



**Community Relations Council**

# Towards A Shared Society?



# **Towards A Shared Society?**

Community Relations Council response to  
the consultation on the Programme  
for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

**Community Relations Council**

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## BACKGROUND

### **What is the Community Relations Council?**

The Community Relations Council (CRC) was formed in January 1990 with the purpose of supporting and promoting community relations work at all levels within the community, a role which it continues to carry out. It originated from a proposal of a research report commissioned by the NI Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights, titled 'Improving Community Relations' (Frazer and Fitzduff, 1986). CRC is the regional body for community relations in Northern Ireland, established as an independent charity and acting as an arm's length body through sponsorship by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). The Memorandum and Articles provide for up to one third of the Board to be appointed by the Government but this option has not yet been taken up by the devolved administration. The board is appointed through a supervised public appointments process. Since its establishment in 1990 the CRC has supported practical initiatives underpinning progress towards a society whose principles are fairness and justice, the peaceful celebration of variety and difference, and the importance of sharing, trust and inclusion. By supporting partnerships, co-operation, dialogue, meeting and friendship, and by promoting better practice and policy, CRC is the leading independent voice championing change to achieve and maintain a shared and open society based on fairness, the celebration of diversity and variety, and genuine reconciliation and interdependence.

Following widespread consultation under the last review of this area of work, *A Shared Future*, an independent CRC was confirmed as the regional body for community relations work with an obligation to challenge across the system to promote a shared and better future across government and society. The consultation responses to *A Shared Future* clearly indicated that there was widespread support for the importance of a regional body, independent of government and capable of commanding widespread support to promote good relations across government and society, support organisations through funding, training and development of good practice and to provide a challenge function across the public sector and wider civic society through research, best practice, and policy development.

Since its inception CRC has developed significantly in its approach to this work, and in its support and implementation of actions and programmes that seek to proactively acknowledge and deal with the legacy of our conflict and the continued

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impacts of division so as to ensure a better quality of life for all in our society. CRC's vision is of a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society founded on the achievement of reconciliation, equality, co-operation, respect, mutual trust and good relations, of an open society, free from intimidation and threat, where peace and tolerance are considered normal. To support the securing and attainment of this vision,<sup>2</sup> CRC's responsibilities as a regional body are:

- promoting good relations actions in the statutory, private, and voluntary and community sectors, encouraging constructive debate on difficult, sensitive, and controversial topics;
- developing practical opportunities for inter-community and inter-cultural partnership and understanding;
- developing, supporting and disseminating best practice examples of peace-building, inter-community partnership and inter-cultural co-operation;
- promoting action and support developing interventions at interfaces and other 'at risk' areas;
- providing support (finance, advice, information) for innovative projects undertaken by local groups and organisations;
- development and management of innovative intercommunity work through the IFI Community Bridges Programme;
- developing work with Victims and Survivors of violence including a lead role in acknowledging and dealing with the past through the EU PEACE III Programme (in consortium with Pobal);
- advising District Councils on best practice, including an advisory role through the PEACE III programme ( in consortium with Pobal);
- advocating and challenging progress towards a better shared and prosperous society and increasing public awareness of community relations work;
- assisting Government in the development, implementation, and delivery on policies, programmes and actions by connecting actions at regional, sub-regional and local level;
- providing support, training and guidance to organisations - statutory, private, community and voluntary - and in doing so developing and producing good practice advice;
- commissioning and undertaking research; and
- encouraging the flow of ideas and practice on North-South, East-West, European and international levels.

Examples of the work and achievements of the Community Relations Council are contained in Appendix I.

## **PREFACE**

In July 2010, the Northern Ireland Executive released its draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration for public consultation. While the document has been a long time coming, successive devolved administrations have found it difficult to agree on the priorities for this vital work. With the publication of a programme the Executive has now set out what it believes to be the priorities of a programme for a shared and better future and has invited wider society to consider the content.

The Community Relations Council (CRC) welcomes the fact that government has fulfilled its promise to produce a draft policy<sup>1</sup>. CRC is also delighted to engage in a full and open public debate on this issue as CRC believe that it is absolutely vital for the future here. In making this response, the Council is mindful of its particular existing responsibilities for work in this area. The CRC was established in 1990 as an independent body at arm's length from government to champion equality, community relations and respect for cultural diversity. Part of its contribution has been to act as an intermediary funder, shaping and developing pilot community projects which both tackled conflict issues as they emerged and sought to promote a shared and better future. But the Council has always been acutely aware that its fundamental task is to neither preserve the organisation nor develop projects but to use these tools alongside others to ensure that the principles of equity and justice, real respect for diversity and inclusion, and interdependence become normal parts of life here.

Following a comprehensive consultation under the last review of this area of work, *A Shared Future*, the Council was endorsed as the regional body for community relations work with an obligation to challenge across the system to promote a shared and better future across government and society. CRC therefore regard this submission as a central part of our public obligation to challenge, and as part of our primary commitment to the promotion of a 'new normal'. Reconciliation must be central to the new programme. However, it is not an event, but a path which must be pursued with dedication, patience and commitment. The slow but steady reduction in active political violence over the last decade has left a society anxious to move towards these principles although still tentative and suspicious.

**October 2010**

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## INTRODUCTION

Northern Ireland has inherited a problem that has sometimes been compared with the San Andreas fault. How do we find a sustainable and better future when our society seems to be at permanent risk of violent rupture on the basic issues of identity and legitimacy? Until now we have mostly sought to resolve this problem through insisting on the exclusive legitimacy of our own case against the case of our opponents. But the consequence was and can only be the same: violent gridlock in the battle between sides who seek a winner and a loser, a victor and a vanquished, a friend and a foe. In the context of this fundamental antagonism, all talk of human rights, equality and a shared future look naive and superficial. In the jargon of conflict resolution, this is what is meant by the 'zero-sum game' - always one loser and one winner.

Over the course of the last twenty five years much has changed. Systematic politically-motivated violence has largely come to an end, the Good Friday Agreement was overwhelmingly ratified in a referendum, policing was revolutionised and devolution was restored in 2007. But the past still leaves a bitter memory and a deeply rooted 'common sense' that trust is not possible for this generation or perhaps for many more. If the fault-line of our division had been 'clean' and a new territorial division could have been drawn between us and them, no doubt we might have taken it. But we know that both military victory and repartition will only be possible at an enormous cost- in human lives, in lost opportunities and in pounds and pence. If the fault tears us apart, it will break our hearts in the process.

The inevitable consequence of violent enmity is inequality, forced separation and community polarisation. Segregation is not 'choice' but the result of threat, violence, exclusion and hatred, and the fact that it carries on, even 17 years after the paramilitary ceasefires, is evidence that we have not yet put these monsters to bed. And for as long as they are still around what we have is a fragile truce not a real peace.

If we are serious about peace, then we have to set to work on a future together. The antidote to polarisation is systematic partnership. But it will not happen without care and attention. The antidote to fear and exclusion is democracy, solidarity, equality and human rights. The alternative to a scared future is a shared future, and it is time to move to demonstrate that we mean this in practice as well as rhetoric.

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CRC was established to explore what a society for all might mean, to engage with practical experiment, to pilot new ideas in this area and to advocate consistently for those changes rooted in genuine trust and trustworthiness founded on an acknowledgement of the value of peaceful difference and a central commitment to the equal value of all and each. The promise of a shared and better future is not, in this view, a defeat or betrayal but a hopeful prospect and aspiration.

Over the years government has been very tentative in this area of policy reform. It is our view that a commitment to a shared and better future is both the fundamental core of the British-Irish peace process and a chance for transformation. In this historic context, we believe that policy in this area must be comprehensive, courageous and radical requiring leadership, commitment and perseverance if it is to succeed.

The latest review of this area of work, the devolved administration's programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) was certainly a landmark- the first attempt by a partnership local administration to suggest a way forward. For this reason, CRC has welcomed the publication of the document. However, it is also our view that policy in this area should reach deeper and act more quickly than before.

Named as the regional body for Community Relations under existing policy, CRC is obliged to promote best practice in this area and to advocate across society to ensure that these issues remain where they belong- at the centre of the agenda of public policy here-in the conviction that decisions made in this area will have a potentially decisive influence over our political, social and economic future.

Given this marvellous opportunity for real debate, we have decided to publish our own ideas on a way forward as part of our public obligation. They are the result of long and thoughtful discussion within the Council and with many people across society, and they are rooted in our participation in peace-building at local level and as participants in the £2bn EU PEACE Programmes and IFI Community Bridges Programme. We are therefore grateful to the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland for their independent support of this document.

Without a serious programme to enact change, broad and vague commitments to 'peace' in the abstract will eventually look naked and unconvincing in practice. We hope and believe that serious debate and action on this issue will go on for many years. We hope also that this document can make a useful and constructive contribution to coherence and development in policy.

**Duncan Morrow** Chief Executive

*January 2011*

# CHAPTER 1

## TOWARDS A SHARED SOCIETY? THE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF CSI

### **The legacy of history: from sectarianism to reconciliation?**

Sustained political and social antagonism along political lines which had strong associations with religious tradition has defined and confined life in the north of Ireland over generations and for centuries. Deep divisions over Empire, the role of the British in Ireland, and the role of religion emerged at the core of the underlying crisis over the legitimacy and nature of the state that have marked Northern Ireland out since it came into existence in 1920. As a result, and well before 1969, public life here was marked by sporadic and repeated political violence, emergency law and fixed political identities<sup>3</sup>.

Political divisions reflected and reinforced divisions in the pattern of interrelationship in everyday life. While there are few acknowledged sectarians, this nexus of hostility and separateness around politics and religion is often referred to as 'sectarianism'. The struggle for power between emergent blocs fostered and justified all sorts of acts of discrimination and violence by state, paramilitaries and other protagonists and individuals, leaving a deep imprint on our sense of who we are - our very identities. The experience of exclusion and discrimination, of imminent threat to culture, person and property and of violent hatred has been too persistent to be wished away or dismissed as a temporary attitude. And our social worlds were often built on the basis of the 'them and us' shaped by exclusion, fear and bitter experience.

In this way, sectarianism is part of our inheritance, part of what counts as 'normal'. It was never the totality of our experience. But its influence over fundamental choices - like where we live, where we go to school and who we talk to shaped even those who wore its legacy lightly. Over the last decades, it has also characterized what the rest of the world understands as 'the Northern Ireland problem' - our seeming inability to find a way to live peacefully together as equals in a shared society. Without recognition of the depth of polarisation and even hatred, it is impossible either to acknowledge the breathtaking degree to which agreeing joint political institutions represents a historic breakthrough in

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relationships, or to acknowledge the scale of the division that both preceded the emergence of violence in 1969 and has outlasted the emergence of our fragile peace in recent years. And it is this - the opportunity for systemic change created by political progress and the sheer scale of the task of transforming a divided society into a shared and better one - which forms the backdrop to the current policy for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI).

Division between Unionist and Nationalist, Catholic and Protestant, British and Irish, loyalist and republican, is the leitmotif - the signature feature- marking us out in the wider world. For everyone living through the period 1969-2007, variously referred to as 'the Troubles', 'the conflict', 'the war'- terms which are each loaded with meaning – 'normality' in Northern Ireland included all sorts of accommodations with division, including the daily reality of bombing and shooting, profound divisions in our attitudes to law and the forces of law and order, normalised separation in housing, education, sport and culture and the emergence of 'peace walls' 'armed patrols' and 'security zones' as the best available way to create safety and security .

At the same time, the 'common sense' of public administration in Northern Ireland, and even the name itself is sometimes taken as a declaration of allegiance, has been to avoid serious engagement with this underlying crisis and the dilemmas it created in public policy. Public policy simply could not afford to constantly re-engage with the crisis of legitimacy and uneasy peace which underlay the institutions of state. This failure to grapple with the underlying issue of division and suspicion lasted through the last period of serious violence, dated back by most people to 1969 and resulting by 1972 in the introduction of direct British political control from Westminster. Planning, public services, business and much of private life were conducted 'as if' this were a normal society.

The emergence of a locally-created policy framework which seeks, however tentatively, to name and address the depth of division is therefore an important symbol of change. The challenge for any policy for cohesion, sharing and integration is to be more than superficial and to tackle this legacy at the right scale.

