation. As a result of our discussions with practitioners, we suggest that broadly speaking the process for consultation or engagement around interface regeneration/transformation should focus on four key areas:

- **Phase One – Pre Consultation;**
- **Phase Two – Consultation/Engagement;**
- **Phase Three – Implementation (This will either lead to action or no action);**
- **Phase Four – Aftercare.**

This section now seeks to discuss in greater detail the process and in particular the key questions to consider at each of these phases. Appendix 1 charts the key points of the process in a more accessible format.

3.1 Phase One: Pre-Consultation

According to most of our interviewees, the beginning of a consultation process is perhaps the most important phase. It is crucial that statutory organisations, community representatives, local residents and other relevant stakeholders (such as local businesses) are brought together to form an area based or barrier specific **Steering Group** prior to any consultation on interface transformation taking place. Indeed the work of the CRC/DoJ Barriers Transformation Group and various examples from within the IFI Peacewalls programme and Belfast City Council's Interfaces programme highlight that a Steering Group of statutory and community members promotes best practice in coordinating efforts and reducing duplication in terms of the provision of resources at the interface.

Where this pre-consultation engagement in the past did not take place, there was at times confusion between community and statutory bodies regarding what resources were available to implement change. It is hard to define what can realistically be done in terms of transforming an interface barrier without both local knowledge and input (from community representatives and residents) alongside those with the remit and resources to enact change (statutory agencies).

As part of this phase of engagement there are a number of key questions which Steering Group members should consider in the pre-consultation process:

- **Why are we doing a consultation? What are we hoping to achieve? Who should be engaged at this stage of the process?**
- **Can we review what previous consultations have been done? Does**

work need to start at the beginning or is there work we can build upon to begin at a later stage in the consultation process?

- **What is the specific barrier/gate or cluster area we are looking at?**
- **Who owns the barrier? Who owns the land adjacent to the structure?**
- **Is there a proposal for regeneration/transformation being put forward? What is it?**
- **Can localised planning tie in to other regional or city-wide plans?**
- **Are there enough resources in place for this proposal? What can we realistically do?**
- **Given that this is a contentious issue, how do we manage differences of opinion, potential gate keeping and/or opt out by key players?**

One of the crucial aspects of the pre-consultation phase is ensuring that there are the resources available to match visions of any proposed change to the interface structure. The example of Newington Street a number of years ago highlighted the challenges posed when community and statutory bodies do not engage with one another from the beginning of a process – community expectations can be raised without the resources available to make any change within a reasonable timeframe. While the gate at Newington Street has opened up (initially on a trial three month basis 24 hours a day), this process has taken several consultations and significant work to ensure this came to fruition. Misunderstandings between statutory and community representatives are less likely to occur when there is engagement right from the beginning of

a process. Additionally, knowing what the options are up front, what resources are available, and what is up for consultation makes it easier for community representatives when discussing any proposals within their own communities.

It is also important to consider:

- Who will carry out the consultation? Who will ask the questions? What questions are we going to ask?
- How will communication between all relevant stakeholders be assured?

Given that communication is crucial to an effective consultation and engagement process, bringing together everyone who should be ‘round the table’ from an early stage provides a solid foundation from which to proceed. This approach also means that ‘who is doing what’ can be agreed at an early stage and there is accountability in the process. Indeed, it is very important to decide at an early stage responsibilities for a consultation, and it should be borne in mind that who conducts a consultation may impact upon responses within the community.

The benefits of having community representatives conduct a consultation may be that they are known locally, motivated to make change in their local area, are trusted and can engage well with residents. The challenges may be that if a community representative has a particularly strong opinion on a proposal, that this may influence the responses of local residents in their feedback. It is important that community representatives bear in mind the potential influence they have in local communities when discussing the issues with them. Community representatives must also be realistic in that they may not represent all members

of the community and, therefore, need to bring on board a variety of different representatives from across different sections of the community including women, young people, church leaders, residents groups and others who may have valid and helpful personal contributions to make and will also be able to reach out to other residents.

Statutory organisations must also be mindful of community representation and, while drawing upon the views and skills of community workers, do not overly rely on a few like minded community representatives when conducting consultations. Firstly, an over reliance on one or two individuals can add to an already significant workload. Secondly, such an approach may mean basing decisions on the views of a small number of individuals ('X said we can't do it') rather than more widely gauging opinion in local communities. Many community representatives do not wish to be 'gatekeepers' – and it is important that statutory organisations do not rely on them to such an extent that this is what they effectively become. Rather, community representatives' input should be valued as providing a 'feel' of grassroots opinion as well as acting as a direct conduit between statutory organisations and the community. But this does not mean that decisions towards action (or inaction) should be taken based solely on the views of a very small number of individuals.

The benefit of using third party professionals to engage with residents, is that they may provide additional experience in consultation in research methodologies (such as surveys, interview techniques, etc). The downsides are the cost of such provision and also whether or not local communities will engage as effectively

with those they don't know. Statutory representatives face a similar 'crisis of legitimacy' in conducting consultations on their own, particularly when they are unfamiliar faces to local people. Best practice would suggest that local input (but not to the extent of coercing or overly influencing opinion) is very important for a successful consultation and who is responsible for doing what should be agreed between a Steering Group at the outset of a consultation process.

While who asks the questions in a consultation can be crucial, it is also important to consider the phrasing of questions. Where possible, questions should provide some brief information on the proposal and seek a genuine response from the respondent. As such, questions should not be 'leading'. **In this regard the use of petitions to 'ask' a resident's response are not necessarily the most appropriate approach because the signing of the petition is merely a response to a particular opinion.**

Other crucial questions to consider early on in a consultation process are:

- **Who is to be consulted? Who is a resident?**
- **What lead in information must be given to enable the resident to make an informed response? (With the safety and security of residents being paramount).**
- **How will any proposed change impact on residents? What are the likely benefits or concerns and how can these be addressed?**

Part of the brief of this study was to ask interviewees 'who needs to be included in discussions around interface regeneration?'

Without abrogating responsibility, it is up to area based Steering Groups, which have a working knowledge of local areas and contexts, to decide the geographic remit and who will be included in consultation.

There is no scientific formula applicable across all interface areas which defines who is a local resident. Rather, local knowledge is crucial at an early stage to build up a profile of an area which can be used to define the houses and streets to be most specifically targeted. A useful approach appears to be informing the wider community of any developments (by way of flyers etc), but conducting more in-depth consultations (such as surveys or door-to-door discussions) with those who live near the gates and will be the most impacted upon by any changes in the local architecture.

It is also important in any consultation process to bear in mind that residents are most likely to engage with a process when they know what the pros or cons are. In other words, highlighting the potential benefits of any proposed change and how it will make daily life for residents better is obviously an effective way of showing residents why they should take part in discussions. Failure to make clear to local people the potential impacts of any change on their daily lives makes the consultation process appear abstract and irrelevant and people are less likely to participate. It is also important to consider early on in a consultation:

- **How can we include young people or marginalised groups?**
- **Who is to be made aware that there is a consultation underway? Are discussions to be made public or kept behind closed doors?**

Before even beginning a consultation it is important to consider who the target groups, or audience, are for the discussions? For consultation purposes quite often the term 'local resident' is used effectively to target only local adults. However, consideration should be given about how to include a wider range of voices in any discussions, and particularly those of young people. The methods chosen for consultation will impact upon whether or not young people are likely to be included in discussions.¹² Traditional means of consulting such as distributing flyers, going door to door, asking residents to fill out surveys, and holding public meetings are very unlikely to ensure the inclusion of young people. More creative measures (See discussion in section 4) may be of use when attempting to gauge the thoughts and opinions of local young people, who after all are also residents, and often the most likely to use public space at the interface. Some of these thoughts have been documented in the CRC publication *Young People and the Interfaces* which was launched in the summer of 2013 (Bell 2013).

