



CRC e bulletin

Interface Issue

Over the years CRC has supported many Interface initiatives and funded research into Interface issues. In this edition we have introduced some of the research and first hand accounts of issues that affect interface communities, both urban and rural.

Patricia O'Neill

Towards Sustainable Security

Interface barriers and the legacy of segregation in Belfast



The Institute of Conflict Research was commissioned by the Community Relations Council to gather together all existing information on interfaces in Belfast in a single document. The research forms a core document to assist the work of the Interface Working Group, an inter-agency group of public organizations each of which can make a contribution to making practical progress, although none of which can act alone. The purpose of this document is

- ◇ To bring together all existing material on the nature, location and impact of interface barriers,
- ◇ To identify locally specific ways to begin to make progress towards a peaceful, shared and better future and
- ◇ To provide a common platform for engagement on how, when and whether such barriers can be removed or altered.

May 2009

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Towards Sustainable Security continued

Alongside mapping each of the interfaces currently operating in the Belfast area, the research reaches a number of important conclusions:

- ◇ The monthly breakdown in the figures for incidents recorded by PSNI in interface areas in A District, January 2004—December 2006 illustrate a very diverse pattern of peaks and troughs with no consistency and no overall pattern suggesting that the ebbs and flows are more likely to be due to very localised factors, and fit for tat responses, than they are to be influenced by events occurring on a city-wide basis. Policy will have to be targeted, local and inter-community in reach.
- ◇ Whilst only a limited number of interfaces have been removed, there are a variety of circumstances and contexts in which barriers can be taken down, either because the barrier no longer serves any useful purpose due to the changing political context, because an area is being regenerated or in response to requests from the local community. These various reasons for removing barriers offer one line of approach to the remaining barriers. Not all communities regard all the barriers as necessary, and may in fact regard them as an impediment to aspects of progress in the local area.
- ◇ More than one third of barriers could be removed or replaced relatively easily as part of a process of regeneration or normalisation given local support, political will and financial resources and this suggests that proposed or possible regeneration in a number of interface areas including Girdwood/Crumlin Road Gaol, Titanic Quarter, North Foreshore and the Northwest Quarter should be undertaken with a view to increasing scope for sharing and integration rather than further entrenching segregation.
- ◇ The development of a vision and strategy for regeneration of interface areas across and between government departments is crucial; a strategic response to interfaces should be developed at city level through the work of Belfast City Council Belfast Community Safety Partnership and the Belfast Area Partnerships; the provision of capacity building training and sustained resources for community based organisations and initiatives; and an assessment of the range of current policy, practice and other initiatives in interface areas.

We intend that this document should become a base for planning and thinking about change in interface barriers and for engaging local communities, policy makers and statutory agencies in consideration of practical steps forward.

Conclusion

This research is intended as a practical tool to enable real progress in exploring the scope or the change and removal of interface barriers. The current climate provides a unique opportunity to tackle the problems of interface communities. It is our view that the peace lines which emerged during a time of serious and ongoing conflict and the policies which enabled them can and should be now reviewed



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To view the ICR Report go to <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/filestore/documents/iwg-publication.pdf>

Shadow Gaps and Peacelines: Architecture, authenticity and the Interface

Mike McQueen—University of Ulster

Northern Ireland has changed dramatically in the last ten years. The impact of the Belfast Agreement on our political landscape is constantly assessed and debated, but has it changed our urban and cultural landscapes; *our architecture?*

Clearly the peace process brought early dividends for architects and the construction industry: The annual turnover of the construction industry in Northern Ireland increased from £3.36 billion in 2000 to £6 billion in 2006. Things look very different in 2009 as world markets tumble, however if recession has a positive side, it may be to allow a space to reflect, digest and propose new directions.

Since 1998 our profession has enjoyed ten good years, but who has really benefited from that boom? Has the vast expenditure and effort brought any tangible benefits at community level in our post-conflict towns and cities? Is architectural design relevant when faced with complex and competing agendas? We claim to be the key players in regeneration projects but what influence does the profession really have over the context and content of urban development and renewal?



These questions permeate the 'Your Space or Mine?' (YSOM?) research project, undertaken by Mike McQueen, Prof. Hisham Elkadi, Dr Jenny Millar and Dr Peter Geoghegan with input from environmental artist Peter McCaughey. The project has its origins in a request for assistance from an interface community group in prioritising community interest in proposals for a key river-front site, close to the Brandywell/Fountain interface in Derry/Londonderry. Previous projects exploring issues of diversity and stakeholder representation in design processes established a basis for YSOM?, which was funded by the European Union Peace 2.1 programme, through the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council.