## **The principles of a shared and better future: equality and good relations**

Sectarianism has been evident in exclusive politics and culture and in socioeconomic discrimination. Among other things it is a crisis in the expectation of equal value, equal treatment and equal opportunity at the hands of both the state and of each other that is the bedrock of democracy.

The Community Relations Council has since its inception believed that the principle and practice of equality is at the core of building good relations. This implies both the full application of the equality provision of Section 75 and a generosity which acknowledges past lack of fairness and disadvantage and seeks to redress any unacceptable exclusions resulting from it. CRC further believes that this commitment to inclusion and equality relates not only to the past but to policy priorities for the present and future.

The emergence of parallel and hostile communities around these issues, the 'them and us' culture, means that trust and interdependence remain fragile. Equality is not plausible between enemies, because enemies always seek victory and advantage. The glib acceptance of 'separate but equal' always ignores the fact that the underlying truth about 'separation' is 'exclusion'. Historically most of the advocates of 'separate but equal' - in the Southern US or South Africa - were more concerned about separation than equality. Thus the obligation on public authorities in Northern Ireland to have 'regard for good relations' does not dilute the commitment to equality but is part of a commitment to inclusion, and to the equal value of all. There will be no good relations without equal value and treatment; but there will be no equality unless there is a commitment to the wellbeing of all.

The concept of 'good relations' is poorly defined in law, and this may lie at the core of the deep confusion which appears to characterise public debate on this question. For CRC 'good relations' does not preclude proper readjustments of employment, goods and services where inequality is proven. Indeed it both requires that such redistribution takes place and creates a framework within which such necessary adjustment is seen as desirable and important. The principle is not the maintenance of superficial harmony, but a commitment to non-negotiable inclusion and inter-relationship on the basis of the development of social and political relationships robust enough to acknowledge conflicts and to take clear and principled democratic decisions without violence to redress injustice and build an inclusive community. Good relations must always be

compatible with the full implementation of human rights including the rights of minorities.

CRC does not believe that apartheid (separate and perhaps equal) is equally desirable or equivalent to interdependence, trust and confidence. Apartheid which is rooted in exclusion and supremacy is never benign but always conceals exclusion based on violence and threat. The appearance of any tendency to apartheid should trigger an urgent concern to promote good relations- precisely to ensure that equality can be achieved.

This was recognised in the Northern Ireland Act (1998) with its additional emphasis on good relations in three specified categories under Section 75(2). While CRC believes that this list can be extended, it is however convinced that progress to full equality and trust between people divided by race, religion and perceived political affiliation here demands additional attention on the part of public authorities to recognise the dangers of separate development.

The Northern Ireland Act and all devolved government actions are also subject to the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act, pertinent examples of which include Article 2 (right to Life, the issue about effectively investigating deaths when it come to dealing with the past in particular), Article 8 (the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence), Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance), Article 10 (the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers).

The emergence of Section 75 has enabled CRC to prioritise the full range of inter-cultural work since 1998. The growth of a more diverse and globally connected society in Northern Ireland in recent years has been a particularly rewarding consequence of the peace process. However, we have all been confronted by the fact that violence and exclusion previously targeted on a sectarian basis now has brutal parallels in attacks on vulnerable people on the basis of minority ethnic background or sexual orientation. While inter-cultural work in no way exhausts the requirement to ensure full race equality, it represents a vital element in ensuring the long-term equality, participation, security and belonging of all people of different backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

Neither CSI nor S 75(2) define equality or good relations. However, the new Equality Act 2010 (for GB, not extended to NI) does provide a definition of good relations in paragraph 149 (5) *'Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—(a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.'*

There is pre-existing legislation (prior to the Agreement) which extends to both public authorities and private employers. The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 makes discrimination on the grounds of religious belief and political opinion unlawful both in the work place and in the provision of goods, facilities and services. The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes racial discrimination unlawful in the following areas: employment; goods, facilities and services; education; and housing management and disposal of premises. In the context of race, it is possible to find an international human rights standard which may also be applicable to many aspects of sectarianism.

CRC believes that the case for additional categories of discrimination and exclusion requiring a specifically good relations approach should be considered where it is clear that such is necessary and appropriate. This does not subtract in any way from the obligation to undertake all necessary steps to protect and promote under the existing provisions of Section 75(1).

Above all, CRC believes that a debate which pits equality against good relations, which suggests that equality can be achieved while hostility remains intact is irrational, ethically questionable and potentially dishonest. The legitimate demand of all those promoting good relations is a commitment to genuine equality. The same demand on all those promoting and protecting equality is that it does not hide a disregard for the fears and threats of all which drive separation nor pretend that equality can be achieved at the cost of embedding hostility to others.

There is a real opportunity to reflect all of this in the values shaping the programme. Throughout the CSI document there is repeated use of a series of values: fairness, equality, rights, responsibility and respect. These values are all vital components of a shared and better future. However, the absence of any commitment to a value which would specifically target or reject separation or hostility represents a significant weakness in a document on cohesion and sharing. CRC therefore suggests that the values of the document need to be

revised, to ensure that no ambiguity can be read into the Executive's commitment to sharing, interdependence and intercultural interaction through the absence of up front commitment.

## **The International, Political and Legislative Framework of CSI**

CRC believes that the journey towards reconciliation and inter-cultural learning is not confined to Northern Ireland, Ireland or these islands. Indeed it is part of an international commitment to align all that we do to vital human ethics and principles. While these are laid out in legal form in a wide variety of documents, they can only flourish when they are articulated as part of a truly human vision. Among the most persuasive advocates of this kind of change in the last century was Dr Martin Luther King Junior. In a speech in Nashville on 27 December 1962, he set a tone and approach which still has enormous resonance:

*"When the desegregation process is one hundred per cent complete, the human relations dilemma of our nation will still be monumental unless we launch now the parallel thrust of the integration process. In the context of what our national community needs, desegregation alone is empty and shallow. We must always be aware that the ultimate goal is integration and that desegregation is only a first step on the road to a good society. Integration is creative, and is therefore more profound and far-reaching than desegregation. Integration is the positive acceptance of desegregation and the welcomed participation of all in the total range of human activities. Integration is genuine, interpersonal, inter-group 'doing'. We do not have to look very far to see the pernicious effects of a desegregated society that is not integrated. It leads to physical proximity without spiritual affinity. It gives us a society where elbows are together and heavy apart. It gives us spatial togetherness and spiritual apartness."*

While the task of reconciliation and building a genuinely shared society here is not identical with the struggle for civil rights in the USA of the 1960s, the need for a clear vision and purpose has not diminished. By setting the goal of society at cohesion, sharing and integration, the Executive has undertaken a vital task. But it will only succeed if it is driven by genuine commitment and a willingness to engage in the complex, difficult, creative and rewarding task of reconstruction, recognition and reconciliation.

The only legislative framework referred to within CSI is Section 75. This presents an incomplete picture of the legal context. The UK government is a signatory to

international human rights standards which also bind the devolved administration and its executive agencies. In addition there is a body of important domestic human rights, equality/non-discrimination and good relations statutes, as well as criminal law. CSI also rests on key international commitments such as the European Convention on Human Rights, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Resolution 1325, World Programme for Education, and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, as well as domestic legislation and policy commitments. CRC recommends that this legal framework is reflected in the final version of the CSI programme<sup>4</sup>.

The Council of Europe has led international efforts to define inter-culturalism. Both the UK and Ireland are full members of the Council<sup>5</sup>. There is no reference in the CSI document to this important framework which is binding on all signatory states and which sets inter-cultural dialogue as a critical element of all policy across Europe. In the White Paper on Inter-cultural Dialogue(2008), the Council maintains:

*Europe's increasing cultural diversity – rooted in the history of our continent and enhanced by globalisation – in a democratic manner has become a priority in recent years. How shall we respond to diversity? What is our vision of the society of the future? Is it a society of segregated communities, marked at best by the coexistence of majorities and minorities with differentiated rights and responsibilities, loosely bound together by mutual ignorance and stereotypes? Or is it a vibrant and open society without discrimination, benefiting us all, marked by the inclusion of all residents in full respect of their human rights? The Council of Europe believes that respect for, and promotion of, cultural diversity on the basis of the values on which the organisation is built are essential conditions for the development of societies based on solidarity.*

Critically, the Council of Europe makes clear that civic participation and dialogue are vital elements in any healthy inter-cultural dialogue:

Intercultural dialogue has an important role to play in this regard. It allows us to prevent ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural divides. It enables us to move forward together, to deal with our different identities constructively and democratically on the basis of shared universal values. Intercultural dialogue can only thrive if certain preconditions are met. To advance intercultural dialogue, the White Paper argues, the democratic governance of cultural diversity should be adapted in many aspects; democratic citizenship and participation should be

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strengthened; intercultural competences should be taught and learned; spaces for intercultural dialogue should be created and widened; and intercultural dialogue should be taken to the international level.

The Council of Europe has insisted that intercultural dialogue, building on universal norms, is the key to managing diversity. It holds out the vision of an integrated society of diverse individual citizens, each of whom sees the others as his/her fellow citizens. This is an important philosophical breakthrough for a tolerant future.

Developing a systematic response to the challenges of intercultural relations has become a major concern of political and social thinking across Europe. In recent years other major cities have developed specific policy frameworks for intercultural dialogue<sup>6</sup>. All of these offer significant support for the development of a fully framed policy for inter-cultural dialogue here. CSI badly misses the opportunity to place policy thinking in this wider cosmopolitan context.

### **Beyond Sectarianism: the challenge of Cohesion, Sharing and Integration**

The ambitious title of the Executive's document- The Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration- suggests that the Executive wishes not only to tackle the specific and enormous legacy of sectarian division, but to acknowledge that hostility, discrimination and hatred has had enormous consequences for people across society on the basis of other aspects of identity.

CRC is well aware that public recognition of the unacceptability of exclusion and discrimination has implications far beyond one category of people, and believes that we address it wherever we find it. The focus on cohesion has this important advantage of placing sectarianism and racism in their proper context - as offences against common humanity which permit violence or exclusion against some on the basis of perceived or presumed characteristics.

CRC recognises and welcomes the recognition that tackling hate crime and exclusion must be an ethical and political priority for all and any government. Indeed our experience of how sectarianism escalates from political history into embedded social norms reminds us that these issues cannot be allowed to fester or be ignored. The commitment in the CSI document to zero tolerance for hate crime is welcome, although it is surely impossible to conceive of any alternative policy.

CRC also recognizes that the emergence of a series of unacknowledged discriminations across society is both a sign of confidence on the part of those who might previously have suffered without recognition and a sign of the increasing inter-dependence of peoples across the globe. All of these changes oblige us to respond not only with sympathy and legislation but also through policy and cultural change.

In 2007, the UK Government's Commission on Cohesion and Integration chaired by Darra Singh published their report into these issues within an English context. In their work, the Commission defined cohesion as "principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure that different groups of people get on well together". They defined Integration to mean "the process that ensures that new residents and existing residents adapt to one another"<sup>7</sup>. Both of these are relevant to the issues at the heart of CSI.

The Commission on Cohesion and Integration identified six key features of an integrated and cohesive society:

- A clearly defined and widely shared of the contributions of different individuals and communities to a future vision.
- A strong sense of rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place.
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment.
- A strong sense of trust in institutions to act fairly.
- A strong sense of the contribution of all, with a focus on what is held in common.
- Strong and positive relations between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions.

The Commission also listed four key principles underlying their report:

- An emphasis on what binds communities together,
- An emphasis on responsibilities as well as entitlements,
- An emphasis on civility and mutual respect recognising that communities change and there is a need for mutual hospitality, and
- A commitment to equality alongside a requirement to make social justice visible and to ensure that citizens trust their institutions.

Despite the title of the CSI document none of this work is reflected in its content. Above all, it does not provide satisfactory definitions of these linked but distinct concepts. Nor does it outline in detail the specific measures that should and might be taken in each case. As a result, legitimate expectations of acknowledgement and action have been raised but have not been fulfilled in the document.