It is also worth considering if a proposal is focused on opening a gate for a park or green space, who the main user groups are? This may extend the remit of a consultation slightly further if the users of parks or green spaces are coming from further away than the neighbouring streets to use the facilities.

It is also important to consider who, if anyone, is to be made aware that a consultation is ongoing? It may be appropriate for early discussions to be limited to a small number of individuals, and in particularly sensitive contexts it may be worth considering whether

¹² See the next sub-section for greater detail on consultation methods.

engagement with local politicians, media or other stakeholders at this stage in the process may help to manage conversations in challenging circumstances.

Other key questions to consider early on before engaging with local residents include:

- **What is a realistic timescale for progress?**
- **What are the potential problems which may arise?**

A consultation process may take time and there could be difficulties along the way that interfere with progress. In setting a pace for engagement and action, it will be important to keep momentum by taking 'calculated risks' and not moving at the pace of the slowest stakeholders, but also at the same time ensuring their concerns are taken into consideration and attempts made to mitigate against these. Indeed, crucial to preventing conversations from developing in a 'circular' manner is devising a plan for consultation with some timescale. While a timescale does not need to be rigidly stuck to, having an idea of what needs to be done, by whom and by when provides a focus to discussions which can progress work more effectively than if left open ended.

At times several interviewees also suggested that at present not enough time was spent early on in what they referred to as the 'problem identification' phase. In other words, before even beginning a consultation, consideration needs to be given to what potential problems may arise during the course of discussions. This identification of problems early on is also linked to the fourth and final phase of the process, the provision of an appropriate aftercare package to address the concerns of local residents. An example of

unforeseen problems which can arise as a result of interface transformation occurred on Duncairn Gardens when it was realised that local residents who had the grilles removed from their windows at the interface would subsequently have to pay higher insurance premiums – who is going to pay for this increase, residents or statutory agencies? Attempting to foresee problems early on in a consultation process limits the potential for these difficulties to stall progress at a later stage which will also increase community confidence in the process.

3.2 Phase Two: Consultation/Engagement

After careful preparations, it is possible to move into Phase Two of the consultation process, which involves direct engagement with the community. Promoting community participation has been identified as crucial to consultation, giving purpose and meaning to the wider process. While consultation has at times been used as a tick-box exercise, seeking permission from the community to take a particular action, developing a process for engagement that values local knowledge and promotes an ethos of information sharing and idea exchange can provide clear benefits to both stakeholders and decision-makers. Thoughtful and well-planned community engagement can encourage community participation, develop a process of mutual benefit to community and statutory actors, and promote sustainability in a particular area.

As discussed in Phase One, before engaging directly with the community or via a provider it will be important to decide who will carry out the consultation and what questions need to be asked, and how communication flow will be assured. Additional key questions and considerations are further explored overleaf.

Choose your methods of engagement carefully considering the local context.

Each local context will vary and therefore the consultation methods employed must accurately reflect local nuances. An exhaustive and long consultation process may be unnecessary in a location where there are few local residents directly impacted upon by any proposed change. However, engagement generally needs to reach out into local communities, so it may be worth considering if there are local schools, residents' groups, women's groups, youth or other groups who may be included in discussions.

Using a mixed and open methodology will allow for wider participation from a more diverse number of groups. There are a wide range of consultative methods, each with their own strengths and limitations. In all instances a vital component will be ensuring that information and evidence obtained through the methods is collated and documented. These methods, described in Table 1, include:

- Distributing leaflets/flyers;
- Holding public meetings;
- Carrying out surveys/questionnaires;
- Door to door conversations;
- Hosting special events;
- Including community consultation days;
- Facilitating community workshops;
- Using creative methods such as visioning and arts based methods; and
- Engaging social media.

Table 1: Tool Kit for Community Engagement

Method	Strengths	Limitations
Leaflets/ Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can reach many people for information sharing, progress reports and/or event invitation. - Requires relatively few resources. - May encourage participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low response rates. - Lack of depth related to issues. - May not be sufficient to show value in community participations.
Public Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People have an opportunity to vent concerns and raise key issues. - Clear line of communication between project representatives and residents. - Networking between stakeholders. - Requires few resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One or two can dominate conversation. - People may be reluctant to speak their mind in public. - Negative gossip after the meeting can spread false information. - Can easily move off topic.
Surveys/ Questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can gauge feedback from a large number of stakeholders and ask a wide range of questions. - Statistically evidences community feedback. - Can be carried out easily by trained individuals and groups. - Useful for identifying key issues through an initial household survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to prioritise feedback from those most affected. - Feedback will be limited. - Does not allow for the emergence of new and creative ideas because of structure.
Door to door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows for open questions that may allow for deeper responses that Steering Group may not have considered. - People feel heard and valued and may begin to participate more actively. - Strong human connection. - Using this method early can ensure people are informed, reducing negative or false information from spreading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time consuming and resource intensive for practitioners. - May be difficult to evidence feedback. - Difficult for independent researchers and/or unfamiliar practitioners to receive open and honest feedback. - Concern over community representatives influencing responses.
Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targets particular audiences. - Can create a positive atmosphere in a contested space such as a park and help people to visualise potentials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource and planning intensive. - May raise suspicion and encourage spoilers to interfere with process.
Community Consultation Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be used in the early stages of engagement where people may have a number of general questions. - All key actors in one place to answer questions and network with local stakeholders. - Encourages participation by offering a wide range of times for local residents to drop in and learn more. - Reduces the potential for one or few people to dominate the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of turn-out cannot be guaranteed. - People can come who may not be directly impacted by the suggested change(s) and have limited stake in the process. - Difficulty arranging for multiple groups where there may be tensions (eg: intra-community and cross-community issues).
Community Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can facilitate meaningful discussion and debate with key stakeholders that can engage deeply with issues. - May be useful for cross-community engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires careful planning and facilitation. - Time and resource intensive. - Could become 'talking shops' without facilitating change.
Creative Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aids people in visualising proposed changes. - Creative techniques, such as visioning or arts based programmes, can reach new audiences. - Particularly useful in engaging young people and hard-to-reach groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May require professional skill-set (eg: architects, artists, facilitators). - Could falsely raise expectations for large scale changes where the resources are not available. - Could be risky to stray from traditional methods.
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reaches a wider audience and encourages a larger scale of participation. - Useful for inviting young people to events. - Allows for networking. - Requires minimal time investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to know who is being engaged and what relationship they have with the interface. - Difficult to monitor feedback. - Only reaches those who use Social Media tools.

There are a number of additional issues which should be considered with regards to consulting with local residents:

- **Residents need to be properly briefed in order to make an informed decision.**

Information sharing is crucial when engaging with the local community and it is important that residents feel that they have been kept informed of developments. However, information sharing is also different from properly engaging with the community. Public meetings are useful to provide information, but consultation should not be reduced to the outcomes of several public meetings. Residents need to be given time to reflect on the information they have been given to make an informed decision. Consideration should also be given to the language used when engaging with the general public, ensuring that 'jargon' is avoided and proposals are discussed with the community in a clear and concise manner.

