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Monthly News

May 2020

Hello again,

Firstly, it is important to say that everyone at CRC hopes you are continuing to keep well and staying safe during the coronavirus pandemic.

You'll notice that this month's eBulletin has morphed into an eNews. During these difficult times we still wanted to bring you stories and examples of how groups have adapted to deliver work online and use new technologies. We also wanted you to be inspired by the amazing stories of the groups we invest in.

In this issue, you can read about how Intercomm and Rural Community Network have been adapting to deliver community relations work online. We also have an article exploring the use of virtual reality to challenge sectarian prejudice. There are inspiring stories on how a 10-year-old girl went up against the Taliban, and a video with Kathy Wolff from Community Relations Forum explaining her dedication to Community Relations work.

We have also included two examples of creative and sport projects funded

by CRC. Read about the "1000 Paper Cranes" project by the Centre for Democracy and Peace Building, and the "Together in Sports" project delivered by Multi-ethnic Sports and Cultures NI.

Keep safe everyone.

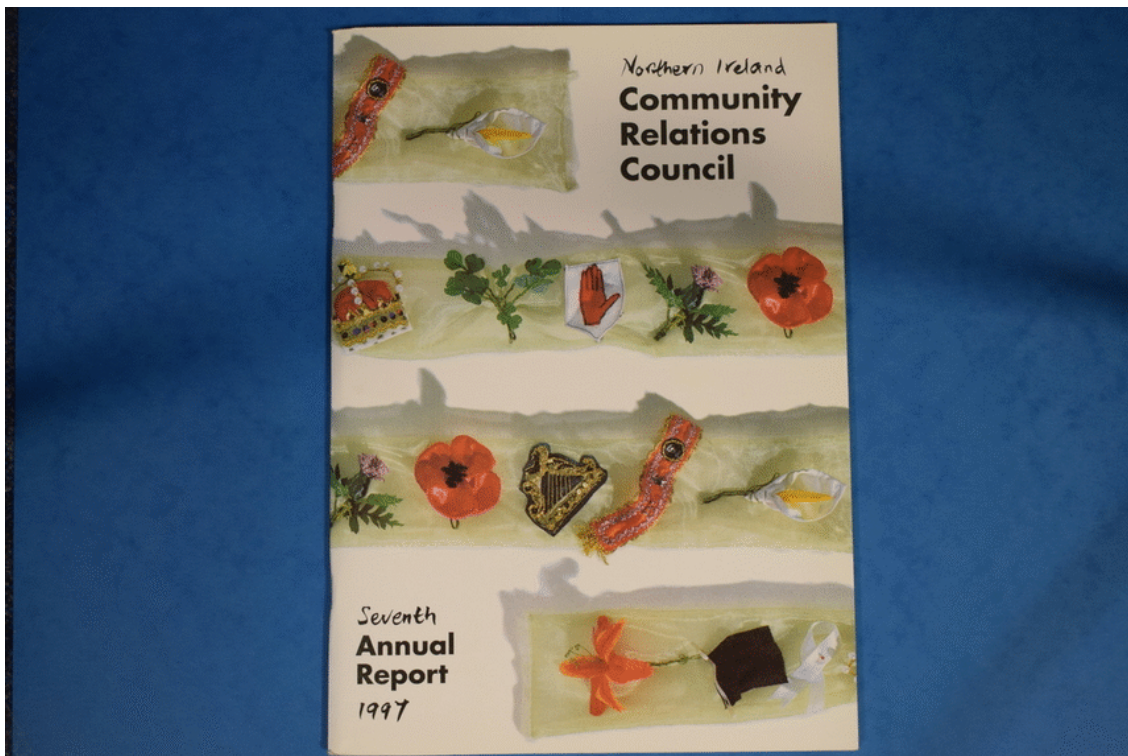
Covid-19 Update

The key priority of the Community Relations Council (CRC) is the health and well-being of those we work with, our staff and their families. We also want to ensure that we continue to deliver our services as far as is possible in these unprecedented times. You will all be aware of the recent change to the government's guidance on Covid-19. Below we have set out the steps we are taking as a result of the new guidance:

- Currently our office is closed. Our staff are working remotely and can be contacted by email or through our current office number: 028 9022 7500.
- All events organised by CRC have been cancelled. We will update this position when the government's guidance permits people to gather in numbers again.
- Until the emergency arrangements are relaxed, we have limited ability to collect post from our office. Post will be collected on Wednesdays only. Consider contacting us by phone or email.

To stay up-to-date, keep checking our website and social media channels.

30th Anniversary



This year, CRC is 30-years-old.

We'll be highlighting the significant work undertaken by the groups and organisations that have been supported by us to build peace in local communities.