For CRC the framework of social cohesion offers many future opportunities to connect a range of important issues. CRC looks forward to future debates on these matters and urge the Executive to bring forward proposals for actions on all of the connected yet separate issues which this raises. This is particularly the case in relation to those at risk because of their sexual orientation, age, gender or disability.

The consequence of this debate will also require changes in institutional architecture to ensure that commitments in principle are translated into action. CRC does not believe that a single body or single approach will be adequate to the complexity of this task. However, this should not preclude an ongoing discussion about how these distinct yet interrelated matters should be tackled. For its part CRC will continue to play its part in any agreed way forward.

### **Building cohesion, sharing and integration on good practice**

Enormous efforts have already gone into the task of making peace and seeking real and meaningful reconciliation. Many people and organisations took real risks for change even when reconciliation was dismissed as naive. The Community Relations Council was established to support these efforts and to build from their insights and achievements. International partners made a huge contribution to this change. The European Union has donated upwards of £1.5bn to promote economic regeneration, social inclusion and reconciliation since 1995, enabling the direct participation of hundreds of thousands of people in building peace. The International Fund for Ireland has likewise invested £630m in economic regeneration and reconciliation since 1985. Atlantic Philanthropies alone may have invested over \$300m. This broadly based support for a genuine people's 'peace process' - sustaining hope through years of political disagreement and difficulty - was vital to the ultimate possibility of political agreement.

These enormous and sustained efforts have given us a historic opportunity for a sea change, holding out the prospect that we will learn to live with one another as partners and equal citizens for the first time. It is a historic opportunity to

transform hostility into partnership which we dare not squander, requiring us to ensure that the commitment to cohesion, sharing and integration is at the heart of policy. CRC is concerned that the current draft fails to tackle these issues with sufficient seriousness or importance.

The absence of sufficient acknowledgement of the contribution of this investment in the CSI document, or indeed that of the Irish Government which annually allocates around €3m for reconciliation projects, leaves the impression that much of this effort is irrelevant and ignored. Most importantly, CRC believes that the value of the present policy can only be really measured if it builds on this achievement rather than seems to suggest that no policy or practice has previously been built.

### **Political commitment to reconciliation**

The Belfast or Good Friday Agreement cemented the values of reconciliation and mutual respect in an international peace treaty. In the Declaration of Support, the signatories committed themselves to 'partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of relationships within Northern Ireland, between North and South, and between these islands'. The section also referred to the tragedies of the past and a commitment that '*We must never forget those who have died or been injured, and their families. But we can best honour them through a fresh start, in which we firmly dedicate ourselves to the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance, and mutual trust, and to the protection and vindication of the human rights of all*'.<sup>8</sup>

Specifically, all signatories to the Good Friday agreement committed themselves to ongoing actions in relation to reconciliation and victims of violence:

*'It is recognised that victims have a right to remember as well as to contribute to a changed society. The achievement of a peaceful and just society would be the true memorial to the victims of violence. The participants particularly recognise that young people from areas affected by the troubles face particular difficulties and will support the development of special community-based initiatives based on international best practice. The provision of services that are supportive and sensitive to the needs of victims will also be a critical element and that support will need to be channelled through both statutory and community-based voluntary organisations facilitating locally-based self help and support networks. This will require the allocation of sufficient resources, including*

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*statutory funding as necessary, to meet the needs of victims and to provide for community-based support programmes.*

*The participants recognise and value the work being done by many organisations to develop reconciliation and mutual understanding and respect between and within communities and traditions, in Northern Ireland and between North and South, and they see such work as having a vital role in consolidating peace and political agreement. Accordingly, they pledge their continuing support to such organisations and will positively examine the case for enhanced financial assistance for the work of reconciliation. An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing’.*

Since the Agreement in 1998 we have witnessed many political ups and downs, with intermittent devolved and direct rule administration. However, the commitment to a shared future was made part of the ministerial pledge of office for all incoming Ministers in 2007. The inter-governmental St Andrews Agreement<sup>9</sup>, the Hillsborough Castle Agreement<sup>10</sup> and the current devolved administration have given society new hope that power-sharing in government and even broadly based historic reconciliation may be possible.

Agreement on political structures has been a crucial landmark in this process. Furthermore agreements on policing, paramilitary decommissioning, demilitarisation and adjustments to allow stable devolution have been equally important. All of these agreements were characterised by their historic ambition, their willingness to imagine a shared and better future and by their determination to replace hostility and exclusion with a culture which promoted inter-dependence, full and equal citizenship for all and respect for mutual rights and responsibilities. Political stability brings with it many expectations in relation to the development and implementation of public policy that will bring about real change to communities and personal life chances as well as to institutions and structures.

The PEACE III programme is based on a widely accepted definition of reconciliation developed by Hamber and Kelly for the PEACE II programme as a result of support agreed through CRC<sup>11</sup>. The programme was agreed by the current Executive in 2007 and the definition still appears to us to be both accurate and helpful:

*“The definition regards reconciliation as a voluntary act which cannot be imposed and involves five interwoven and related strands, as follows:*

- ***Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society:*** *The development of a vision of a shared future requiring the involvement of the whole society, at all levels. Although individuals may have different opinions or political beliefs, the articulation of a common vision of an interdependent, just, equitable, open and diverse society is a critical part of any reconciliation process;*
- ***Acknowledging and dealing with the past:*** *Acknowledging the hurt, losses, truths and suffering of the past. Providing the mechanisms for justice, healing, restitution or reparation, and restoration (including apologies if necessary and steps aimed at redress). To build reconciliation, individuals and institutions need to acknowledge their own role in the conflicts of the past, accepting and learning from it in a constructive way so as to guarantee non-repetition;*
- ***Building positive relationships:*** *Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process, resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us;*
- ***Significant cultural and attitudinal change:*** *Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard. A culture of respect for human rights and human difference is developed creating a context where each citizen becomes an active participant in society and feels a sense of belonging; and*
- ***Substantial social, economic and political change:*** *The social, economic and political structures which gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed.*

The absence of a vision of reconciliation in the document is a clear omission and should be rectified if the document is to be a credible successor to the policy and investment which preceded it. CRC believes that the definition offered by Hamber and Kelly should be reinstated to give shape to the policy and the actions which might arise.

Success for CSI will depend, however, on ensuring that we respond to the challenge with the necessary vision, energy, action and resources. In the face of violent division in Northern Ireland, what this means is:

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- a vision to match the historic task of reconciliation;
- leadership to change deeply ingrained expectations;
- wide participation by the whole of society and its institutions which accepts that we have to change the normal and not just the superficial; and
- the priority of this issue at the heart of all decisions about economics, social change and cultural life for the next generation.

## Policy

There are a number of key policies that must be taken into consideration when considering the draft programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

The *A Shared Future* consultation carried out during 2003-05 took place during a period when devolution was suspended. Although the consultation was very broadly based, it was implemented while political consensus was too fragile to allow for progress with the consequence that it lacked the full legitimacy and confidence that only devolved government can give. Nevertheless, it represented the first time that government had acknowledged that reconciliation would require comprehensive action and change by the state and its agencies, and could not simply be left to political negotiations and local communities and organisations. This set a benchmark which acknowledged that practice and policy had reached a certain level and now needed to advance.

The European PEACE Programmes have been implemented in Ireland with the support of all parties and following a wide consultation process and detailed process of evaluation and learning. The PEACE III Programme was supported by the current Executive, and the operational programme contains clear and unambiguous commitments to peace and reconciliation. The programme acknowledges that *"The key challenges in the short to medium term future, all of which are linked, include: harnessing the potential for sustainable economic development and tackling sectarianism and developing lasting reconciliation. Building on the foundations of recent political progress, the British and Irish Governments are committed to working in close co-operation with the incoming Northern Ireland Executive to that end."*<sup>12</sup> CRC believes that this analysis is still valid but believes that these links are not adequately made within the current CSI Programme.

The PEACE III Operational Programme identifies a number of key indicators which require urgent attention: residential segregation, interfaces, lack of shared

services, sharing in education, lack of cross-community contact, issues for ethnic minorities and cross-border work and connects these to significant economic weaknesses. The Executive's support for this programme makes the absence of any such analysis in the CSI document all the more surprising.

The PEACE III programme has two strategic objectives:

- **Reconciling communities:** key activities will facilitate relationships on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis to assist in addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance, and accepting commonalities and differences. In addition, key activities will seek to acknowledge and deal with the hurt, losses, trauma and suffering caused by the conflict; and
- **Contributing to a shared society:** key activities will address the physical segregation or polarisation of places and communities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region with a view to encouraging increased social and economic cross community and cross-border engagement. The absence of any reference to these objectives within CSI is a noteworthy omission which should be urgently corrected.

PEACE III has four key priorities: building positive relations at local level, acknowledging and dealing with the past, creating shared public spaces and building institutional capacity for a shared society. It also creates a clear framework for measurement. This approach should be reproduced within CSI.

Peace building was prioritised in the current Programme for Government<sup>13</sup>, with an overarching aim of 'building a peaceful, fair and prosperous society', and comprised of five strategic and independent priorities<sup>14</sup> including one to 'promote tolerance, inclusion and health and well-being'. The acknowledgement by the Executive that creating the conditions to create a 'peaceful, prosperous, fair and healthy society', contribute to 'economic growth and deliver real improvements in health and wellbeing' and that sectarianism, racism and intolerance impact negatively on economic investment and ventures is a positive position. The Executive also rightly recognise that major challenges remain for our society in terms of peace-building and conflict transformation.

The Patten Commission on policing demonstrated the degree of change required of the single institution of policing to move from conflict to a new normality. It is perhaps the best example of the scale and scope of what change will require of every other aspect of a society shaped by conflict.

Sectarian hostility is not just a historic legacy to be discussed by academics. It has shaped the structures which we have inherited from education, to public safety to community development. It has shaped the most basic personal choices like where we might live, what we can wear and what we might say to whom. All of this shapes our attitudes to politics, economics, our ideas about the law and culture and our understanding of history and morality in Ireland. So to seek reconciliation is not a small tinkering enterprise aimed at controlling some anti-social elements. It is to propose a new 'normal' and to create the institutions, attitudes and expectations which might give real meaning to the goal. It is to move from a politics of 'them and us' to a politics of 'us together'.

### **Addressing the causes of conflict?**

One of the political criticisms levelled at *A Shared Future* was that it failed to address the causes of conflict. Unsurprisingly, the CSI document is equally short on any analysis of causes. Both reflect the common sense experience that attempting to 'explain' the past collapses in recrimination and disagreement and prevents all progress or action. Worryingly, the fact that no consensus is possible reflects the profound importance attached to these issues rather than indifference. Because whoever wins the 'intellectual' debate about causes wins the 'moral' debate about who is to blame, whose cause was legitimate and who was responsible for violence and crime in Ireland. However coarsely, the debate about causes is the debate about who were the 'good guys', who were the 'terrorists' and who were the 'victims' and about important moral ideals and duties like freedom, justice and the defence of loved ones. Furthermore, they are not merely inventions, but based on historic and recent experience of traumatic violence, exclusion and discrimination which were part of the real political, social and economic history of these islands.

For people, organisations and communities who have been committed to causes and suffered their consequences for generations, this is a battle about meaning and identity which cannot be lost. Silence in inter-community settings seldom represents an agreement to disagree, but more often hides a festering resentment, and contrasts sharply with the certainty and simplicity of the 'story' told within and by communities to ourselves, usually alone. Often we tell the story of our own victimhood, while the violence emanating from our own communities is veiled from us by the legitimacy of 'cause' and the absence of our victims from the room. But if everyone is a victim, then no one is responsible.

Tragically, the failure to communicate and find reconciliation about the past often reinforces our sense of isolation and difference from one another and always threatens to re-emerge as resentment and violence. Events which commemorate or make reference to the past are therefore always potential trigger points for new disagreements and violence in the present. Paradoxically, our disagreements about the past prevent trust in the present, and potentially into the future. And it still seems that silence is the only basis on which co-operative progress can be made.