- **How a proposal is framed can influence the response.**

Best practice to date also indicates that framing discussions around regeneration issues and changing how people use public space by organising cross-community events and fun days can allow for conversations to develop more naturally over time. In North Belfast the initial drive around Alexandra Park was to reduce anti-social behaviour, clean the park up, and encourage local residents to start to use it again. It was only after a period of time that discussion turned to the potential of opening the gate (see section 4).

- **It may be appropriate to consider the sequencing of when consultation events are held.**

According to several interviewees, the holding of public meetings early and before door to door discussions may adversely impact on views within the community if one or two individuals who are particularly negative about a proposal dominate the discussion in a public meeting.

- **A solid evidence base is required to document residents' views.**

It is also of crucial importance that the views of the community are recorded and documented accurately. It is of no use to inform other individuals and organisations on the Steering Group that 'We consulted local residents and they thought x'. The results of a consultation and the views and opinions of residents need to be evidenced and the information needs to be available if requested. **Best practice would suggest that the results should be shared between community and statutory organisations to avoid any suspicion of methodology or results.** Documenting varied feedback from a wide range of stakeholders can help develop a well rounded view of key issues in an area. It is important to remain open to critical voices and ideas that may challenge current ways of thinking and planning.

- **Is it possible to provide the opportunity for capacity building and learning for local people through the process?**

An additional point to consider relates to the potential for community development or 'up-skilling' through an inclusive consultation process. Getting to the heart of community thoughts and feelings often requires dedication and commitment from local volunteers. There is the potential to harness this activism by rewarding people for the time and effort they put into their work. For example, offering training opportunities

and developing the professional capacity of volunteers to get involved in conducting consultations can be of great benefit to the wider process. By developing a process that trains a number of local residents, there is the potential for capacity building so that future developments could sustain themselves regardless of what action results from the community engagement.

3.3 Phase Three: Implementation

Phase Three of the consultation process considers the findings of the community engagement described in Phase Two. There is no onus on decision-makers to take action that reflects the feedback from the community. However, in order to give value and meaning to the process it is important to document consultation findings and evidence how any decision was reached. In conversations with practitioners a number of issues were identified in relation to the implementation phase of the consultation process. These issues are discussed in greater detail below.

- **Consultation findings and the next steps to be taken should be shared with the local community.**

It is crucial to keep the local community informed of the outcomes of the consultation process, regardless of whether or not this has resulted in a proposal being accepted, amended or rejected. Ultimately, keeping local people informed of the findings from the consultation and showing a clear evidence base to support any decisions made will promote feelings of accountability within the community and encourage trust-building between decision-makers and local residents. Sharing the findings also makes the consultation process more transparent and less of a 'tick-box' exercise'.

- **Seeking 100% community consent for a proposal is an unrealistic goal. But neither should one or two individuals hold a power of veto over a process.**

Many decision-makers had questions around determining when they had secured enough community consent to take action. Practitioners explained that in the past there have been cases in which a small number of residents have been able to limit progress where they felt uncomfortable with proposed changes. The objections of a small number of individuals should be taken into account, but should not impact upon any decision taken based upon the majority of residents' views. Indeed, taking action with the aims of benefitting the community will likely involve calculated risks. Again, there is no precise mathematical equation applicable across all interface areas which indicates that when a certain level of community support has been achieved action can be taken. Rather:

- **Weighted priority should be given to the views of residents who will be directly impacted upon by any proposed changes to a barrier or a gate.**

Allowing the wider community to have a say in a consultation while giving priority to the views of those local residents most impacted upon by change is one way of slightly circumnavigating the challenges regarding 'veto power'. If engagement with those residents living at an interface barrier reveals that a large enough number are concerned with proposed changes, this should immediately be taken into account. Good practice to date suggests the importance of attentive listening to the concerns and queries of local residents, asking them what their concerns are and assessing how these concerns can best be minimised.

Those residents with genuine fears relating to a proposal, around security for example, should be engaged with to allay these fears. Being able to document the numbers of interface incidents at a location (for example from PSNI statistics) has been shown to be a useful means of reassuring residents that the local security context is relatively stable.

Common sense is required by barrier specific Steering Groups to determine the levels of opposition to plans. Should, for example, 20 of 50 local residents express concern about a proposal, this obviously indicates that plans should not progress in their current format. Should, for example, 5 of 50 residents have concerns, efforts should be made to address these concerns. However, if after efforts to allay fears there remains a small number of objectors, this should not stop the implementation of a proposal if there is sufficient consent. Objectors should be kept informed, as other residents, of the results of the consultation, and reassured that there will be ongoing support from statutory agencies in the aftermath of any change (See phase four).

In the case where local residents generally feel favourably towards proposed changes and that change is supported by statutory agencies:

- **It is best to take action as quickly as possible.**

Delays in implementing any changes provide the potential opportunity for those opposed to negatively influence local opinion. A relatively quick process of implementation will also indicate that bureaucratic red-tape is not hindering the process, as the longer any changes take to be made, the greater the levels of apathy in the community become.

In the case of Newington, as a result of the road closure, families felt comfortable with their children playing in the streets without traffic. The function of the gate shifted away from its original security purpose and became important for protecting children at play. Therefore, the community requested traffic calming measures, which if expedited, could have facilitated the transformation of the interface gate. However, statutory requirements for a further consultation directly related to the traffic calming measures and road changes further delayed the process which was received with a certain degree of anger within the local community. It was felt that while Special Powers were required to build interface structures in the first place, there needed to be greater flexibility within statutory departments to respond to community desires within a reasonable timeframe before positive momentum and will towards change is lost.

In addition to taking immediate action after the consultation findings have been assessed, it is important to address concerns in a timely manner. In particular cases, years after the initial concern was raised, action has been proposed which is no longer necessary. For example, one interviewee argued that a number of years ago residents in Ballysillan expressed concern in relation to golf balls hitting their windows. The suggested action plan included installing a 70-80 foot net around the properties affected at the cost of approximately £45,000. By the time the solutions were entering a phase of action several years later, the problem of golf balls hitting windows had largely been resolved.

In order to best progress activities after the consultation findings have been reviewed:

- **A local area action plan should be devised.**

The CRC led Interface Working Group produced a *Guidance Paper on a Proposed Process for Interface Barrier Transformation/Removal* (See Appendix 2) to provide a process for statutory agencies and their voluntary/community sector partners to work within when entering into collaborative arrangements to address the transformation of interface barriers or calls for new or strengthened interface barriers. It proposes that all public agencies adopt the aim, strategic approach and guiding principles contained within the document to enable them to provide a joined up process to work within when entering into collaborative arrangements to address the transformation of interface walls.