Findings from YSOM? and preceding studies suggest architects and architectural design skills could hold a key position in moving towards integrated and shared futures in Northern Ireland. However the work also suggests that to be truly effective in complex and contested social contexts, architects need to embrace a paradigm shift from current modes of education and practice and allow space for the development of participatory design skills.

Responding to this perceived deficit, YSOM? employed community based artists in poetry sessions, art workshops, guerrilla gardening and temporary urban 'transformations', recording and expressing cross-community values, experience and ambition.

This approach drew from contemporary planning, public art and conflict transformation theory. Work in these fields converge on issues of engagement highlighted in Lederach's call for '*a new set of lenses through which we do not primarily see the setting and the people in it as the 'problem' and the outsider as the 'answer'. Rather, we understand the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting*' (Lederach 1995) ?. YSOM? also benefited from significant input and support from Derry City Council, DSD and other statutory and private development agents in more usual consultation techniques.

The qualitative nature of the arts workshops, supporting expression of both positive and negative community experience, provided a deliberate counter to the usual statistical reading of communities through the Noble Measures of Deprivation. Noble determines community quality of life by identifying areas of under-performance (health, education, economic well-being etc). Resident surveys, however, often defy such readings by returning high resident satisfaction rates in areas which are, statistically, amongst the

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Edited by Patricia O'Neill and Ellana Tomasso

Shadow Gaps and Peacelines continued

deprived in the UK. The analysis of YSOM? Findings, instead adapted Audit Commission Area Profiling methods allowing the diverse types of data gathered in the workshop stage to be read together, informing potential design responses.

Significantly YSOM? went on to examine the roles of urban renewal (DSD) and the social economy (DETI) in developing shared space and examined innovative urban design and renewal precedents to propose a series of recommendations to move interface development towards sustainable and shared futures.

Ultimately the project re-directed architectural skills to discover and release 'locked-in' social, cultural and financial capital, defining a community-driven interface development strategy. This process identified key resources and potential revenue streams capable of supporting long-term active-citizenship and capacity-building in developing shared-future strategies. The funders' report and summary report are available for download at: www.yourspaceormine.org.uk.

The reports proposed re-direction of architectural skills towards participatory forms of practice raises questions for professional operation and education.

Although not mainstream practice, diverse examples of the creative potential of such an approach can be found in work by, amongst others, **muf** architects in the UK and Auburn University's Rural Studio in the USA.

The case for a professional shift towards dialogical and participatory practice is not a new one. In 'Architecture and Participation' (2005) Peter Blundell-Jones et al. outline a theoretical and ethical imperative for an architecture of engagement, reframing a line of architectural enquiry stretching back to the 1960's.

What is new is the global recognition that we need new ideas following the failure of the western neo-liberal value system, witnessed by the current global financial crisis. For 20 years, claims for the inevitable social benefits of free-market de-regulation have dove-tailed neatly with architectures abject retreat from post-modern accusations of catastrophically inept social experimentation.

Post-conflict, Northern Ireland has been free to enjoy the free-market party, with place-making, branding and market-led development replacing technocratic land-use and conflict management as priorities for planning. In all of these processes the architect is, in varying degrees, removed from the implications of their practice. Perhaps it is only possible to *unreservedly* love the process and product of architectural design when removed from its less palatable implications (environmental impact, economic and social polarisation, globalisation), safe in the illusion that bigger issues are being dealt with elsewhere.

Education has a key role in this removal. In 'The Lost Judgement', Jeremy Till suggests that architectural education is a form of indoctrination in which architectural students take on new values and a new language to become informed and skilled but detached. It may be that this indoctrination and detachment, this distance, is essential to a discipline claiming a social conscience while operating in a neo-liberal professional context.

But if the criticism is accepted: architectural education is a form of indoctrination which facilitates professional detachment, resulting in celebration of process and product while abdicating responsibility for the implications of our product, is it possible to chart a new direction?

To do this requires a re-examination of the integrity of our professional activity and the authenticity of our exchange with the consumers of our architecture. Too often when faced with complex situations, we accept that our skills are used in what Robin Evans has called an 'architecture of forgetting': obscuring content with polished product and indulging loose focused ambition over clarity of purpose.