CRC is made aware of these dilemmas on a daily basis through our work in communities and with victims and survivors. Many policies and actions in both the distant and recent past have 'caused' conflict. What is certain is that these causes have included political domination through Empire and religion, the fear and experience of lethal violence from our neighbours and political institutions, concern for liberties at the hands of authoritarian opponents and institutions, economic discrimination and marginalisation, revenge for past injury and misunderstanding. What is not clear is that any or all of these can be accounted for in any simple or just conclusion.

This is not the same, however, as saying that no meaningful agreements can or should be reached about how to stop the poison of injustice and violence in the past preventing meaningful progress in the future. If the causes remain disputed, much of the legacy is clearly visible. Central to the peace process was the need to create a political basis for co-operation. The primary purpose of the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* programme must be to seize the huge opportunity of this political agreement and to create the policy framework and action programme to tackle the legacy. Indeed, unless that is done, it is the view of CRC that the legacy will continue to generate violent outbreaks which destroy lives, embed mistrust and prevent real prosperity.

### **A programme for a reconciled future**

In spite of huge political progress, the shadow of the past continues to haunt the future here. Individuals, communities, towns, villages, the workplace and service delivery continue to experience the daily consequences of the legacy of the past – sectarianism and division have not yet disappeared. There are different legacies of the past – social, economic, physical and emotional. Too often, fear and a tradition of suspicion still determine where we live, socialise and work. For many parts of society this has become a normal and acceptable feature of life here. For

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too long public policy accepted the principle that we are a divided society without acknowledgement or comment. Much of this has to do with a common sense based on fear and hostility, which may have had some validity in the past but which now prevents the emergence of a society truly at peace.

A crucial legacy issue to be addressed is, of course, violence and its consequences. Undoubtedly the most tragic manifestation of the impact of the conflict is the legacy of death, injury and bereavement. The commitment to purely political means and agreement on the rule of law are major advances. The potential for a return to violence may have grown over recent years and continues to impact on security budgets<sup>15</sup>. Violence can only be ultimately defeated when it is shown to be futile and demonstrably unable to generate meaningful progress. Part of that progress is engagement with the rights and expectations of the victims of violence and a serious discussion about how those directly engaged in violent conflict are to be integrated into normality in the future. The absence of any reference to these important dimensions in the CSI document is therefore a source of disappointment and concern.

The legacy of violence in the past is not confined to the generation which lived through the worst years, and it has had a profound impact on community health<sup>16</sup>. CRC also believes that a meaningful public and political commitment to acknowledging dealing with the past with honesty represents a serious gap in policy.

The CSI policy must also put an emphasis on safety for all. Zero tolerance should not simply be proclaimed but accompanied by actions to make it real. Under systematic threat, communities here have resorted to seeking basic safety through separation, the construction of walls and avoidance<sup>17</sup>. It is absolutely not acceptable in a western democracy that people have to rely on forty feet high permanent barriers to protect them from being threatened. Nor is it acceptable that people of different backgrounds can be intimidated out of their houses without protection or action against their persecutors<sup>18</sup>. The results of violence have left communities isolated from one another<sup>19</sup>, but also from services and jobs<sup>20</sup>. Concerns about safety dominate people's decisions about where they can live, where they can go and what they can say. It is common sense here to avoid certain parts of our cities and towns, to worry about sporting allegiances or taking jobs or using the local library. The shared space agenda is not a pious hope, but a determined effort to ensure that all districts and public resources- from houses to health centres - are of good quality and are equally welcoming, accessible and safe for all members of society.

The law is very specific in relation to matters pertaining to shared space, specifically the Public Order (NI) Order 1987 Article 9 and 19, (See Appendix).

A similar critical legacy issue for CSI is the ending of all discrimination. Exclusion from power and marginalisation in economics has fuelled violence and resentment for generations. Genuine equality is a critical element of any shared future and will only be possible if it is part of a properly open and welcoming society. This will require a new commitment to opening up housing, public resources and services to all, to a transport policy which enables people to access key resources such as jobs and services and to the extension of the principle of partnership as part of the normal way of doing business.

A CSI proposal also needs to consider the statutory duties to provide safe public space and equal access to public space imposed on District Councils and the duty to meet objective need in housing imposed on DSD and NIHE.

The CSI policy must support the growth of underlying trust in both each other and institutions. The pattern of public housing segregation contrasts sharply with the repeated results of survey after survey that the vast majority want to live in peace together.<sup>21</sup> Education continues to operate on the basis of parallel provision. Some young people continue to be on the frontline of community violence, blamed by some for acting out a long-prevalent pattern of community hatred, while others opt out of democratic society altogether. There is a need to develop a serious youth strategy which deals with the various needs of young people as they are, rather than the current provider-led models which leave too many young people without support. Most starkly of all, there must be a serious attempt to regenerate the interfaces and reintegrate these communities on the frontline of conflict and violence into the mainstream of civic life<sup>22</sup>. This is not a simple question of 'taking down the walls', but of a concerted effort to reinforce safety through partnership and trust and create assets which serve everyone through radical regeneration. All of this will require a much more specific and perhaps painful attempt to resolve our cultural conflicts through agreements on the rights which must accord to all and the behaviour which is expected from everyone, than is currently outlined in the programme. Furthermore, our cultural jewels - sports, arts, museums- must reflect the growing cultural diversity and pluralism of our society, acting as meeting places rather than battlegrounds.

Finally the CSI programme must make the vital connection to economics. There has been a sharp tendency to pretend that economic prosperity represents the only basis of our agreement, without a serious willingness to address the obstacles

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in our legacy of conflict and violence to any meaningful progress. To date, prosperity in the future has been the alternative to talking about the past. But the opposite is true. Investment depends on attractiveness, on attracting financial investment and good people to come here in the context of a global economy where everyone is in competition. We will never succeed in this competition without serious cohesion and sharing. For decades now we have been largely shielded from the failure to grow a private sector economy by the investment of the public sector. Since 2008 this has left us extremely vulnerable to the global recession. Unless we address our signature weakness- violence and conflict- we will find it increasingly difficult to attract investment and people. A commitment to cohesion, sharing and integration is an integral part of reconstructing the economy.

One of the most promising areas for service industry growth is tourism. Events this summer around parades and protests reminded governments across the world of the risks of visiting the north of Ireland<sup>23</sup> and resulted in a warning from the Australian Government to its citizens who intended to visit Northern Ireland 'to avoid all protests and demonstrations as they may turn violent'<sup>24</sup>. Warnings were also issued by the US Consulate and the New Zealand governments. Again, a serious attempt to build a shared and inclusive society is the necessary condition for eliminating this risk and growing our tourism to its proper size.

In the meantime, we continue to invest resources in duplicating core services which could be more efficiently provided through sharing. Our police service is much larger than should be necessary<sup>25</sup>, our school system is made much more inefficient through our inability to combine resources<sup>26</sup> and our leisure services are provided on a parallel basis.

Perhaps the worst result is the impoverishment of whole communities and families<sup>27</sup>. According to Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), of the top 20 most deprived areas in Northern Ireland, 17 are located in North or West Belfast. It is obvious that many of the most deprived parts of Northern Ireland are also the most segregated, containing the most number of peace walls, and it is important to note that North and West Belfast alone accounted for 1240 (or over one third) of the 3636 fatalities in total that took place over the course of the conflict. Such statistics provide direct evidence of the disproportionate impact of the conflict on the poorest sections of our society. Not only have communities suffered disadvantage because of the conflict, but conflict has

created marginalised communities, and this makes the attraction of investment impossible and drives the best and most successful members of communities away. Community relations work is often caricatured as of interest only to the chattering classes. In reality the opposite is the case: the people who pay most are usually among the poorest in society. Sectarianism destroys economies and targets the poorest.

If quality of life depends on

- healthy relationships
- safety
- equal value
- jobs
- high quality services and facilities
- an economy and
- a future for families and children,

then there is an urgent need for a serious programme for cohesion, sharing and integration. Peace has already enabled us to reconnect to the global economy and made this an attractive place for people to move to. Success will look like more people arriving, in contrast to the emigration and economic depression which is the alternative. Diversity is a buzz word everywhere, but the central importance of cohesion, sharing and integration across many cultures and backgrounds will grow the more successful we are. The programme needs to focus not only on the past but the opportunities and challenges which an intercultural future will bring. Cohesion, sharing and integration is not only a question of addressing the legacy of the past but also of taking the opportunities of the future. CRC believes that this matters enormously, and it is vital that the programme and structures match the scale of the challenge ahead.

## **Conclusion**

1. We have been handed a historic opportunity to address the legacy of division. Peace brought a huge dividend in that Northern Ireland became an attractive place to visit and move to. The issues of cohesion, sharing and integration do not diminish through this process, they change. This is not an additional extra but a core challenge to all in a global economy. It is vital that we take this opportunity through the CSI Strategy.
2. The requirement to build a truly inter-cultural future is a paramount concern here and across Europe. The CSI policy should be rooted in a broad legal and political framework which promotes a new normal - of intercultural integrated societies, open and welcoming to all and rooted in democratic values.
3. CRC believes that the title of the document has given rise to legitimate expectations that it will deal with all aspects of these complex subjects. As this is not the case, this may lead to a real sense of frustration in a number of constituencies. CRC urges that policy on all aspects of this complex policy area be developed.
4. CRC believes that sectarianism is the defining feature of Northern Ireland's political and social landscape and requires a comprehensive and deliberate policy approach. The scale of the current CSI is inadequate to deal with the topic.
5. CRC believes that equality and good relations are intimately linked and must be pursued as common objectives. A properly understood good relations approach to issues of sectarian, political and racial division is a vital element in the requirements of equality.
6. The values stated in the CSI document need to be revised to ensure that there is no ambiguity about the Executive's commitment to sharing and inter-cultural equality.
7. The past continues to throw a long shadow over all attempts at reconciliation. The CSI document contains nothing on causes. The failure to acknowledge our division on this tends to reduce the seriousness with which we approach the topic.
8. CSI should offer a serious possibility to address the legacy of past injustice. There is no reference to victims or ex-combatants in the document. This reduces the value of a document aimed at sharing and integration.
9. Division is an economic issue. To be serious a policy on cohesion, sharing and integration must address safety, equality, trust and economics. This is nowhere reflected in CSI.

## CHAPTER 2

### SHARING OVER SEPARATION: BUILDING A PROGRAMME FOR COHESION, SHARING AND INTEGRATION

#### Introduction

In this chapter CRC will focus on our critique of the consultation document as well as making suggestions for the way forward. Our comments are made in a constructive spirit and CRC looks forward to discussing our recommendations with OFMDFM Ministers and officials in the coming months.

Our society is no longer defined solely by its past conflict, and is sometimes seen as a sign that even the most intractable of political conflicts might be resolved through the political process. At a political level we have rooted peace in shared power, agreed institutions, the principle of consent, equality and human rights and the rule of law. Where we have been successful, these changes have been characterised by a willingness to strive for inclusive agreement, by a commitment to accommodate others and even to difficult compromise, and to a firm commitment to build trust on the basis of inclusion, equality and an end to violence. This has created a huge opportunity to tackle the legacy of division and to create a cohesive, shared and integrated society, open and welcoming to all, resolving conflicts on a purely peaceful basis. Because this draft programme has at its foundation the need to tackle the underlying structures built on hostility, this has the potential to be the most symbolically and historically important consultation since devolution.

#### Vision & Context

The *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document is the first document agreed by local politicians to tackle these issues<sup>28</sup>. It has emerged in the context of years of community effort and an unsurpassed level of international investment. This is the third review of community relations since 2001, and the existing policy was established in 2005. Civil society has contributed strongly to the substance of change during the peace process, and the Executive now has the opportunity to ensure that this policy is properly and robustly shaped to ensure an ongoing interaction with civic society and key stakeholders to ensure the CSI Programme is fit for purpose.

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It is against these efforts that the CSI document must be measured, and CRC believes that policy should build on their achievements rather than step back from them. Because none of these are directly reflected or acknowledged in the CSI framework, the document may be measured against the absence of agreement on policy rather than against the quality of work and thinking that needs to be protected and progressed.