The approach has been adopted by the Department of Justice, Belfast City Council and the IFI Peacewalls Programme which involves the Steering Groups developing action plans clearly designating what is to happen, who is responsible, and what the timeframe for change is. Even in those instances where there is community opposition to a proposal and no action will be taken, it will be important to feedback the findings into a local area plan for regeneration so that learning is not lost and the value of the consultation is not reduced. This sharing will inform other initiatives and identify the key areas that warrant attention in order to progress. Additionally,

- **By documenting the experience of the consultation process it will be possible to transfer knowledge and experience across contexts.**

While local nuances make cross-context information sharing challenging, it is important that good practice be shared whenever possible to build upon lessons learned and promote effective working. Efforts should be made to secure general cross-community agreement where

proposed changes impact upon both communities at the interface.¹³ But it is important to bear in mind that Protestant and Catholic communities may have different feelings towards interface barriers. For example in a recent survey of interface residents, 41% of Protestants compared to 10% of Catholics believed that without the peace wall their community would disappear (Byrne et al. 2013: 29). This identifies a significant difference in opinion whereby the wall has particular value to the Protestant community in relation to protecting space and identity in contentious interface areas. Different perceptions within communities on the purpose of the walls may therefore impact upon which are the most appropriate methods of engaging with the local community as well as what actions may be perceived as benefitting the regeneration efforts in the area.

It must also be noted that opinions about the need for interface barriers may change during times of unrest. The flag protests triggered by Belfast City Council's decision in December 2012 to restrict the flying of the Union flag at City Hall to designated days and ongoing tensions around parades and protests, and at times associated violence, in interface areas such as Twaddell Avenue and Ardoyne, highlight that the context in which discussions take place at the interface may be very important. It will in all likelihood be much more difficult to engage with residents on sensitive issues relating to barriers and walls if the local political context is one of uncertainty and fear. A more stable situation at a macro and local political level will in all likelihood provide a more fertile soil from which to discuss interface regeneration and transformation.

3.4 Phase Four: Aftercare

The fourth and final phase of the community consultation process includes five main elements:

Supporting the actions agreed as a result of the consultation;

- **Evaluating the process;**
- **Ensuring any concerns are adequately addressed, with particular reference to meeting security needs;**
- **Engaging with all the relevant agencies that need to be involved delivering the agreed recommendations; and**
- **Providing a structure whereby communication is maintained between the Steering Group members and local residents.**

The Steering Group needs to continue to meet regularly following any change at the interface. It is crucial to show local residents that they are not going to be 'abandoned' or left alone in the aftermath of any change. Ongoing support is also instrumental in supporting any action taken as a result of the consultation process. In certain cases the transformation agreed upon requires continuous action on a daily basis, as in the case of opening gates at predetermined times. Consistency of opening and closing times has been identified as a key element of the process which helps to normalise the transformation for residents. In the event this support is unavailable, key actors lose accountability in the process.

For example, a set of gates was opened in the Tullyally/Currynrierin area of Derry

Londonderry at the request of local residents in the late 1990s. Dedicated community workers and volunteers from the community were responsible for opening and closing the gates each day. Over time these gates stopped opening each day, not because of increased security concerns or a change of heart in the community, but because of a lack of aftercare support. In the case of Alexandra Park, wardens employed by Belfast City Council are responsible for opening and closing the gates each day, which has been identified as an important element of support in the transformation process.

The aftercare package is also linked to the pre-consultation phase when potential problems which may arise should have already been assessed. Consideration should be given to how measures which may provide residents with a greater feeling of security are going to be resourced (for example installing CCTV cameras or upgrading street lighting).

There are other issues which residents may need additional support with in relation to any change at the interface. As documented in section one, it is possible that with any change pertaining to removing or opening barriers there may be a difference in terms of the support available to NIHE tenants when compared with private home owners or tenants. Although these issues should have already been considered before even beginning a consultation, it is in the aftercare stage when residents may require additional (and possibly financial) support.

Various examples of good practice in terms of aftercare provision have occurred through the IFI Peacewalls programme.

¹³ Current programmes such as the TASCIT initiative are seeking to reach local agreement by conducting single identity consultation workshops first before bringing residents from both communities together in cross-community plenary session to reach agreement on any proposed change. The evaluation of these workshops will likely inform future practice in the area of community consultation around issues of cross-community impact.

Initiatives funded through the programme have built in reviews to monitor the consultation process and the outcomes. Additionally, the programme has stressed the need to ensure that local communities feel safe and secure in their own homes. In this regard examples of appropriate aftercare provision have included the installation of toughened glass for residents at interface areas, the provision of help-line numbers that residents can phone in case of emergency, and in various areas an increased number of PSNI patrols to provide a greater sense of security. In the Duncairn Gardens area agreements have been made with local residents that if they feel unsafe, the grilles on their windows which have been removed as part of the programme, can be put up again at certain times of the year. These are all important developments to provide interface residents with a sense of support and security should any incidents occur at the interface.

It is also important to **monitor and evaluate** the progress of any transformation at the interface. In other words, what have the practical outcomes been for local residents? In this regard it is important to consider whether or not a barrier has been made to look 'better' but has this had any real impact on people's lives? Statistics on interface incidents from the PSNI and BCC's Tension Monitoring Scheme will provide a useful barometer of general security issues, but other methods of reviewing progress, such as monitoring the use of parks/public spaces in the aftermath of any change should also be considered as useful means of documenting what the practical impact of transforming an interface structure has been.

Summary

This short study has found that a consultation process on interface transformation/regeneration should focus on four key phases:

1. Pre-consultation;
2. Consultation/Engagement;
3. Implementation; and
4. Aftercare.

A crucial component of a successful consultation in interface locations is having a focused Steering Group in place right from the beginning of the process, even before engaging with residents. Statutory and community representatives need to be engaging with one another and with local residents at the start of the process to assess what is possible, what the resources are for change, and provide continuing support to residents in the aftermath of any change.

The following section seeks to put into a practical context some of these elements of good practice which have been identified to date in terms of work to transform the interface.

4. Case Studies

The following section documents some practical examples of the consultation process with regards to Alexandra Park in North Belfast and the creative approaches used to help the local community imagine what their area might look like through the *Draw Down the Walls* project.

4.1 Alexandra Park

On 1st September 1994, the foundations for a 120-metre long, 3.5-metre-high corrugated iron fence were laid in Alexandra Park under the auspices of providing security for local residents given a significant number of sectarian incidents in this part of North Belfast. Perhaps ironically, the building of this 'peace-wall' took place the day after the Provisional IRA ceasefire.

Although the interface structure is still there, as of 16th September 2011, the gate is open during the week between the hours of 8am and 4pm and for more limited periods at weekends between 7am and 12pm. This process of opening an interface structure which had been closed for 17 years highlights a number of useful points to consider for other interface contexts.

In particular, the key drive to 'do something' about the park which gathered momentum in 2010 was not focused on opening the gate or even lowering or transforming the interface wall. Rather, local residents had been complaining of increasing levels of anti-social behaviour in the park, and community organisations on both sides of the interface had been engaging both with the local community and with the PSNI to try and reduce the

numbers of incidents (which included trees in the park being burnt). This initial contact between community organisations such as North Belfast Interface Network, the North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group and the PSNI laid the foundations for a Steering Group to be established to look at ways to further reduce anti-social activity in the park and encourage residents to start to use the space again.¹⁴ From the beginning of the process this multi-agency group had statutory, community and local resident representation.

The Steering Group decided that community confidence in using the park as a social space needed to be increased and a series of clean-ups of the park were started. Additionally, park wardens from Belfast City Council increased their patrols in the area, as did the PSNI, particularly at weekends, when anti-social behaviour was at its highest. Essentially the drive was around increasing community confidence to once again use the park. However, the discussions which had been ongoing between community and statutory representatives and local residents led to thoughts turning to the possibility of opening the gate.