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Shadow Gaps and Peacelines continued

Lessons can perhaps be drawn from the world of fine art. For the last 30 years, a section of the art world has abandoned the gallery, employed by Rothko and other abstract artists as a space for elite retreat and reinforcement of higher values, as irrelevant to contemporary society. Instead dialogical forms of practice have emerged which propose participatory practice as a requirement in the process of “making” something finite, specific to context and yet profound. Examples are well documented, particularly in the field of public art. For example, the Hamburg Monument against War and Fascism by Jochen Gerz situated in Hamburg (1986), dispels any concerns about lack of sophistication or quality produced through engagement.

Could an architecture of participation, built through creative understanding and shaping of intimate experience, steer our professional focus away from formal and material obsession, ironmongery and shadow gaps and back towards the life within our towns and cities? Could it give voice and expression to sections of society silenced by 30 years of violence, embracing rather than embarrassed by the peace-lines?

Rather than spend our skills dressing urban futures determined by stylists, estate agents and financial institutes, YSOM? suggests that an architectural approach as engaging, wry and uniting as our local dialects and responding directly to our collective life experience, is within reach and worth pursuing.

A Rural Interface – The Visibility of the Invisible

Michael Hughes, Chief Executive Officer, Rural Community Network

During the last major unrest as a result of the Drumcree marching issue, Cookstown was effectively sealed off by a series of road blocks which prevented travel to and from work. In my case it was travel from work to home in Donaghmore. What was I to do, stay at work until the blockages had been removed or attempt to make it home travelling through areas which I knew had little possibility of such blockages being formed as the community make up was not set up in a way that could make this happen. I chose the latter and although it did take me a little longer to get home I made it safely free from further diversions along my chosen route.

In discussing the matter at work the next day, I was asked how I knew these areas I travelled through to “be safe”. The easy answer was I just knew, from personal and work experience and was told that I had used a “sectarian mind map” which was able to identify interfaces which needed to be avoided to allow me to get home.

For many people who link interfaces with the ironically named Peace Walls the idea of having sectarian interfaces within a rural setting may seem a little bewildering. For them the absence of a physical structure to keep communities apart from one another could allow them to ask the question how rural areas can have such a thing called an interface. However if we determine interfaces as being identified with structural edifices then we fail to understand the very essence of interfaces within a rural setting.

During the height of and as a consequence of the conflict many people living in rural communities had to adopt lifestyles and coping mechanisms that allowed them to continue living in the area they called home, although for many surviving was as good a quality of life that they could expect. This was particularly applicable when you were a member of the minority community surrounded by a majority who knew where you lived, worked, recreated, worshipped and traded. Interfaces were created in peoples’ minds, they knew where the ‘others’ were and they adopted lifestyles which, for many, reduced the necessity to interact with them.

So what is a typical rural interface? The simple answer is that there isn’t one. There are some visible signs which include the positioning of flags or the blotting out of

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A Rural Interface continued

road signs which points the traveller to one community or the other. In addition each community will be able to identify a bend in the road, a stream, a crossroads, community venue, house, a road sign or in the cases of small towns and villages, the side of the street which signals a change in community identity. The rural interface is therefore embedded in the minds of rural people and as such will take different forms at different stages of community life, when various events happen, when new people arrive into the area and much more worryingly when members of the minority community decide to leave.

This lack of homogeneity makes it difficult for policy makers, programme developers and funders to identify suitable opportunities which would support local communities to work through many of the issues which could address community relations in these areas enhancing the prospect of building more cohesive and sustainable rural communities for the future. The challenge is therefore to commence investment in mapping the range of interfaces within our rural communities this being only achieved with sustained engagement of the experts in this field – people living in these areas.

Despite huge societal and community conflict it is still the aspiration of many people from minority communities to continue to live in the area they call home. If we are therefore to build a rural society which values all its people as the key assets to sustainability we cannot continue to ignore barriers to participation which are shaped by non-descript geographical features or long held memories handed down through generations.

In an era where scarce resources are becoming scarcer it is now morally wrong to keep funding two of everything just because that is the way it has always been. In rural areas we must find ways of allowing everyone in the community to contribute to the sustainability of all the key community assets in that area. A key ingredient of such work – the removal of interfaces in all their forms from our rural society.