This context perhaps clarifies why, in reflecting on the policy content of the CSI programme, CRC has come to the conclusion that it does not go far enough to address the issues it references. Whilst the rhetoric of sharing, collaboration, equality and rights recurs throughout the document CRC has genuine concerns that the practical commitments will not do justice to the scale and scope of sectarianism and racism.

CRC remains concerned that the vision and its respective goals and identified actions are insufficiently focussed on reconciliation. The current policy, *A Shared Future*, appeared as a policy and strategic framework, whilst the CSI document is only referred to as a programme, raising the concern that this indicates a lack of policy or a drop in policy status. Above all, CSI does not appear to outline a complete programme of action or any commitment to resources. In this context we believe that the current draft programme appears to be a regression from commitments already contained within current policy.

The absence of a formal review of existing policy in the CSI programme is a serious weakness, leaving consultees unsure about the status of work developed over decades and of the direction of policy in *A Shared Future* which saw a significant inter-departmental action plan as the core of new development. The Patten Commission demonstrated the degree to which policing in Northern Ireland was shaped by and to the circumstances of mistrust and conflict. It also outlined the scale of change required for the new circumstances. In this particular case, the urgency and importance of policing reform had the support of political parties, the police themselves, and of committed international supporters. It was also extremely costly. It is clear that this degree of international and financial support is unlikely to be available again. However it is beyond doubt that reconciliation requires change to enable a 'new normal' in critical areas of public policy and delivery, including such difficult areas as public housing and education.

Beyond the toll on lives and communities, the economic costs of conflict are enormous. Desmond Tutu refers to conflict as 'development in reverse'. Areas of endemic and long-term conflict are characterized by deep poverty and disadvantage, the flight of investment and investors, by emigration and by the destruction of infrastructure. In Northern Ireland, the failure to attract private investment or to retain and attract global talent has been compensated for in part by public sector investment. This has left Northern Ireland extremely vulnerable to reductions in public sector support. A serious economic policy must also include a serious strategy to ensure cohesion, sharing and integration.

Any hope of building significant economic production, of attracting talent, of sustaining inward investment, of generating significant tourism, or of tackling poverty depends on putting the violent past definitively behind us. Furthermore, it is the only way to reduce long term dependency on public subvention. Putting that in reverse, cohesion, sharing and integration is an essential element of any meaningful economic policy. The absence of this connection in the document is a serious omission or oversight.

CRC believes that 'special circumstances' do indeed apply to the current political, economic and social reality in Northern Ireland. But additional resources can flow from central funds if and only if they are to be used not to shore up an unsustainably divided and antagonistic structure but to tackle and address the underpinning structures of hostility and discrimination which prevent the emergence of an open society and change the patterns of the past. CSI must play a significant role in the planning process for the next programme for government.

### **Critique of CSI document**

CRC believes that the consultation would be made much stronger and clearer with

- a clear vision statement at the beginning
- a clear definition of the problem
- an overarching aim to identify the solution
- a set of objectives which would realise that aim if achieved
- programmes and projects to implement those objectives concretely
- the structures/mechanisms needed to provide a coherent framework

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- designated actors to take responsibility for getting the work done;
- a clear statement about resources
- arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness, and
- review and revision of the strategy in that light.<sup>29</sup>

## **The Problem**

CSI is not based on a review of cohesion, of existing work to tackle sectarianism and racism or of the state of community relations policy, practice or development. This sets a potentially inaccurate context in which to assess the policy. While acknowledging that challenges exist, it provides little analysis or measure of the scale of the problem. The document fails to describe how the segregated nature of our society had, and continues to have, a lasting impact on how we engage and interact with each other or to assess the barriers this generates for employment, housing, and access to facilities .

Eleven years on from the Belfast Agreement, antagonism and parallel development remain serious obstacles to a normal, open and peaceful society. The majority of public policy still operates within a context which takes separate and parallel communities for granted. Furthermore, direct responsibility for improving community relations, race equality and other cohesion issues cannot be reduced to a small element of one department. It is the view of CRC that the Executive and its Departments must agree to share responsibility for addressing the legacy of the past and building a shared and better future. Section 75(2) clearly imagined the whole of the public sector being responsible, accountable and concerned about good relations.

CRC believes that public policy should be re-framed around a framework of conflict transformation. For too many years public policy has been framed around the containment of communities as a tool of conflict management leading to a pattern of separation, duplication and social distance. This programme should examine how public policy contributes to the stability of the peace process.

Finally, the document does not sufficiently acknowledge the unparalleled scale of international support and community effort for peace in recent years or the pace of progress on the ground. There should be greater acknowledgement and recognition of the work, expertise and successes of existing practice and the efforts of thousands which has often been achieved in difficult and dangerous

situations. The peace process has had investment of time from millions and the payment of billions. The document should commit to the principle that the achievements of the last 20 years is the bedrock of future progress and commit to ensuring that there is no regression from current levels of inter-community activity and partnership.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The present title of the programme – cohesion, sharing and integration- opens up the expectation that the policy will address all aspects of cohesion, including challenges to cohesion and integration based on age, gender, sexuality and disability. However, because most of the policy is taken up with tackling the specific problems of sectarianism and racism, policy on wider cohesion issues will require further elaboration. CRC believes that it is important that this is clarified in the final policy, and clear guidance given on future expectations in relation to all aspect of cohesion.

CRC believes that the aims and objectives of the document should be strengthened. A policy to tackle sectarianism and racism should include a commitment

- to bring the antagonism of the past to an end, by acknowledging its consequences and injustices and undertaking all necessary change to ensure that they cannot be repeated and
- to build a future in which sectarianism and racism is confined to the past, in which all citizens are treated as equals and in which all disputes are resolved peacefully and through purely political means.

### **Programmes and projects**

CRC is pleased that a number of critical issues have been identified as priorities including:

- Addressing the physical and community division at interfaces
- Ensuring and promoting the safety of vulnerable groups
- Tackling the visible manifestations of intolerance and sectarianism
- Addressing hate crime
- Promote equality and tackle disadvantage
- Creating and expanding shared spaces.

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All of these are vital issues. Having said that, it is unclear why these particular priorities have been selected while other key issues, such as economic and social regeneration, community safety, housing, culture and commemoration and education are not similarly prioritised. In a policy for cohesion, sharing and integration all of these are serious challenges.

The commitments remain overly general and lacking in practical detail. The commitment to ensure the safety of vulnerable groups is laudable but still vague. The promise to tackle hate crime is absolutely essential, but the document appears to do little more than restate an assumed commitment to zero tolerance for this kind of crime. The commitment to tackle inequality and disadvantage is crucial but there is incomplete evidence of economic or social analysis of how this might be achieved through this policy area. The commitment to interfaces is uncertain given that it is both an urgent priority and listed as an area for 'long term change'. Finally, CRC has championed serious shared space for many years. However, by suggesting in one part of the document that shared space will be a 'short term' area for progress while tackling flags and emblems and sectional symbolism will only be addressed in the long term, CRC is concerned about the choice of priorities, the absence of detailed policy and the commitment to change.

Throughout the document there are references to policy issues including children and young people, education, further education, housing, re-generation, economy and social economy, parading and public assemblies, shared services and facilities, workplaces, hate crime, race, re-imaging, health, leisure, sport, tourism, rural communities, volunteers, language, community festivals, arts and culture. While the draft programme cannot be criticised for the range of named policy issues few of these are fleshed out in any detail. Without some indicative actions, the programme remains vague and insubstantial rather than comprehensive in these areas. It also fails to inspire confidence that every department and all ministers are committed to a shared set of principles and commitments.

There are a number of unexpected omissions from the document. There is little reference to the consequences of division, violence and discrimination in the past. Policy for victims and survivors of the conflict is not integrated into policy for cohesion, sharing and integration and there is no reference to the implications for those who were actively involved as ex-combatants and ex-prisoners. The document also regrettably fails to acknowledge or examine the role and contribution of women to peace-building. Given the specific 1325 UN

resolution in relation to women and peace-building it seems a significant oversight that the important role of women in conflict transformation has been ignored, an omission which potentially restricts them from any future role under CSI. Churches and trades unions have been similarly omitted, as has the contribution of community development and capacity building and the need for re-examination in the light of peaceful circumstances. There is also surprisingly little reference to the substantial body of cross-border work undertaken over the last 40 years and more.

Furthermore, the division of priorities into short, medium and long does not appear to have been thought through and is profoundly illogical and confused. This makes it difficult to make any significant comment on their capacity to ensure change particularly in the absence of any detail or commitment to specific outcomes or resources.

### **Practical Proposals for Changes in Policy**

Having considered the principles and the context of community relations CRC believes that change will only happen through taking practical steps in real policy areas. With this in mind, and in the light of our own experience, CRC proposes changes in a number of areas. The lists below should be considered as indicative rather than comprehensive and CRC looks forward to positive engagement on policy in years to come.

#### **A. Our violent past**

1. CRC believes that the absence of policy for acknowledging dealing with the past with honesty represents significant problems. Engagement with the future expectations of the victims of violence and an open discussion about how those who were themselves directly engaged in violent conflict are to be fully integrated are important priorities. CRC therefore recommends the inclusion of these groups, both as stakeholders and contributors in the final CSI policy.
2. The concerns of victims and survivors should be at the core of the *Cohesion Sharing and Integration* programme. It is important that victims and survivors have a voice in this process and are included in the strategy and its implementation, and are acknowledged as being an important part in healing the divisions of this society. Dealing with the past is highly contested and it would be useful to learn how Government understands

the complementarity of the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* strategy with the Victims & Survivors Strategy.

3. In our own work with victims and survivors groups, the 6 main areas of need as identified in the recent Hunter report<sup>30</sup> (commissioned by CRC) are as follows:
  - counselling & therapy;
  - befriending, respite and social support;
  - organisational development;
  - education/training/employment and welfare advice;
  - truth, justice and acknowledgement; and
  - transgenerational/young people
4. On the basis of our experience and knowledge, Council believes that policy for CSI and for victims and survivors should be cross-referenced. Our specific understanding of issues to be addressed is included in this document in the footnotes<sup>31</sup>.

## **B. Economics**

1. The current CSI does not connect cohesion, sharing and integration to a successful economy. This contributes to the ongoing sense that policy on sectarianism and racism is only of secondary importance of interest only to a narrow group of self-interested inter-community organisations.
2. In the view of CRC, the opposite is the case. CRC believes that ongoing violence, conflict and social division around these issues is the signature weakness of Northern Ireland. Tackling endemic sectarianism and racism is crucial to any strategy of doing business. Prosperity and economics will falter if we do not act to ensure that sectarianism and racism cease to define where people feel safe to live, work, play, travel to school, meet friends and access public resources. The ultimate aim of a stronger and vibrant economy should be about reducing our dependency on external agencies and improving quality of life for all – ending division, duplication and sectarianism is fundamental to achieving this objective of the Executive.
3. Building a shared society needs to be at the heart of economic regeneration if it is to be successful. If we are serious about building a sustainable economy, there are three interrelated priorities which must all be addressed:
  - attracting people, investment and creativity (economics)
  - building a just society within the rule of law (safety and justice)
  - addressing the legacy of the past and embedding trust, safety and partnership.

4. Failure to address this issue at source leaves us vulnerable to instability and, in a world which depends on attractiveness to capital and labour, makes us unattractive internationally and exposed as the region most dependent on public sector subvention from the UK taxpayer. Thus Mayor Bloomberg's warning that the continued existence of peace walls represented a seriously negative sign to international investors should be taken seriously, particularly if we have the interests of those living in the shadow of the interfaces at heart. Specifically, ongoing sectarianism and racism
  - reduces our attractiveness to foreign direct investment
  - reduces our attractiveness as a place for talented entrepreneurs
  - repels tourists
  - deters highly qualified NI-born young people from returning to Northern Ireland for work
  - undermines the good work done since the peace process
  - generates untold duplication of services
  - increases the resources spent on security
  - leads to a semi-permanent misallocation of resources
  - contributes enormously to the poverty of interface areas
  - reduces growth, increase poverty and destroys a global and open image
  - leaves communities hardest hit by the conflict in a cycle of poverty and violence.
5. Business is good for peace and peace is good for business. Economic policy and good relations policy are interdependent, not alternatives. Good business relationships and strong relationships across society are interdependent, as business will also be a beneficiary of the stability that improved community relations would bring. There is no better way to cement our interdependence than through trade and investment. Where violence is rife or social tensions dominate, there are always better places for businesses to go.
6. Building a sustainable peace cannot be a matter of limited party co-operation or of local action. It will require concerted government action across **ALL** departmental areas, including Justice, Economic Development, Planning, Social Development, Rural Affairs, Education and Culture. Spreading prosperity depends on embedding lasting social stability. In CRC's view, sustainable peace will require years of focussed work by the Assembly and Executive, setting the direction and investing resources for the development of a normal civic society.