It was decided that there was a need for a consultation process with local residents and so community representatives, with statutory support, went door to door to speak with and survey residents living in areas such as Dunville, Parkside, Limestone Road and Tiger's Bay bordering on the park. Groundwork NI were also involved in the process to support the community organisations during the consultation process. The questionnaire for residents provided a brief overview of what was being proposed (the opening of the gate

¹⁴ The Steering Group involved NBIN, BCC, Groundwork NI, North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group, DoJ, PSNI, New Lodge Arts and Grove Women's Group.

at specific times) and asked them to indicate whether or not they agreed or disagreed with this. Significantly, the question was phrased in such a way so as not to lead residents to a preferred response. Alongside the engagement with residents, local community representatives also spent time going into youth clubs, schools and local businesses about the proposals and perceptions of public safety. Although young people were not specifically consulted about the proposals, young people were included in the design of various arts based activities for the community fun days which were organised in the park.¹⁵

Community responses to the consultation indicated that close to 100% of residents were in favour of the opening of the gate. Given that community support had been secured, consideration then had to be given to redoing the path which had become overgrown, mending the gate, renovating the small fishing area and deciding who would have responsibility to open and close the gate on a regular basis. It was decided that the BCC Park Wardens were best placed to open and close the gates.

After the gate was opened on Friday 16th September 2011, on Saturday 17th September a cross-community family fun-day was organised in the park to publicise the opening as well as encourage local residents to use the space. As time progressed local residents asked why the gates were not open at the weekends, and subsequently opening hours were extended to include more limited periods on a Saturday and a Sunday. During the hours that the gates are opened, residents on either side of the interface are more able to access shops and services on the 'Other' side, although there is currently no

hard data to indicate how much more likely people are to cross the interface as a result of the gate opening.

It should be noted that there have been challenges in the process in Alexandra Park. However, the presence of a Steering Group has allowed the impact of these challenges to be minimised. At one stage the gates were no longer being opened and closed regularly by the wardens, and it was through the mechanism of the Steering Group that this could be remedied. Although in some ways perhaps the situation was slightly 'easier' in Alexandra Park because there are a limited number of residents, there are a number of useful lessons which may be learnt for other interface areas.

4.2 Creative Approaches: Draw Down the Walls

In a number of community consultations to transform interfaces a particular difficulty for local residents has emerged around visualising change. Professional support from architects is one tool that has been employed to circumnavigate these challenges. For example, the Forum for Alternative Belfast (FAB) offers workshops for communities to inform and educate residents and practitioners about Belfast designs within local and city-wide contexts. The aim of these workshops is to develop a stronger community voice on issues of planning, which will ultimately have an impact on the social, economic and political make up of the city's geography. Similarly, Urban Innovations has been commissioned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's BRIC programme to work together with community representatives to develop visual models of what a particular change at an interface may look like. These designs have been

¹⁵ Through New Lodge Arts and Mountcollyer youth club.

incorporated into the consultation process for current interface work including BCC's Interfaces Programme. The feedback from community representatives, architects and statutory workers engaging with this process has been positive in relation to the possibilities for visualising change and discussing different ideas. The potential for deepening engagement with local residents has however yet to be evidenced, and will warrant further evaluation at a later stage.

Creative approaches have also been praised for broadening the consultation to a wider audience. A youth oriented *Bring Down the Walls* Programme engaged with 120 young people in a conference in 2009, forty years after the first physical structures were built in Belfast. The programme included visits to interface barriers around the city, discussions around key issues and a creative process whereby young people wrote messages on a cardboard display designed like a brick wall. From this process, 16 volunteers were appointed Ambassadors for Peace and underwent training on a range of topics related to good relations and personal development. The feedback from young people was collected through this process and plans were developed for the next ten years through which interface structures would be transformed. Feedback from this process was collected and delivered to key statutory actors.

The 'Your Space or Mine' research carried out in the Brandywell/Fountain interface of Derry/Londonderry highlighted the strengths of innovative solutions in increasing participatory engagement (McQueen 2008: 10). Within this year-long research initiative, facilitators worked in The Diamond, a centrally located urban space, where they were able to engage with people on the streets through artistic mediums which ultimately increased

awareness and interest in the broader regeneration project.

Along a similarly creative thread in Portadown, a People's Festival was organised in the interface space under consideration for regeneration as a way of engaging young people and enticing wider participation. Similar festivals were organised at Alexandra Park to promote shared space prior to the gates opening there in September 2011.

The feedback from these methods has shown increased levels of participation which have inspired a deeper community interest and spirit of community activism.

One particular process rooted in creative engagement with young people has contributed to a process whereby gates were opened for an art event for the Cultural Olympiad in 2012. *Draw Down the Walls* is a project that has been successful in incorporating new voices into the consultation process and bringing about physical change around an interface structure. The project was developed as a single-identity process which used detached youth outreach and creative workshops with artists/facilitators to engage 'new' young people into a conversation around social issues in the area. The project has developed to focus more broadly on cross-interface community relations in North Belfast and spans the areas of Ardoyne, Lower Shankill and New Lodge/Newington through the partnership of the Golden Thread Gallery, North Belfast Interface Network and Lower Shankill Community Association.

The inspiration for this programme developed from the understanding that traditional structures and techniques of engagement on interface issues were not reaching all young people. The programme included focus groups whereby young

people engaged in discussion with creative dialogue techniques. This included photographic and video workshops to describe the space in which they are living. The direct focus was not on conflict or interface barriers, as practitioners noticed a tendency for young people to focus on symbols of conflict and respond to adults with rehearsed ideas that reflect the conflict more so than personal opinion.

The project began on a single-identity basis. This is reflective of many other consultation approaches that seek to gain opinions on both sides of an interface structure separately. This has been identified as an important approach, in that different communities and local areas will have very specific and wide ranging issues which will impact upon the necessity of the interface barrier. For outcome specific programmes where an amendment of a wall/fence would affect more than one community, cross-community agreement is seen to be crucial. For a programme like *Draw Down the Walls* where good relations is an important consideration, cross-community engagement is central.

Unique methods were employed throughout the *Draw Down the Walls* project to facilitate how young people visualise and describe their space. For example, one artist/facilitator used a *camera obscura*, a hollow box large enough for a person to fit inside. Inside the box, the view is of the surroundings flipped upside down. An important dynamic to the *Draw Down the Walls* efforts is to change contested spaces through imagination and widening world views. The *camera obscura* literally changed the way young people viewed their surroundings.

Another creative technique included publicising ideas and encouraging wider engagement with the general public. For

example, large billboards were placed on the walls of a gate providing a view of what the area would look like if the gates were open. Questions and contact details were written on the board for the general public to get involved in wider conversations. Information was linked to an online blog and phone number whereby those who saw the billboard could provide feedback. This incorporates a social media element which has been of central importance to *Draw Down the Walls*, reaching out to 1500 *Facebook* members from both the community and statutory sectors. This use of social media has been highlighted as having great potential for increasing public participation in future consultations.

As a result of the successes of *Draw Down the Walls*, a proposal was made for a larger scale international initiative to transform the space between the Flax Street gates as part of the worldwide truce for the Cultural Olympiad. For the interface communities involved in the *Ambulatorio* event, it was an opportunity to harness civic pride in the cultural dimension of the work as well as build upon ongoing successes in the area.