Social Economy Regeneration on the Stewartstown Road

Jean Brown, Suffolk Community Forum

Representatives of the Suffolk and Lenadoon communities began working to regenerate the Stewartstown Road interface in 1996. At this stage we received a lot of support and encouragement from various key agencies such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, International Fund for Ireland, the Belfast European Partnership Board and the Belfast Interface Project. We began by forming a Ltd Company which was jointly managed and owned by both communities. The Stewartstown Road Regeneration Company (SRRP Ltd) was the first of its kind in Northern Ireland and went on to demolish all of the derelict and semi derelict shops and houses which had blighted the front of the road and replace them with a row of modern shops and offices which helped to transform the physical appearance of the road and brought much needed services and jobs into the area.

We had long recognised the need for childcare in the area to enable local parents to return to work and this increased in importance when a major report released in 2004 revealed that the most growing hard line sectarian attitudes in Northern Ireland were among pre-school children. With phase 1 of the Stewartstown Road regeneration programme up and running we turned our attention to phase 2 with the stated intention of ensuring that pre-school childcare would be a major element of this.

SRRP had no desire or remit to run day care facilities so it was agreed that they would built a day care centre and tender for a tenant to run it. We were clear that any childcare centre had to bring benefit to the local area and our preferred option was to run it as a social economy project with local ownership. This involved us

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Social Economy Regeneration continued

setting up a new childcare company who would tender to run the centre as a tenant of SRRP Ltd. This new company would be responsible for finding fit out costs which were considerable and all of the other multitude of costs associated with starting up and running a new company. We were encouraged to receive a one-off grant from Belfast City Council which funded a planning residential week and paid for us to develop a business plan.

The development process was riddled with problems as we could find no-one prepared to fund the necessary capital costs for fit out. Peace 11 capital funding directed towards interfaces seemed to have a very narrow focus on business units with no-one even remotely interested in funding childcare provision. Even some of our previously biggest supporters thought it was a foolish idea and were reluctant to support us. Eventually and thankfully we read that CRC had a small amount of capital funding for projects and contacted them. They were also clear that they didn't fund childcare but were interested in exploring the peace and reconciliation element of what we were trying to do which eventually led to us submitting a successful application. We are extremely grateful to CRC for taking the risks involved in thinking outside the box without which Sparkles Day care Ltd would not have been possible. We also received funding from BBC Children in Need for special needs equipment and Atlantic Philanthropies agreed to fund the Manager's salary for 3 years as part of the Suffolk Lenadoon Peacebuilding Plan.

After what could best be described as an interesting journey extended over 5 years Sparkles eventually opened in February 2008 and is now operating very successfully. We have 17 staff and over 50 children in both full and part time places. We now have a lengthy waiting list and no shortage of ideas for future developments. Our journey continues.

Jean Brown and Renee Crawford Receive Community Relations Award



Jean Brown from the loyalist Suffolk estate in West Belfast and Renee Crawford from the adjacent republican Lenadoon, have together tackled violence and division in the troubled area for more than 25 years - often in the face of significant threat.

The two brave peace-builders were presented with the annual Northern Ireland Community Relations Award for their impressive track-record at the flagship event of Community Relations Week 2009 in Newtownabbey's Corrs Corner Hotel.

Duncan Morrow, the chief executive of the Community Relations Council, which presents the annual award, says: "The success of the highly important Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group is in many ways a personal triumph for Renee and Jean, such is the commitment and effort they have put into it and the personal risks that they have taken so that it can succeed. The positive change that Jean and Renee's work has brought to this area has significantly improved the lives of many, many people."

Maria Bannon, operations manager of Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG), said about them: "Jean and Renee have been instrumental in the development of peacebuilding in the Suffolk and Lenadoon area. Through their efforts, they have transformed the physical shape of the interface, helped to create jobs, helped to ensure income generation was possible for the area and have restored a sense of hope to a deprived community."

Policy Update

Assembly Update

Questions & Answers

Durning April MLAs put forward various issues for discussion which were of particular interest to CRC. They covered a number of policy issues such as:

OFMDFM

- Definition of victim
- US investment and McBride Principles
- Funding for victims and survivors
- CSI
- Bill of Rights UK
- Long Kesh Site – update
- Reconvening of Race Forum

DCAL

- Plantation exploration/commemoration
- Football violence – delay in introduction of the Football (Offences) Act 1991
- Trouble at International football match
- Language development
- Underfunding Ulster Scots

DE

- History curriculum in Secondary Level Education

DETI

- Plantation exploration/commemoration

DOE

- Obligations and management of bonfires

DSD

- Removal of paramilitary murals – North Down
- Travellers' sites – impact on community relations in Craigavon
- Social housing – Botanic Ward in South Belfast and those awarded intimidation points
- Management of bonfires – policy and responsibility of NIHE

DRD

- Irish language in the Gaeltacht Quarter in Belfast

Two questions of particular interest relate to the teaching of history in schools and an update on the Maze/Long Kesh project.