7. The principles of peaceful interaction allowing sharing and aimed at embedding trust and reconciliation should be enacted across all government departments and needs to be reflected in the different department budgets.
  - Safe accessibility to employment is a pre-requisite to building any economy and must be addressed. It will require a joined up approach between the executive departments and the wider community.
  - Distribution of economic investment and benefit must be equally felt across all parts of our cities and on an east/west and urban/rural basis.

### **C. Safety**

1. Hate Crime is a significant threat to the lives and safety of a significant portion of our population. This extends beyond sectarian crime, which continues to be under-reported, to racism and crimes against people on the basis of sexual orientation or disability.
2. The document proposes a series of community safety priorities which include eliminating attacks on cultural, sporting and other symbolic property and monuments; ensuring that all responsible agencies continue to provide a high level of community safety delivered within rights based framework and an overarching ethos of mutual respect; building community support networks across community, cultural and minority ethnic groups and building the capacity of the local and minority ethnic communities to support people who have experienced hate crime.
3. The Programme further commits the Executive to a zero tolerance for crimes motivated by prejudice and all forms of hate crime, whilst actively promoting rights and respect; and to ensure and promote the safety of vulnerable groups. CRC strongly welcomes the explicit connection between sectarianism, racism and all forms of hate crime with community safety. CRC is particularly pleased to see the engagement of communities in supporting, encouraging and providing safety. Zero tolerance cannot merely be proclaimed but should be presumed and demonstrated through action<sup>32</sup>.

At present the commitments to end attacks on symbolic premises and pledges on hate crime could be seen as reiterations of existing policy. Further detail on the impact of current hate crime legislation, or what new measures are needed for the future would be helpful. CRC believes that the possibility of peace should allow for the emergence of a new paradigm on safety which seeks to ensure that all citizens are safe in all places and

- at all times. Everyone has the right to live, work, play and socialize in a safe environment. Community safety must encompass everyone regardless of whether they come from the community or not, and regardless of their background, views or orientation.
4. Instead of a model of safety which depends on excluding people from areas, through intimidation, community control or physical barriers, there should be a commitment that all people should be free and safe to live where they can or wish, and that all people should be safe to walk the streets and access services as workers, service users or visitors. Policy must then seek to realise these high level goals in practice. Cities, towns and neighbourhoods must be safe places for everyone and 'shared space' should be a central theme in designing, developing and implementing measures and programmes that can contribute to safe shared space.
  5. The current system whereby people who are intimidated are removed for their safety from their homes should be paralleled by a renewed effort to ensure that justice is served on those who intimidate. This will require new connections between policing and communities as well as the engagement of statutory services. This should be directly connected to community policing strategies and community development plans.
  6. The involvement of local organisations who are involved in tackling hate crime at local level is paramount in any work aimed at promoting better community safety, regeneration and work to reduce tensions and violence or create shared space at interfaces. Likewise, targeting hotspots will require a joined up approach and must include work with community leaders.

#### ***D. Cultural issues***

1. CSI seeks to promote greater understanding of cultural diversity and expressions of cultural identity and aims to progress this work under a range of actions. Within CSI the terms "culture" "identity", "cultural diversity" and "culture and identity" are used somewhat ambiguously. Culture is primarily discussed as a legacy of conflict in a two community model. This is reflected in the treatment of regional and minority languages. The references to minority ethnic diversity is largely limited to the "promotion of respect for newcomers, Travellers and children from the Roma community" (5.6 Department of Education), zero tolerance for hate crime and community support for those who have experienced hate crime; and the development of support networks across community, culture and minority ethnic organisations. In examples of good practice, promoting

- inter-faith dialogue and the role of minority ethnic communities in celebrating culture is identified.
2. From CRC's perspective, culture remains a vital and unresolved area of concern for inter-community relations affecting all communities. Cultural space is reduced to an ongoing and bitter 'culture war' which reduces culture to 'us and them'. A zero-sum game between two monolithic cultures would be a disaster for public policy and quality of life. A two community model of cohesion, sharing and integration is no longer sufficient for a more diverse Northern Ireland which builds on long established faith and minority ethnic communities.
  3. In this context of faith and minority ethnic diversity and the legacy of the conflict important issues include -
    - hate crime and attacks on property, language, commemoration;
    - cultural expression as part of shared space - flags, emblems, parades and protests; and
    - the potential role of arts, culture and sport as critical parts of a policy of participation, culture and change.
  4. The Racial Equality Strategy (RES) is not replaced or superseded by CSI and it is argued the latter provides a framework for the delivery of good relations aspects of the RES. Arguably racial equality and tackling racism is undermined without a commitment in CSI to reconciliation. An approach that places the burden on communities is wholly inadequate to the challenge. It is necessary to take a step back and consider the implications of racism and sectarianism in terms of conflict, identity and new populations in Northern Ireland<sup>33</sup>.
  5. Violence is a developed habit which is an identifiable legacy of the conflict. It "is the so-called 'gang culture', where groups of young men use or threaten to use violence and instil a sense of fear preventing moderation in the community"<sup>34</sup>. In this context fear is the mechanism used to safeguard territory and resources and indeed attempt to regulate what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. A recent report dispels the myth that Protestant communities are more antagonistic than Catholic communities to new populations. It suggests that the monolithic communal identities "have created impervious communities that differentiate people by the extent to which they do not belong" Difficulties experienced by people of minority ethnic background are exacerbated due to the conflict and the legacy presents additional difficulties<sup>35</sup>.

6. The Racial Equality Strategy 2005-2010 contains a robust analysis on the scale of the challenge in addressing racism and racial inequalities. The first action plan committed departments to meagre, small scale initiatives or pre-existing commitments and therefore did not reflect the vision, strategic aims and principles contained within it. Departments and agencies therefore need to revisit the RES to ensure that their commitments under CSI are indeed grounded in the strategy. The recommendations of the STEP Additional Difficulties report (cited) have informed the specific actions identified below. Specific actions include:
- delivering on the commitment for ethnic monitoring by service providers of key service areas;
  - staff training for service providers to address lack of understanding or cultural insensitivity.
  - utilising bi-lingual recruitment because it is efficient and effective in creating pathways to services;
  - utilising schools as key points for integration of children and their parents;
  - developing educational programmes for schools and communities that address xenophobia and racism to address the trans-generational nature of the legacy of the conflict;
  - providing for the participation of both new and old communities in understanding conflict and conflict resolution in a wider and sustainable context;
  - developing a strategic approach to the acquisition and monitoring of language proficiency and the effectiveness of translation services that addresses integration and access to services and equality and human rights of the new populations;
  - strengthening inter-agency engagement in Protestant, Catholic or mixed communities with community level action to deal with incidents as they occur rather than facilitating or pre-empting the exclusion of other identities;
  - protecting members of minority ethnic and faith communities subject to attacks;
  - more effective enforcement and recognition of the conflict related nature of anti-social behaviour; and
  - including ethnicity and identity as cross cutting themes across all CSI and Peace III funding measures.

7. In addition, there are a number of serious absences in CSI:
  - Culture is treated as fixed commodity rather than as a living, evolving organic resource. The potential for a vibrant, safe, welcoming, diverse, forward looking cultural space to contribute to quality of life, attractiveness to creative entrepreneurs and key companies and tourism is not developed.
  - There is no reference to faith diversity (for examples Baha'is, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs).
  - The barriers to integration and expression of faith and minority ethnic groups are not explored.
  - The inter-connection of cultural space with the concept of shared space. How do we resolve the dilemmas of particular cultural expression within a broadly shared framework?
  - The huge opportunity to promote culture, arts and sports as vehicles for integration, participation and the development of young people is undeveloped.
  - The failure to explore, never mind find, a clear basis to resolve issues such as flags and emblems, parading and protests.
8. A cultural diversity policy must have at its heart a commitment to reflect the variety and complexity of cultural life, to raise questions, to create safe and open places for interaction and debate, to create gateways for engagement and to resolve political issues in a way that is consistent with the overarching values of equality, human rights and reconciliation<sup>36</sup>.
9. CRC acknowledges the importance of work within communities and continues to fund some projects and initiatives which provide opportunities for communities and groups to reflect on and address issues of identity within a safe space and to promote many particular contributions to the public realm. The City of Culture 2013 – Derry/Londonderry offers huge opportunities for reflection and learning about how cultural and commemoration is expressed in the context of the overarching values. One of the key actions included is the accommodation of diversity within an inter-cultural norm rather than the current reality where shared festivals are seen as exceptional.
10. Segregation within society impacts on minority ethnic and faith communities who also ask "Is it safe to live here?" This draws attention to the link between sectarianism and racism. CSI affirms the Racial Equality Strategy (RES), however, without reconciliation, it is argued CSI and the RES will not be complementary. The positive contribution by people from minority ethnic backgrounds needs to be acknowledged.

11. The absence of reference to faith diversity belies the progress that has been made in this area. Specific action should include:
  - recognition of how the minority ethnic organisations have developed
  - their inclusion in positions of leadership particularly within the context of mechanisms to support CSI
  - reconciliation must be included within the CSI strategy thus linking it with the Racial Equality Strategy
  - inclusion should be a key principle in the organisation of all community events
  - encouraging greater understanding of faith diversity, including the development of educational materials for schools
  - supporting interfaith dialogue and the structures that sustain it.
12. A zero tolerance approach to hate crime requires that those who are attacked are protected and the criminal justice system and police are more effective in enforcement. The key aim of working to eliminate attacks on cultural and symbolic property needs to include reference to continuing attacks on property belonging to other faith based organisations such as the Indian Community Centre and Belfast Islamic Centre and of symbolic centres such as the Chinese Welfare Association, as well as attempts to prevent the further development by faith and minority ethnic groups. Action should include:
  - effective and developed policies, strategies and action plans to improve protection and enforcement in relation to hate crime and attacks on cultural, faith and symbolic property and monuments and
  - acknowledgement of the vulnerability of property belonging to all faiths and symbolic properties relating to minority ethnic groups.
13. CSI makes separate provision for Ulster Scots and the Irish language as minority and regional languages without seriously attempting to make their promotion less divisive. Within the minority ethnic community and organisations supporting their inclusion and integration, lack of proficiency in English is identified as a significant barrier to integration. Children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds require a background in their parents' first language. Specific actions include:
  - encourage and promote an inclusive approach to Irish and Ulster Scots;
  - tailor English language programmes to reflect the needs of the various minority ethnic communities including addressing illiteracy, level of education, marginal and isolated groups, reflecting income and working hours;

- support for mother tongue Saturday schools; and
  - service delivery at statutory and community level to proactively address the needs of people of different faith and minority ethnic backgrounds in accordance with the principles of equality, human rights and mutual responsibilities.
14. The first decades of the 21st century include 100 and 400 year anniversaries that have had an enduring impact on our concepts of British and Irish identity. This includes the Ulster Covenant and the Easter Proclamation, the foundation of the Republic and Northern Ireland, the First World War, the impact of the Plantation and the early years of the immediate conflict as well as trade union, male and female suffrage movements. Where these are expressed in public space (and with public funds):
- principles underpinning exploration and anniversary activities in the public arena should aim for a plural, interactive and modern approach; and
  - our understanding and practice of models for how commemoration set in broad historical contexts should be fostered in the public as opposed to private space.
15. Cultural displays should occur in the context of civil and political liberties and in accordance with international human rights norms. The explicit right to freedom from sectarian harassment made in the Belfast Agreement (1998) is also relevant.
16. In a democratic society, parades and protests need to be peaceful and based on a respect for the rights of all. Controversies over parades and protests are part of the legacy and all too often act as a proxy measure of cultural equality in society. In addition, new parades and newly contested parades cause disruption where demographic or political balances have shifted, causing new rivalries and power struggles to emerge on the streets. There is no quick fix. We should not be satisfied with the annual containment of potential violence in which contention is normalised. The failure of the recent parades legislation consultation and the action taken to appoint to the Parades Commission indicates that we do not have an agreed basis for their regulation.
17. Flags and emblems impact directly on the plausibility of ideas like shared space, on the future of interfaces and on the possibility of a serious cultural accommodation in a divided society. There is an urgent need for all political parties to identify the difference between the freedom of cultural expression on the one hand and, on the other the permanent marking of

towns, districts and public amenities in a way that suggests that they are partisan possessions rather than part of the public realm. Moreover, community development and/or environmental improvement have shown significant results in the context of both reducing displays of flags, emblems and murals and/or reducing the period over which displays take place, and transforming the context in which the displays are viewed.