The artist Oscar Muñoz was carefully selected for his sensitivity to the contentious topics under discussion and the environment into which he was entering. Muñoz himself founded a community arts centre called Lugares Dudas, *a place for doubt*, operating as a safe space for critical thought in his home of Colombia. Ensuring that the creative approaches undertaken to transform the space and engage the community are sensitive to the local context in this way was highlighted as a strength of the project.

For the *Ambulatorio* installation to be assembled and open to the public, the

gates at Flax Street needed to be opened. Discussions were held around opening two gates to allow for equal access from both communities. The consultation process included leafleting the wider community and inviting all to participate in a public meeting hosted by local community representatives and attended by partners from Draw Down the Walls in case people had particular questions related to the installation.¹⁶ Art work was on display at the meeting and an explanation of the piece that would be unveiled at Flax Street was provided. The questions that emerged from the group focused on the practicalities of the gates opening and the security that would be in place. One participant suggested the opening of a third gate to allow for easier access from another neighbouring area. The suggestion received full support from the others at the meeting. It was perceived as a particular benefit that the idea for the third gate opening came from residents themselves.

Building on this momentum, statutory support was quick to make the necessary changes, which included providing unforeseen expenses to replace part of the gate that broke off its hinges because of the state of disrepair it was in after so many years of closure. This ability to act quickly once the communities were consulted and key issues were addressed was of central importance to the success of the *Ambulatorio* event.

The three gates were open between the 9th of July and the 4th of August 2012¹⁷ to provide open access for visitors to the exhibit. Feedback from those who passed between the gates to see the exhibit

ranged from those who walked through to access a bus stop, others who noticed the similarity of the houses on the other side of the fence looking the same as their own, and more specific comments related to the art piece itself. Over the course of the event nearly 2,000 people passed between the Flax Street gates and experienced the art work. The entire event went by during a traditionally contentious time in the Northern Ireland marching season without trouble.

As *Draw Down the Walls* continues into its fourth year, the momentum developed in the long-term engagement process and the successes of *Ambulatorio* have created an important opportunity for continued discussion around interface transformation in Belfast.

The lessons from this engagement process are wide-ranging and speak primarily to the importance of using creative approaches for encouraging community participation. The *Draw Down the Walls* project continues to deliver arts based workshops for young people and provide new tools for self expression. The *Ambulatorio* exhibition gave particular cause for opening the gates. The feedback from those who visited and the positive experience of the event support continued work around opening these gates for local residents on a longer-term basis.

¹⁶ 822 leaflets were distributed to residents in the Woodvale area inviting them to a public meeting to discuss the proposal. 47 people turned up to a public meeting (approximately 5% of those leafleted).

¹⁷ The *Ambulatorio* event was open to the public 9th July through 4th of August inclusive with exception to 12th July which was closed because of forward planning for the public holiday, not because of security issues.

Summary

Both the examples of Alexandra Park and the *Draw Down the Walls* initiative highlight a number of key points relevant for other areas considering interface transformation. These include:

- **The need to have a Steering Group prior to any consultation taking place which can respond to any difficulties once change has been made;**¹⁸
- **Phrasing conversations around interface transformation on access to public space may be a useful means of engaging with residents;**
- **Engagement should take place with the wider community, but prioritise those residents most affected by any proposed changes;**
- **Any changes to be implemented should be done so quickly to maintain momentum;**
- **Creative and arts based tools can be a useful means of engaging with residents and allowing them to 'vision' what the change might look like. Creative approaches are also a useful means of engaging young people who are often not included in traditional methods of consultation.**

The following and final section offers some concluding remarks on the process of consultation at interface areas documented throughout this report.

¹⁸ It is however important where possible to avoid 'repeating' consultations as happened in Newington.

5. Summary and Conclusions

The practitioners engaged with in this study, from both community and statutory sectors, expressed clearly that meaningful engagement with the community is essential for promoting regeneration and transformation around interface areas. There is a recognition amongst those working for change that community participation is crucial for the outcomes of a consultation process to be both effective and sustainable. In assessing the different experiences of community consultation across contexts in Northern Ireland it is clear that while the methods employed are diverse, there is scope for the development of a model that draws upon the lessons learned. The suggested process for consultation around issues emerging from our study includes the following four phases:

- **Phase One – Pre Consultation;**
- **Phase Two – Consultation/Engagement;**
- **Phase Three – Implementation (This will either lead to action or no action);**
- **Phase Four – Aftercare.**

This four staged process identifies partnership, comprehensive preparations, creative and open community engagement; evidenced action; and thoughtful follow-up as the core elements that have made for successful consultations in Northern Ireland. There are many lessons to be learned from good practice, and from approaches that did not work as well, in the cases of interface

transformation as exemplified by Alexandra Park, Brucevale, Edlingham Street, Flax Street, Newington Street and elsewhere. There are currently a number of well funded and coordinated programmes engaging in efforts to promote regeneration in some of Northern Ireland's most deprived and marginalised communities. The experiences from these ongoing efforts supported by BCC and IFI will likely contribute to this model of consultation and indeed enrich these examples of best practice. For this reason, it will be essential that current and future consultations are well documented, evidenced and evaluated so that effective information sharing may take place and the findings from this study can be built upon.

It seems something of a paradox that while anecdotal evidence and discussions in both the community and statutory sectors often refer to 'consultation fatigue', 68% of interface residents in 2012 wanted to be 'informed more about developments at the interface' (Byrne et al. 2012).¹⁹ While not all local residents will be interested or want to be consulted with regarding any change at the interface, a legitimate process of consultation which this study has sought to document will help empower those local residents who do want to become involved, while providing an evidence base to show to those opposed that there is perhaps general community support for change.

While statutory organisations are already using the 'Collaborative Working in Disadvantaged Areas' and 'Delivering Social Change' frameworks to try to work together more effectively, the drive towards community planning will undoubtedly prove useful in promoting

¹⁹ It is however important where possible to avoid 'repeating' consultations as happened in Newington.

area based partnerships between statutory and community organisations which will help in terms of consulting on interface regeneration and transformation. However, consultation through the structures of community planning needs to be carefully considered. Although some of our interviewees felt that there may be scope through community planning to allow for a reduced number of community consultations on multiple issues, other interviewees felt that this would be difficult given the difference between the very specific requirements of interfaces compared to more 'general' consultations around health or education policy.

Regardless of the number of consultations in future, local residents will need to be included in discussions and feel empowered in terms of being able to influence decision making. In December 2012 at the Joint Interface Working Group/Interface Community Partners annual conference, Dr Jonny Byrne, chair of CRC Policy and Communications Committee, noted that, '*People find it hard to imagine what the city might look like without walls*'. It is to be welcomed that there is now a strategy in place to improve community relations and work towards building a shared society. However, the *Together: Building a United Community* aim to remove all interface barriers by 2023 needs to be based upon a legitimate consultation process with interface residents on the future development of their areas. Such a process which seeks genuine engagement with interface residents may be able to provide people with a sense of security while at the same time reducing the physical manifestations of division.