History Curriculum in Secondary Level Education

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education what topics are available for study as part of the history curriculum in secondary level education; and for a breakdown of the topics available for each of the individual year groups.(AQW 6614/09)

History is part of the statutory curriculum here from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 3. The statutory minimum content for history provides a framework and the flexibility for teachers to tailor the breadth and depth of coverage to meet the needs of individual pupils.

At Key Stage 3, there is an explicit requirement for schools to deliver the minimum content through a broad and balanced range of: historical periods; Irish, British,

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Policy Update Continued

European and global contexts; and significant political, social economic, cultural and religious development. This includes providing opportunities for pupils to investigate the long and short term consequences of the partition of Ireland and the impact of events and ideas of the 20th century on the world.

At Key Stage 4, there is significantly less curricular prescription in order to provide greater choice and flexibility for pupils. At Key Stage 4 and in sixth form it is for pupils to choose to study history.

Schools here are free to choose which awarding body they use when entering pupils for GCSEs or A levels. The subject content for history will therefore vary, depending upon the examination specification (syllabus) set by individual awarding bodies. Awarding bodies are required to design and develop their GCSE and A level specifications against criteria set down by the Qualifications' Regulators.

The content requirements set out in the current criteria for GCSE and A level history are very broad in that they define the general parameters for specification development rather than specific topics or periods of history to be studied. These are left to the discretion of the awarding body. For example, in both GCSE and A level history a key requirement is that all awarding bodies must allocate at least 25% of the course content to significant individuals, topics and issues related to Irish and/or British History. Awarding bodies have the freedom to specify content within this broad context.

Long Kesh Site

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the development of the Long Kesh site given the current economic climate and the need to create employment opportunities. (AQO 2480/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We believe that the former Maze/Long Kesh prison and security site is a most valuable asset that can serve as a driver for international as well as local investment, employment and prosperity. As we announced on 8 April, the 360 acre site, which remains in public ownership, is a site of regional significance. We fully recognise the economic development potential of this site and we are committed to exploiting this potential to the full, particularly given the economic climate we now find ourselves in. In order to do so, we will establish a Development Corporation which will take this project forward and will build on the work previously undertaken by OFMDFM and the All-Party Maze/Long Kesh Consultation Panel and which will have regard to all the elements of the site including any listed buildings. As we seek to maximise the economic, historical and reconciliation potential of the site we will continue to work with all those bodies interested in contributing to the development of the site.

Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

The Committee is continuing its evidence gathering process into the feasibility of implementing the proposals of the Report of the Consultative Group on the Past in Northern Ireland. Following receipt of written evidence in April, it has now begun conducting oral evidence sessions and on Wednesday 29th April, they received presentations from:

Patricia MacBride, Brendan McCallister, Bertha McDougall OBE and Michael Nesbitt, Commission for Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Retired Police Officers Association.

Committee Website: www.parliament.uk/niacom

Council member profile—Stella McDermott



A geography graduate from QUB with an MA in Administration and Law from UJJ, Stella McDermott is Casework Manager with the Heritage Lottery Fund. She manages a small team of staff delivering around £10M annually to a wide range of organisations across the heritage. Her experience covers work with museums, libraries and archives, historic buildings, land and countryside, parks and gardens, industrial transport and maritime heritage as well as oral histories and area-based/local heritage.

Stella has a particular interest in the area of heritage and identity and was a key player in the organisation and delivery of a major conference on the issue in 2007. 'Digging Deeper; Share our Past, Sharing our Future' looked at the complexity of our identities and suggested alternative ways of contextualising who we are and where we come from. HLF continues to facilitate discussions and fund projects in this area. Stella is passionate about the heritage and its importance to local communities. She has worked with HLF for 10 years and previously worked with CRC in the delivery of peace funding.

Originally from Co. Donegal, Stella splits her time between Belfast and Ballycastle. In her spare time she enjoys reading, gardening and spending time with family and friends, and reluctantly going to the gym!

News

PEACE III Theme 1.1 Council Cluster Workshop Magherafelt Thursday 23rd April 2009



Jim Dennison, Director of European Programmes at CRC addresses the audience.