18. The "Flags Protocol" has been ineffective in coordinating statutory action and therefore is currently under review. The 2010 QUB Monitoring Report indicates about 30% of flags remain all year round and the number of flags in absolute terms remains relatively constant; and the location (outside public amenities), content and the length of time they are on display are of significance. This affects personal safety and access to public amenities, housing and workplaces. It also negatively impacts on investment and commercial life in town centres. Specific actions include:
- parades and protests - to develop a long term solution - an ongoing conflict transformation and reconciliation action plan developed, delivered and reviewed with the involvement of all key stakeholders at community, district council and central government;
  - flags and emblems - joint protocols developed between the key departments and agencies;
  - detailed protocols need to be developed in each statutory organisation to support staff setting out their role and the basis (and limits) of action;
  - district councils should have a lead role in coordination in the context of community engagement and statutory agency response; and in specific circumstances the Roads (NI) Order 1983 Article 87 in relation to lampposts should be enforced.
19. Against this backdrop we wish to see:
- a serious political attempt to agree the basis of cultural and intercultural equality within human rights for Northern Ireland;
  - policies and programmes designed to renew and reclaim public space and reaffirm that community ownership has the potential to build good relations within and between communities;
  - support given to sports bodies who seek to open up their sports to the participation of all. Much progress has been made in this direction in recent years with very encouraging results. CRC would like to see the sports authorities rewarded with strong political leadership and programmes developed which move beyond symbolic elite events to grassroots development; and

- art galleries and museums placed in context of how our society and communities have changed and, to embrace our growing diversity, create more collections concentrating on the nineteenth and twentieth century's and the present day. Both Museums have vital role as places of interaction and public education. In a divided society this has a particular importance, offering vital opportunities for safe space to engage with evidence, experience, artefacts and stories which may be different from our expectations. There can be few more important places which enable us to make sense of our diversity, our interdependence and all of our cultural traditions and identities.

### ***E. Shared Spaces or Parallel Living***

1. CRC strongly welcomes the inclusion of shared space in the document. However CRC is concerned that there is no formal analysis of the many issues involved in this concept and of the challenges in generating a 'new normality' that all space belongs to all. The document also lacks any clear statement of the preference for sharing over separation. The shared space agenda is not a pious hope, but a determined effort to ensure that all districts and public resources, from houses to health centres, are of good quality and are equally welcoming, accessible and safe for all members of society.
2. For CRC there is no such thing as separate and equal. Separate means by definition that I cannot access **your** resources and vice versa. CRC does not believe that equal resources can be provided on a segregated basis. The cost both financially and socially of the duplication of services and facilities is unsustainable. In a context where resources are short, the result will be an appalling fight between poor communities to retain meagre resources, where the only available equality will be an equality of misery and poverty.
3. In the context of division and hostility, shared space becomes impossible. Current examples include the failure to develop the Crumlin Road Gaol/Girdwood site in Belfast; the fact that town centres like Lurgan are divided with assets not accessible to many as a result of fear; disputes about parades which remain unresolved after many years, and the fact that many assets from libraries to leisure centres to health centres and childcare facilities are seen as the preserve of one community. It proved impossible to build a new Chinese Welfare Centre on the Donegall Pass or to open up a new roundabout at Broadway without it becoming another interface.

4. CRC believes that
  - shared spaces must be useful, well designed, thoughtfully located and managed;
  - shared space must be developed within a framework of economic and social relevance to town and city centres, access and arterial routes, retail centres, public services and housing estates;
  - a systematic commitment is required to ensure that all future development maximises the openness of all resources, commits to shared public realm and integrates the concept of sharing into the planning and management of assets; and
  - progress will require serious inter-departmental working. No commitment to this idea in practice will materialise without significant resources, determination and effort and a willingness to manage the difficulties.
5. The CSI programme commits the Executive to develop shared and safe spaces for working, shopping, socialising and playing, to create shared accessible and welcoming facilities which provide high quality public services; and safety for individuals and groups who wish to express and celebrate their identity or culture peacefully. Achieving this involves a number of commitments from departments such as the Department for Social Development (DSD) i.e. ensuring *city and town centre master-planning programmes* promote shared spaces and that physical development and public realm projects work to remove physical evidence of the conflict such as redundant security measures. Tasks are also identified for the Department of Regional Development (DRD) which might result in the revised *Regional Development Strategy (RDS)* setting out guidance on strengthening community cohesion, fostering a stronger community spirit and the importance of city and town centres as shared spaces. There is also a series of commitments to tackling the visible manifestations of racism, sectarianism intolerance and other forms of prejudice, and proposals that the displays of flags and emblems, graffiti or murals, parades or public assemblies or festivals take place in an environment which respects individual and community rights.
6. The role of the workplace has been paramount in change in Northern Ireland. It is currently one of the few genuinely shared spaces where people mix as a matter of routine, and business and the trade unions are to be congratulated for their efforts. Sometimes this has been won through strict neutrality. CRC would like to see more emphasis on the opportunities

which the workplace presents for more tolerant and diverse approaches, although no change will be possible if these words become code for intimidation or threat.

7. The section in the document which focuses primarily on the role of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) and how it works to create shared workplaces requires more explanation and clarity.
8. There is insufficient recognition of the central role of trade unions have played in combating harassment, especially given that a CRC core funded group, Trademark, is highlighted as a model of good practice. There are no actions identified with this section and again no depiction of the barriers or work taking place to challenge barriers to shared workplaces.

### ***F. Education & Young People***

1. Young people are a vital part of the future. They are also a vital part of the present. CRC is aware of the challenges facing young people in Northern Ireland on a daily basis. Attacks on people for wearing 'the wrong' uniform are recurrent; buses take longer routes than required to avoid potential flashpoints; arrangements are made for 'riots' through social networking sites; parks, swimming pools, cinemas, shopping centres and restaurants are 'out of bounds' for kids in towns across the whole region. This is particularly true at night and at certain times of the year.
2. Surveys and academic research consistently suggest that there is considerable support for increasing the opportunities for sharing within the education system<sup>37</sup>. These preferences reveal the aspiration of many parents to educate their children in a mixed religious, integrated and shared environment, an ambition that is not currently being met.
3. In relation to domestic law the education orders, particularly The Education Reform(Northern Ireland) Order 1989 **64**.—(1) state that: *It shall be the duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.*

International law also comments strongly on the rights of children and young people. Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that *States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.*

4. CRC believes that how our children are educated, what they are taught and who is considered 'one of us', are important aspects at the heart of all serious long term policy for a change sectarianism and racism. CRC agrees with Sir George Bain's assessment that '*the education of children and young people in schools is one of the most important tasks of any society – a task that is about much more than obtaining academic qualifications*'. If education plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and relationship building, and in promoting the skills that help challenge negative views such as hate, bigotry and prejudice then the references to education throughout the CSI consultation document are disappointing.

The draft programme refers to the role of the integrated sector and other sectors in promoting greater understanding of shared values. The current *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED)* policy out for consultation by the Department of Education has a focus on learning the values of mutual trust and respect in the classroom and, despite a commitment to promote engagement and interaction through the formal educational structures, much of this will depend on resources. The decision in May 2010 by the Department of Education to eliminate serious public support for inter-community schools and youth work does not bode well. CRC remains convinced that this failure to invest in a society which has free and open engagement between all our young people is a serious mistake with long term consequences.

5. The CSI programme does not present any analysis on the impact of existing levels of separation in education. There is no reference of the need to reduce surplus places and the creative opportunities this might give for real sharing while reducing the potential diseconomies of duplication. The opportunities provided by the Bain report are not fully exploited. A recent report by Oxford Economics for the Integrated Education Fund provided additional evidence that savings could be made through a more closely aligned system<sup>38</sup>. Much of good practice in partnership and collaboration is driven locally by individual schools and school principals, with the financial support from external bodies. There is no indication that the models that have delivered positive outcomes are to be mainstreamed into public policy; rather the implementation of cuts to the community relations budget outside of the current CSR sets the scene for the role of education in peace-building.

6. Neither CSI nor CRED fully acknowledge the huge amount of work being undertaken by schools, youth organisations and communities with young people, and both fail to comment on the leadership given by many young people themselves in tackling segregation and separation. Given the number of schemes and programmes delivered through schools and the youth sector, policy makers should review how the different levels of formal and informal education and personal development can work jointly to promote mutual trust, equality and reconciliation.
7. CSI does not examine the role of early years provision and the role of teacher training in a post-conflict society. There are currently public consultation exercises on an Early Years Strategy (DE) and Teacher Training in a Climate of Change (DE & DEL) and it is particularly frustrating that neither within single departments, nor across departments, is there much evidence of cross-fertilisation of ideas and all have failed to make the crucial links.
8. CRC believes that a systematic approach is required to support the embedding and mainstreaming of good relations throughout schools' policies, practices, procedures and ethos. To achieve this key strategic objective, the various delivery structures that encourage greater sharing and collaboration across and between communities should be supported and promoted better. Sharing cannot be seen as a single, centrally dictated model, but must be a core principle which can be applied in different contexts with different results. The presumption that we have parallel and polarised systems should be replaced with a common commitment to the welfare of young people. Core religious and cultural values and differences can be protected without fostering a sense of eternal polarisation or antagonism through practical and repeated models of real co-operation, through regular and 'normal' shared resources, and through an openness by schools and communities to experiment together in the structuring and sharing of schools. Recent recommendations developed through the joint challenge paper in partnership between the Equality Commission and CRC on behalf of the Good Relations Forum provide real opportunities to address the persistent inequalities of academic attainment and performance, and can also make a substantial contribution to improved social and community cohesion, both within and between the diverse social mix of our society. They are included in the footnotes to this document.<sup>39</sup>

### **G. Policy for young people**

1. Young people's experiences are crucial to the possibility of change in this and every society. Likewise education is the crucial vehicle through which the beliefs, attitudes and norms of one generation are passed on to the next. While family, community and informal education play the crucial role in any child's life, formal education is a vital source of information and learning.  
Unfortunately, throughout the CSI document, we get the impression that young people are 'a problem' for cohesion, sharing and integration rather than the primary hope for the future. In several cases the text appears to define young people as a problem to be curtailed portraying them as separate from the community i.e. "the relationship between young people and the community". In another section, the document maintains that some young people have made flawed judgements that have resulted in the "engagement in civil disturbances, antisocial behaviour or interface violence."
2. There is no doubt that the behaviour of some young people at interfaces is indeed a serious issue. However, there can also be little doubt that young people in these areas are following well-worn paths, imitating behaviour which in previous generations was regarded in some quarters as heroic. Numerous studies into the inter-generational impact of conflict on children and young people<sup>40</sup> have shown that this issue will only be resolved with a new approach to youth intervention and cultural work. The Executive has a clear responsibility to address the structural and political issues that impact on the ability of generations of young people to live in a shared and peaceful society. This policy must make effective practical actions possible.
3. Investments should also be made in young people living in geographies of violence and in finding ways of offering young people sustainable ways out of violence. This includes economic youth development and alternative pathways to living. The narratives of young people involved in violence and sectarianism also need to be heard and understood as part of the CSI programme.