Appendix 1: Consultation Process and Key Questions to consider

I. Pre-Consultation

- Why are we doing a consultation? What are we looking to achieve?
- What is the specific barrier/gate or cluster area we are looking at?
- What is the scope/ scale of the area to be included?
- Who owns the barrier? Who owns the land adjacent to the structure?
- Is there a proposal for regeneration/transformation being put forward? What is it?
- Can localised planning tie in to other regional or city-wide plans?
- Are there enough resources in place for this proposal? What can we realistically do?
- Who will carry out the consultation? Who will ask the questions? What questions are we going to ask?
- Who is to be consulted? Who is a resident?
- What lead in information must residents be given to make an informed response?
- How might any proposed change impact on residents? What are the potential benefits or concerns that might be raised and how could these be addressed?
- How can we include young people or marginalised groups?
- Who is to be made aware that there is a consultation underway? Are discussions to be made public or kept behind closed doors?
- What is a realistic timescale for progress?
- What are the potential problems which may arise?

II. Consultation/Engagement

- A mixed and open methodology should be employed that may use some combination of the following:
 - Distributing leaflets/flyers;
 - Holding public meetings;
 - Carrying out surveys/questionnaires;
 - Door to door conversations;
 - Hosting special events;
 - Including community consultation days;
 - Facilitating community workshops;
 - Using creative methods such as visioning and arts based methods; and
 - Engaging social media.
- Have residents been properly briefed in order to make an informed decision?
- How might the framing of the proposal influence the response?
- What is the appropriate sequencing of consultation events for this particular situation?
- How does our evidence base document the views of residents?
- Share the findings between Steering Group.
- Is it possible to provide the opportunity for capacity building and education for local people through the process?

III. Implementation – Action or No Action

- Share consultation findings and the next steps to be taken with the local community.
- Seeking 100% community consent for a proposal is an unrealistic goal. One or two individuals should not hold a power of veto over a process.
- Give weighted priority to the views of residents who will be directly impacted upon by any proposed changes to a barrier or a gate.
- Take action as quickly as possible.
- Address complaints quickly.
- Devise a local area action plan to draw links between wider and longer-term strategy wherever possible.
- Ensure community feedback is well documented and accessible to support future regeneration.
- Maintain momentum from community consultation where possible.
- Document and share the experience of the consultation process with other practitioners in the spirit of informing best practice across contexts.

IV. After Care

- Support the actions agreed as a result of the consultation.
- Evaluate the process.
- What are residents' concerns? How can we address them?
- Provide a structure whereby communication is maintained between the Steering Group members and local residents.

Appendix 2: GUIDANCE – Barrier Removal and Transformation Process CRC 2011

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a process for statutory agencies and their voluntary/community sector partners to work within when entering into collaborative arrangements to address the transformation of interface barriers or calls for new or strengthened interface barriers.

Background

The first interface barriers were built in the early 1970s, following the outbreak of serious and ongoing conflict. They were built as temporary structures but have become more permanent. The current political climate provides a unique opportunity to facilitate a process that will enable interface communities to participate in the transformation of interface areas by trying to help create an environment where the people directly affected by the interface barriers feel safe enough to consider transforming them.

In November 2007 the Community Relations Council (CRC) raised with the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) its concerns about the decision of the NIO to build a fence in the grounds of Hazelwood Integrated Primary School as a result of ongoing tension and incidents leading to safety concerns.

Following these discussions, CRC decided to set in motion a process to assist the development of an overall strategy for potential new peace walls and existing peace walls. CRC established the Interface Working Group (IWG) which is an interagency partnership that:

- acts as a think-tank and shares experience, expertise and good practice to creatively explore issues emerging from interfaces by bringing together key policy-makers and experienced practitioners working in the field of good relations, conflict transformation and community regeneration;
- acts as a stimulant to the debate on interfaces through high level policy seminars, workshops, conferences and research aimed at mainstreaming ideas and policy proposals and highlight challenges which need to be addressed to achieve the transformation of interface areas;
- establishes appropriate working groups where necessary including the Interface Community Partners and the Beyond Belfast Steering Group; and
- in light of emerging policy in general and CSI policy in particular, informs and advises Government Departments on potential and existing Government interventions in interface areas and, where appropriate, coordinates a programme of work with specific outcomes.

This guidance is part of the work developed by the IWG.

Public Policy and Interface Barriers

The policy which led to barriers being erected has not yet been accompanied by any systematic thinking about how and when such barriers might be removed. As a result, temporary or emergency interventions have become effectively permanent. Furthermore, the responsibility for removing barriers and engaging in a more broadly based strategy to ensure safety requires the involvement of social, economic and political actors from a broad range of public agencies.

The voluntary/community sector has an important role to play in facilitating interface communities in considering their future in the context of the peace process, supporting the statutory services in the transformation of interface barriers and in responding to problems leading to local communities calling for new or strengthened interfaces.

Proposed process

The Interface Working group proposes that all public agencies adopt the following aim, strategic approach and guiding principles to enable them to provide a joined up process to work within when entering into collaborative arrangements to address the transformation of interface walls and barriers.

Aim

Where possible, to find ways to provide structured support for initiatives to regenerate interface areas, leading to the eventual creation of open and vibrant communities free from fear, threat or any obstacle to interaction across the region.

Strategic Approach

This will include supporting peace-building initiatives in the development and delivery of short, medium and long-term actions to address social, community, physical, economic and security and safety issues in interface areas. It will build upon existing good practice and address any gaps in provision. This support will require Departments to adapt a flexible approach to practices which may be beneficial to enabling or sustaining regeneration and transformation approaches which take full account of the problems and opportunities for local areas and the entire region.

Principles

In all responses to the legacy of physical segregation the safety and security of those people living near to interfaces and interface barriers will be the priority. At the same time it is the responsibility of government to develop responses to the real challenges of fear and threat which do not rely on permanent barriers or patterns of exclusion and violence.

With this in mind:

- Departments should create the conditions for the removal of all interface barriers across the region
- The process of removing interface barriers should be part of an inclusive, community approach towards building a shared society
- New barriers will only be built if all other avenues of intervention have been tried and failed. Priority must be given to other forms of investment in communities to ensure their safety and security without the need for physical structures.

STEPS TO MAKING IT HAPPEN

Principles

In all responses to the legacy of physical segregation the safety and security of the people living near to interfaces and interface barriers will be the priority. At the same time it is the responsibility of government to develop responses to the real challenges of fear and threat which do not rely on permanent barriers or patterns of exclusion and violence.

With this in mind, Departments should agree to create the conditions for the removal of all interface barriers across the region.

The process of removing interface barriers should be part of an inclusive community approach towards building a shared society.

New barriers will only be built if all other avenues of intervention have been tried and failed; rather priority must be given to other forms of investment in communities to ensure their safety and security without the need for physical structures.

Political and public sector process

- Political endorsement
- Lead agency identified
- Cross Departmental engagement agreed
- Stakeholder meetings convened
- Action plan developed
- Resources secured
- Local area consultation and plans
- Monitoring and evaluating process and outcome

Community/voluntary sector process

- Form local interagency partnership or focus existing partnership re: interface work
- Capacity and confidence building at local level
- Visioning/participatory planning at local level to develop options
- Seek consensus and community buy in on options through community consultation
- Deliver plan

Leading to peace-building initiatives in the development and delivery of short, medium and long-term actions to address social, community, physical, economic and security and safety issues in interface areas. It will build upon existing good practice and address any gaps in provision

Interagency work

The engagement of the statutory sector with the voluntary/community sector in relation to planning for, and responding to requests about interface barriers is crucial and vice versa

Interagency partnership working is critical for responding to local issues and requests. Existing partnerships may be a useful vehicle to work through or the establishment of a fixed term partnership of key agencies may be necessary. Either way the following model for community and statutory actions are key.