If you want us to help tell your story, contact us on info@nicrc.org.uk

Keeping connected



Over the past few weeks keeping connected online has been a new and essential element of lockdown life. Many of the groups we work with have been delivering their good relations activities in new ways, as well as supporting the delivery of front line essential services to the most vulnerable in the community.

CRC has brought together groups in the Core Funded Programme and in the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme to update and support each other on the progress they continue to make in delivering good relations work in local communities.

Martin McDonald, Chair of CRC, and Jacqueline Irwin, CEO of CRC had this to say...

[Read more](#)

Media Grant



We awarded 7 organisations with Media Grants for 2019/20.

This represents an investment of £25,000.

Our funding will help to create podcasts, interactive maps, short films and more – across Northern Ireland.

[Read more](#)

Monthly News

We support and fund organisations that promote community relations work right across Northern Ireland.

Our funded groups affect positive change in people's everyday lives.

In this section, you'll find a case study about developing a programme for the digital space, as well as articles on virtual reality and sport.

Plus many more great stories.

Adapting to Online Delivery Intercomm



Intercomm have adapted to using online communications during the Covid-19 pandemic, with an innovative way to deliver their Shared History Programme. This is now the basis for a T:BUC Case Study from The Executive Office.

The Community Relations Council spoke to Gordie Walker from Intercomm about how they, as an organisation, have adapted to online working and the future delivery of services during the coronavirus pandemic.

[Read more](#)

In This Together Project Rural Community Network



The Rural Community Network (RCN) is delivering a special digital project during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The “In This Together Project – Rural Communities, Rural Connections” will showcase how relationships have developed during the coronavirus pandemic, as well as exploring areas and communities where relations have potentially developed for the better.

“We all know the impact Coronavirus has had on our communities and every single individual and family throughout the country,” said Charmain Jones, RCN. “This project has been developed to try and showcase that even though we are all facing adversity and times that are unprecedented.”

[Read more](#)

Virtual Reality Challenging Sectarian Prejudice



Virtual Reality is being used to help challenge stereotypes and reduce sectarian prejudice in a project developed through Queen's University Belfast with assistance from the Community Relations Council (CRC).

Dr Salvador Alvidrez, principal investigator for the project, joined CRC for a research secondment during 2019.

Virtual reality (VR) is an emergent technology that is currently being applied to many areas such as business, health care and entertainment. It has become more affordable and popular in recent years.

"Our project will test social interactions in VR between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland and their influence in overcoming prejudiced perceptions," Salvador explained.

[Read more](#)

A 10-year-old Girl Against the Taliban



A 10-year-old girl went up against the Taliban to get an education in music – and won. Taranom (now 15) fought to join the Afghan Women's Orchestra at age 10.

Now relocated to Finland with her family, she speaks to Kerry Anderson – a Beyond Skin #youth4peace ambassador – about her love for music and her memories of Afghanistan.

[Read more](#)

1000 Paper Cranes CR/CD Funded Project



1000 Paper Cranes is an art project for the whole family that involves using the template (found below) to fold paper into the iconic shape of a crane. The crane has long been a symbol of hope and longevity in Japanese culture.

The project was developed by Centre for Democracy and Peace Building (CDPB) with funding from the Community Relations Council to help celebrate diversity and peace.

As part of the initial project, there were several workshops that helped create 1000 paper cranes.

Now the template for making the paper cranes is available as part of a toolkit with full instruction on how to make this origami marvel with you and your loved ones during the covid-19 lockdown, and beyond.

[Read more](#)

BME Together in Sports
MSCNI



Black and minority ethnic (BME) women and children participated in sports and healthy living training.

Multi-ethnic Sports and Cultures NI (MSCNI) organised the event with funding from the Community Relations Council (CRC).

MSCNI was established in 2016 because “there were very few women for BME communities who participated in sporting activities.”

“There are many reasons why BME communities do not engage in sport,” explained Jahswill Emmanuel, MSCNI chairperson and founder.

[Read more](#)

Profile

We are profiling Kathy Wolff from the Community Relations Forum, who speaks about how she got into community work, and developed courses at the Barron Hall, the only shared space venue within Newtownabbey.

Kathy gives insights into how she engages with the community, and what drives her to continue the great work she's doing.

Kathy Wolff

Community Relations Forum



The Community Relations Forum (CRF) was established in 2003 to promote good community relations by encouraging honest and open dialogue. Central to this is Kathy Wolff, who runs CRF from within the Barron Hall, the only shared space venue within Newtownabbey.

Kathy is an advocate for Good Relations and Peace Building, and dedicated to continually find ways to enabling people to have a better understanding of and respect for each other's views and opinions.

[Read more](#)

Submissions

Have you got an amazing story or case study that would make a great fit for our next monthly newsletter?

Send your submission as a
word document
with a
photograph.

Click the button below to submit...

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