On the 23rd April the Consortium of the Community Relations Council and Border Action, hosted a workshop for the 14 PEACE III Partnerships in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. Almost €50 million of the European Union's PEACE III Programme will be used by the PEACE III Partnerships to implement their Local Peace and Reconciliation Plans.

Members and staff from the PEACE III Partnerships gathered at Magherafelt District Council's offices for the event which began with a presentation on Everyday Sectarianism by CRC's Chief Executive Dr Duncan Morrow. This was followed by talks from Joe Law of Trademark, a Belfast-based Reconciliation group, and Marie Crawley, an independent researcher who raised the all too often overlooked issues of Silent Sectarianism. *"People who are in a minority look the same, speak the same, eat the same food, wear the same clothes, farm the same land using the same methods.....but are set apart. Members are not marginalised, not poor...but silenced. Work is more challenging and approach must be different to other minority work."*

Bridie Sweeney from Sligo County Council gave an input demonstrating practical examples of how the Sligo Partnership has addressed this issue in their peace and reconciliation action plan.

Those present participated in roundtable discussions on the issues arising from the presentations. This provided an excellent opportunity for the participants to share experiences and ideas as well as plan ahead for joined up working in implementing the most effective Peace and Reconciliation strategies.

The event provided information to the Partnerships on the progress of The Consortium's work under Theme 1.2 of the EU's PEACE III Programme, which funds individual groups facilitating peace building; counselling and reconciliation work, allowing the Partnerships insight into the work currently being undertaken in their area. A joined up approach will ensure complementary work and allow gaps to be addressed.

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News continued

The event was very well attended and feedback proved positive showing that The Consortium role of supporting the PEACE III Partnerships is working to achieve an effective approach with successful outcomes.



(L to R) Paul Skinnader (Border Action), Emma Dargan (CRC), Bob Loade and Jackie Sherriff (CAN PEACE III Partnership), Gary Mortland, Harry Parkinson and Gerard McFadden (NW PEACE III Partnership).

Events

The George Best Community Cup

The event will be a 3-day (3rd-5th July 09), East Belfast based, cross-community and cross-border football tournament. As well as local teams it will include teams coming from Republic of Ireland and mainland UK. Some examples of clubs involved to date include; Liverpool, Motherwell, Linfield, Shamrock Rovers, Doyle F.C and Cardiff City. The focus will be on two age groups – Under 13's and Under 17's, and we aim to have a total of 32 teams participating in the 11-a-side games. The event will have an anti-sectarianism and anti-racism theme.

Where did it come from?

The event, builds on a successful single identity football tournament organized by Sydenham Historical and Cultural Society in 2008. We want to develop and expand the tournament for 2009, with a view to making it a landmark annual event for the area which takes place within the East Belfast; therefore bringing all communities together for positive reasons.

Why run an event like this?

The event encourages children of all cultural backgrounds from across NI, ROI and mainland UK to participate, and will use the experience as a way of coming together to develop understanding and respect via the mechanism football. When the young people are not on the pitches a range of anti-sectarian and anti-racist workshops and activities will be delivered to work towards developing the experience and understanding of the young people involved.

Who is supporting and organizing the event?

The IFA and FAI are supporting the event by working with us on the anti-sectarian and anti-racist workshops and training volunteers. Sydenham Cultural & Historical Society are organizing the event with support from the CORE project (Co-operation Ireland), Ashfield Boys School and other local volunteers.

Go to: www.georgebestcommunitycup.co.uk
Or contact David McConnell (Chair) on:07517845773 or
email: sydenham1978@hotmail.co.uk



Events continued

The Africa Caribbean Forum (ACF) will host Africa Day May in Navan May 22-25. Africa Day is observed in Ireland and throughout the world of May 25. The Meath celebrations will involve a series of cultural and education events as indicated below:

Panel Discussion at the Solstice Arts Centre - May 22 at 6pm
 Children's Fun Day at Dalgan Park - May 23 at 1pm
 Church Service, St Mary's Church of Ireland, Navan – May 24 at 11:30 a.m.
 Cultural Events and Display at the Claremont Stadium - May 25 at 2 pm

Our aim is to facilitate the integration of African and Caribbean residents into Irish society and generate respect for the communities, their cultures and their values.

We look forward to welcoming all to the events.

See www.africaribbeanforum.com or email thompsonliving@yahoo.ie for further information.