The model set out below demonstrates how a process for barrier removal may be, using good practice, initiated either from the community based organisations working in interface areas or areas where barriers exist or alternatively from the Departmental, Statutory or Agency. It sets out a number of steps and overarching guiding process to ensure that throughout the staged process that community confidence is assured and that there is appropriate cross departmental/ agency support to allow transformation and transition. It also sets out the steps that need to be taken in a joined up method between both community based organisations and the responsible department or agency.

PROPOSED STEPS OF TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS

Departmental/ Agency/ initiated steps

- 1. Political/Ministerial** endorsement or statement
- 2. Lead** - Responsible Department/ Agency initiates process
- 3. Cross-Departmental Engagement** - Interface process to written correspondence sent to other Departments which potentially has responsibilities or interest in the removal of barrier in the area
- 4. Explore** - Identify potential areas
- 5. Evidence** - Collate existing information such as previous Consultations, surveys and discussions by community and statutory organisations
- 6. Rationale** - Develop rationale as to why areas have been selected to go forward for Risk/impact assessment – e.g. regeneration opportunity, capacity and confidence at good level etc.
- 7. Assessment** - Risk/impact assessment by DoJ, OFMDFM, DSD, CRC, PSNI, emergency services, roads service, Council - other agencies and local community organisations where and/or when relevant. Interagency forum to be set up to explore specific barrier related proposals from community.

JOINT STEPS

- 1. Lead** - If Assessment has low risk or no risk then process for responding to the transformation will be initiated by Department/agency responsible for barrier.
- 2. Engagement** - process will include written correspondence to other Departments which potentially has responsibilities or interest in the removal of the barrier in that area.
- 3. Stakeholder Meetings** - Lead agency or Department to convene meetings and/or roundtable discussions with other Departments, agencies and community stakeholders to determine suitable direction.
- 4. Consultation** - If no consultation has been carried out before; this is to then be initiated in partnership with local community organisations in the area. Where there are gaps in information or the consultation process, to develop additional community engagement process either through local community organisations in partnership with the Department or agency with responsibility for the barrier.
- 5. Collate** - views and opinions to be collated and exploration of concerns that have been raised.
- 6. Develop** - series of potential options and costings to be developed where relevant
- 7. Presentation** - Present a series of options to community for agreement or consensus
- 8. Action plan** - to develop an approach for staged opening closing, reduction or removal. This is inclusive of factoring in aspects such as: owner, sponsor, stages, timeframe, responsibilities and targets including the agreed option by community alongside the relevant resources required.
- 9. Resources** - Ensure the relevant resources are in place; community safety, police presence, intervention programmes, and youth activities increased OFMDFM, DoJ, DSD, CRC and local Council need to be included within the overall action plan. This may require establishing a resources group to bring together funders, departments, council and other organisations that provide resources and funding in area.
- 10. Communicate** - Information events, flyers articles in papers community news sheets detailing process and stages of staged opening/closing detailed when, what times, contacts etc or removal process
- 11. Monitor and Review** - Ongoing monitoring of increasing/reducing tensions and residents concerns

Community initiated Process

- 1. Capacity building** - contact, dialogue, cross-community work, common issues identified and addressed
- 2. Confidence building** - interventions to address common issues and address concerns and tensions
- 3. Visioning/participatory planning** - exploring possibilities, benefits, regeneration/challenges (age, gender, religious, political, disability, proximity to barrier/wall, closely neighbouring communities/streets) range of stakeholders, DoJ/ DSD/CRC/OFMDFM/DRD/local council /business/community/councillors / MLA's etc
- 4. Identify** - Department/ Agency who owns or has responsibility for the barrier identified
- 5. Assessment** - community organisations request for to meet responsible Department and request risk assessment to be carried out Risk/impact assessment DoJ, OFMDFM, DSD, CRC, PSNI, emergency services, roads service - other agencies, council and local community organisations where or when relevant - interagency forum to be set up to explore specific barrier and proposals from community.

References

- Baizerman, Michael (2007). 'Introduction' in Doug Magnuson and Michael Baizerman (eds), *Work with Youth in Divided and Contested Societies*: Sense Publishers, Rotterdam.
- Bell, John (2013) *Young People and the Interfaces*. Belfast: Community Relations Council.
- Byrne, Jonny, Cathy Gormley Heenan and Gillian Robinson (2012). *Attitudes to Peace Walls: Research Report* to Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister. University of Ulster.
- Carter, L. Randolph and Michael Shieler (2005) 'Youth: Protagonists for Peace' in Paul van Tongeren et al *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Societies*.
- Cave, Suzie (2012) *Local Government Reform Past and Present*. Belfast: OFMdfM.
- Clarke, Breandán (2012). *Draw Down the Walls: Creating the conditions to imagine a city without barriers*. TransConflict: 29 June 2012.
<http://www.transconflict.com/2012/06/draw-down-the-walls-296/>
- Cleaver, Francis (1999) Paradoxes of Participation: Questioning Participatory Approaches to Development. *Journal of International Development*. II, 597-612.
- Cornwall, Andrea (2008) *Unpacking 'Participation': models, meanings and practices*. Oxford University Press and Community Development Journal.
- Department for Planning and Infrastructure (2006) *Urban Regeneration: Creating Communities Through the Art of Place Making*. Report from June 2006 Conference held in Perth, Western Australia.
- Department for Social Development (2012) *Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework: Consultation Document*. Belfast: DSD.
- Duncan, Pete and Thomas, Sally (2000) *Neighbourhood Regeneration: Resourcing Involvement*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Florin, Paul (1990) An Introduction to Citizen Participation, Voluntary Organizations, and Community Development: Insights for Empowerment Through Research, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18:1.
- Lederach, John Paul (1997) *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Leonard, Madeline and Martina McKnight (2011) 'Bringing down the walls: Young people's perspectives on peace-walls in Belfast', In, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. Vol. 31 No. 9/10.
- Manzo, L.C. and Perkins, D.D. (2003) Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 20, pp.335-350.
- McQueen, Mike., Elkadi, Hisham, Millar, Jenny, and Geoghegan, Peter (2008) *Your Space or Mine? A Co-Influence Approach to Shared Future Urban Environments in Interface Communities*. Belfast: University of Ulster.
- North Belfast Community Action Unit (2002) *A Report of the Project Team* (the Dunlop Report). Belfast: OFMdfM.
- Reimann, Cordula and Norbert Ropers (2005). Discourses on Peace Practices: learning to Change by Learning from Change? in van Tongeren, Paul, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, and Juliette Verhoeven (Eds.) *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society*. Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder and London.
- Salway Black, Sherry (1994). Redefining Success in Community Development: A New Approach for Determining and Measuring the Impact of Development. Richard Schramm *Paper on Community Development*: The Richard Filene Center.
- Shirlow, P. and Murtagh, B. (2006) *Belfast - Segregation, violence and the city*. London: Pluto Press.
- Training for Work in Communities (2007) *Community Consultation Training: What it is and how to do it, Guidelines developed through practice*. Southampton: Southampton Borough Council.
- United Nations (2003) *Youth Participation in Decision Making*. United Nations: New York.



A Model of Consultation?

Transformation and Regeneration at the Interface

Published by
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council
6 Murray Street
Belfast BT1 6DN
Email: info@nicrc.org.uk

www.nicrc.org.uk

Community Relations Council