'Up Against the Wall'

The 1st 'Up Against the Wall' event will take place on Saturday 9 May from 11am-4pm in the Indian Community Centre and the Hopelink Centre at Carlisle Circus.

The idea is to give young people living in interface communities the opportunity to have a voice on the future of interface barriers in and between their communities. This will be done on the day using IT, drama, music, sports and art.

9th November is the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Walls coming down and so we want use this as a focus for a series of youth-led activities over the next 6 months.

If you would like to bring a group of young people on 9th May email info@youthlink.org.uk

Discussion Nights

Are you interested in social issues and do you want to hear view-points from people from all walks of life?

Thursday 7th May, 7-8.30 pm:

What are the distinctive characteristics of Protestant culture in NI?
 Is it under threat and if so what are the consequences?
 Where does the feeling of threat come from?

Thursday 28th May, 7-8.30 pm:

Is it possible to talk about peace when money is short?
 What are the implications of the financial crisis for the peace in Northern Ireland?
 Will the economic downturn promote community relations or undermine the vision of cohesion?

Peace House, 224 Lisburn Road, opposite Roast Cafe

We have limited space, so if you intend to come, or if you need more information, please contact Marianne Jacobs: 07775452393, M.T.Jacobs@students.uu.nl

Youth Link: NI invite you to the launch of its Community Capacity Building Strategies Programme for Belfast and the Border Regions

Thursday 28th May at 10 am in the Ramada Hotel, 117 Milltown Road, Belfast

RSVP to carole@youthlink.org.uk

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Books & Resources

Public Achievement has just launched two new resources for those working with young people in conflicted societies as part the organisation's contribution to Community Relations Week. A handbook for local youth workers, teachers and volunteers helps adults to support groups of young people to organise and implement action projects around local issues. The second resource is a training manual for youth workers in conflicted societies, and is based on the work of a collaborative project led by Public Achievement and involving youth workers from conflict regions around the world including the Middle East, the Balkan states, the Basque Country and South Africa.

Professor Tony Gallagher, Head of the Graduate School of Education and chairperson of Public Achievement said: "One of the challenges of contested societies is trying to get people to see themselves as architects of the future –these resources can help support work with young people that gives them the opportunity create a different future".

Michele Marken, OBE, retired principal and Public Achievement board member said "The niche work of Public Achievement is about offering a building block for the society of the future - the resources are worth their weight in gold in terms of supporting work with young people that develops their skills and knowledge and challenges their attitudes".

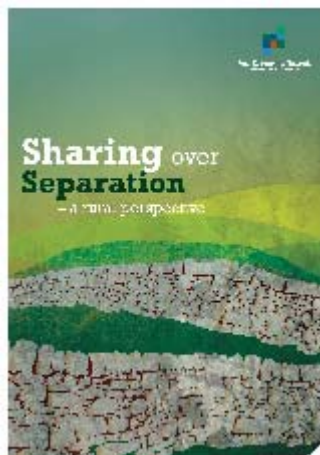
The resources were launched at Queen's University, and are available free of charge from Public Achievement. Tony McCusker, Chair of the Community Relations Council commended the new resources and the work of Public Achievement: "Young People are the future and Public Achievement has made a significant contribution to ensure that the future they face is totally different to the one we had".

Public Achievement Director, Paul Smyth expressed his worries about the Department of Education's review of its Community Relations policy and funding. "There is much work still to be done to build a shared future and to get young people engaged in building more democratic communities. In particular the recent upsurge of 'dissident republican' activity is evidence of the importance of ongoing high quality community relations programmes if we are to counter the violent radicalization of young people by these and other groups."

For further information contact Sean Pettis, Training Officer on 028 90 442813, 07525123217 or sean@publicachievement.com

Sharing over Separation - a rural perspective published by Rural Community Network (RCN) with support from CRC and based on reflections on research conducted last year.

Available from RCN tel 8676 6670.





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Community Relations Week

Community Relations Week 2009 was held from 27 April to 2 May and involved over 140 events across all District Council areas. The Community Relations Council would like to thank all in the voluntary, community and public sectors who organised or attended the events. This was a marvellous opportunity to showcase the work that is being done and to highlight the difficult issues which as a community we need to address.

A special issue of CRC News will be produced over the next month which will reflect and capture some of the atmosphere of the Week. If you are not already on the mailing list for this and would like to receive a copy send your postal details to etomasso@nicrc.org.uk