4. Desmond Bell and Sarah Nelson once highlighted that young people in Northern Ireland, particularly in working class areas, are seen to play an active and increasingly central role in the preservation of 'traditions' and thus have become the 'guardians of tradition.' Normalised sectarianism is intergenerational and young people are often exposed because they act out the messages rather than merely repeat them verbally. Young people's attitudes and behaviour can therefore only be usefully tackled as a specific intervention within a broader commitment to cohesion, sharing and intervention, also requiring multi-agency intervention.
5. Mc Evoy-Levy<sup>41</sup> makes it clear that in the longer term, the endurance of peace agreements depends on whether the next generations accept or reject them, how they are socialized during the peace process, their perceptions of what the peace process has achieved and their tangible experiences of a better life. Success will lie in whether they remain objects of elite rhetoric and policy, or whether they become participants in the transition process and whether peace brings tangible benefits.
6. Policy makers should provide opportunities for genuine dialogue to occur between children, young people and adults in power. This includes facilitating young people to set their own agenda and seek to bring about change: genuinely involving young people in policy making and enabling them to define solutions to issues impacting on them. Young people's role in shaping policy is crucial to the inclusion of young people in society and yet they are too often passive recipients of policy. Government and education policy should put the views of young people central to such a process.
7. Magill, Smith and Hamber (2009) report that young people want an answer to the critical questions: why did all the Troubles start? Why it is still going on? And why couldn't it have been prevented?<sup>42</sup> The Report of the Consultative Group of the Past has highlighted the need for much more debate on dealing with the past in Northern Ireland. *"Finding an honest way to examine the conflict is important if we are to spare the next generation from repeating the same mistakes we made"*<sup>43</sup>. CSI must address this crucial issue and not leave this to be addressed in isolation at the community level or education level. CSI could provide the honesty, leadership and support to deal with the past effectively and honestly. Risks should not be left with the education sector to address such complexities in isolation. The 'focus on education' must involve all stakeholders on this substantial dialogue at all levels.

8. Research shows that a large percentage of young people learn about the past from their parents. Partnerships with parents are under-developed and there is much to learn from them about the legacy issues they deal with on a family basis.
9. Although the document acknowledges the need to progress beyond short-term year-on-year approaches and places a particular emphasis on engaging young people and the community in long term strategies to reduce prejudice promote rights and responsibilities and build a culture of mutual respect, there is nothing in the CSI document which moves beyond the rhetorical in this area.<sup>44</sup> CRC believes that there is broad community consensus that this should be a priority and calls for an urgent review of youth strategy with a commitment to find resources.
10. In contrast to the Department of Education's approach in 2010, CRC believes that inter-community engagement should be mainstreamed as 'normal' within youth work. There is a need to develop a serious youth strategy which deals with the various needs of young people as they are, rather than the current provider-led models which leave too many young people without support. After so many years, CRC is concerned that the verbal commitments to a youth intervention programme are not backed by any plan of action or by any promise of resources.
11. Progress will depend on moving from treating young people as 'a problem', to encouraging an approach which also engages young people in learning, enhancing their employability, encouraging active citizenship and developing an awareness of young people's rights and responsibilities within the community. This needs to be tied into a properly articulated early years and parent support strategy.
12. Although CRC is aware are numerous examples of good work carried out with young people, there is scant recognition given to the role of youth work in the CSI document – both formal and detached. This has been a theme of community relations work for many years. CRC therefore recommends a revision of the programme that seriously considers the learning from best practice at community, voluntary and statutory level.
13. Intercommunity youth violence must address the specific needs of "flashpoint" times in the calendar and in specific areas in relation to sectarian concerns both through targeted intervention and within a reviewed strategic approach to youth work. Opportunities to develop pilot programmes encouraging normalised inter-community and inter-cultural interaction should be identified, developed and delivered to young people

who are out of school or who are unemployed. Special attention should be paid to the role of young people in confrontation and disputes, and at sensitive areas through programmes developed on a year round basis rather than merely through repeated emergency or seasonal interventions.

14. There is very little inter-relationship between the indications of a youth strategy in CSI and the proposals brought forward by the Department of Education under their Community Relations, Education and Diversity (CRED) programme. CRC believes that a coherent strategy for young people should be developed, including a formal commitment to inter-community and inter-cultural engagement. All of this should be fully reflected in the Priorities for Youth being developed by the Department.

## ***H. Housing***

1. Housing is a critical matter for CRC, impacting immediately on the issues of safety and freedom of movement, on where people feel safe to live, work and play. For CRC, equality in housing provision is of critical importance. Issues of segregation must be tackled while also protecting the fundamental principle of equal access to affordable housing on the basis of need. At the same time, ongoing territorialisation of housing in Northern Ireland touches on profound issues of territorial control, inequality of access to vacant properties, the myth of choice, freedom of movement and intimidation. In our view, none of these issues can be ignored any longer. CRC believes that the ongoing distortion of equality and choice through fear must be tackled in such a way as to guarantee genuine equality of access into the future<sup>45</sup>.
2. The CSI programme contains a number of important DSD commitments to develop shared housing including actions such as introducing the screening of each new social housing scheme for its shared potential; supporting a three year pilot programme aimed at encouraging and supporting 30 shared neighbourhoods within existing estates across NI, continuing to promote a mixed-tenure approach (social housing), and examining the process of Social Housing allocation to explore how best to accommodate the aspirations of the majority of the population who wish to live in mixed-religion neighbourhoods. CRC is strongly supportive of all of these measures. While CRC is aware that DSD and its agencies play a critical role, they will require support and co-operation from planners, builders, landlords, politicians, communities and economic developers.

3. CRC is concerned by the lack of any formal analysis of the scale of the challenge to be faced. While each of the specific proposed changes are welcome and overdue, they are insufficiently ambitious for the task of ensuring equal and safe housing on the basis of open access by all to safe housing throughout the north. Equality in housing provision is of critical importance. CRC believes that the allocation of housing and the pattern of living together must also be addressed to end effective segregation in public housing and the ongoing distortion of free choice through fear.
4. Housing should be addressed in a systematic way, and a report should consider issues such as planning, community safety and community development. An effective housing system in 2020 should include an objective to reduce segregation or increase the levels of shared living within this timeframe.
5. Equality and good relations in housing can only be delivered through the development of an agreed plan of action and an acceptable timeframe. Intimidation and fear prevent and reduce housing choices. They also create an unequal and unfair reaction of the relocation of the victims of intimidation and discrimination. The critical questions of equality of access and cohesion must be addressed together particularly in relation to housing and equal opportunity to access housing.
6. The reduction in housing duplication will contribute to efficiency savings in the current budgetary climate. It continues to be the case that there are vacant houses available but in areas that many would feel unsafe.
7. Inter-agency/community initiatives must be developed throughout our society. These have worked in areas and has revitalised public housing, by addressing sectarianism and racism as well as other social problems i.e. dereliction, empty houses, and anti-social behaviour. Springfarm is an example of what can be achieved via inter-agency work alongside the commitment and leadership of the local community. It now has a waiting list for housing.
8. Communities working hard to address barriers and to enable change and progress must be supported and mentored. Such progress results in a softening of boundaries that consequently enables more choice and opportunities for housing selection.
9. It is crucial that design encourages sharing rather than division, for example, designing out opportunities for the erection of paramilitary symbols etc

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10. Residential spaces require:
  - high quality facilities which attract people;
  - open and safe design;
  - thought out location and access; and
  - serious ongoing management of sites and facilities, particularly in areas which are contested and require proactive intervention to ensure safety, openness and equality.
11. There is a need to protect and extend existing mixed/open housing areas.
12. There is a need to continue to support, develop and incentivise:
  - pilot schemes on integrated housing;
  - mixed home ownership to promote less divided territory; and
  - new build shared housing projects in both the public and private sector.
13. It is necessary to explore options for allocation and to investigate short-term approaches that can measure the ability to meet objective need whilst also enabling more choice in housing provision. Initiatives should also be embedded to increase public safety for all in public housing.
14. Design-led crime reducing approaches in the planning and construction of housing can work to make new builds secure from the start or to make existing dwellings more safe with intelligent refurbishment. 'Design Out Crime' initiatives in housing planning can be effective preventers of capacity for anti-social behaviour.
15. Because these issues are so hugely complex and supremely important, CRC believes that they can only be tackled via a high level review of housing provision charged with coming up with proposals which will ensure safe, shared and equal access to housing in an agreed period of time, a project not unlike the scale, scope and ambition of the Patten Commission on Policing applied to housing. Currently the Department of Social Development is reviewing the future role of the Housing Executive. It is important that these elements are at the heart of that review.

### ***I. Policy for Interface Communities***

1. Cities and towns are divided by the physical barriers which were once seen as short term protection for embattled communities but have now become part of the permanent structural landscape. This is especially true in the case of Belfast. These structures serve to remind us that the hostility, fear and anger of the past remain alive and continue to threaten the peace of people and communities on either side of the barrier. The barriers separate

communities in which the fear remains that, without the barrier, lives will be put at risk.

2. Tackling poverty in Northern Ireland is directly connected to creating a new culture of freedom from fear. One of the legacies of conflict is that many of the areas most traumatized and shaped by conflict are also among the poorest<sup>46</sup>. Poverty and violence have combined to leave many areas battling with multiple deprivations, creating a complex nexus of multiple disadvantage.
3. CRC is very pleased to see that CSI commits to tackling the problems of interfaces by proposing to 'urgently address the physical and community division created by interfaces with the support of communities'. Under this area the programme promises to execute an early and strategic intervention to tackle anti-social behaviour and tensions around interfaces with the objective of creating secure and safe communities which may facilitate the removal of physical barriers.
4. However, CRC is concerned that the document promotes an overly simple idea of community consent without an equal emphasis on the principle that it is a government obligation to provide safety that does not depend on massive physical barriers which generate poverty. CRC is strongly of the view that it is a government obligation to lead efforts to find alternatives to physical barriers to secure safety and that this will require a pro-active approach. CRC believes that a new paradigm of community safety be developed which commits the system to real engagement and innovation on this front.
5. CRC is committed to tackling the reality of interface division and poverty<sup>47</sup>. Over many years it has invested heavily in people, organisations and programmes to alleviate violence and to create advocacy for communities on the interfaces. CRC is therefore pleased that the document recognises that isolated piecemeal approaches will not be effective, and how closely the work of community safety and regeneration is tied to interfaces although CRC is concerned that the document does not sufficiently acknowledge the work that is currently taking place<sup>48</sup>. There are many pilots and programmes and it is time for the local learning to make its way into strategic policy development and implementation with a holistic approach inter-departmentally. Utilising the knowledge and expertise currently in place will be crucial for any long-term intervention.
6. Most starkly of all, there must be a serious attempt to regenerate the interfaces and reintegrate these communities on the frontline of conflict

and violence into the mainstream of civic life<sup>49</sup>. This is not a simple question of 'taking down the walls', but of a serious effort to build up the partnership and trust and create real regeneration.

7. Even at this early stage, it is clear that this strategy will have a number of key elements:
  - The issue of interfaces at a strategic level, which will ensure they are given due regard when developing local action plans. What is required is an inter-Departmental approach, which ties changes in communities to changes in regeneration and investment, which builds on the desires and knowledge of local communities themselves and which ties the interfaces into the regeneration of our cities and region.
  - Regeneration offers huge opportunities for social inclusion and cohesion, both at inter and intra community level. CRC believes that the success of regeneration projects requires a number of key aims:
    - The generation of social, economic and environmental benefits should be pursued together in a coherent and coordinated fashion.
    - Benefits for local communities, the wider city and region and visitors should be ensured by connecting previously marginalised areas into the local economy and society. This will generate a 'vibrant, inclusive and diverse environment' in communities which continue to struggle with poverty, fear and separation.
    - Best practice in community safety from elsewhere should be utilised. 'Tension' monitoring is an important tool to measure potential or growing problems in a locality. It should be examined how this could be implemented at a cross-agency level. Also vital is the interaction between communities and policing and community safety partnerships are central to the development of safe, open and shared spaces.
    - Community relations and good relations should be mainstreamed into the management of shared space programmes and central to intervention and diversionary programmes. This would create committed partnership rather than dialogue as the prime model of interface management and could create programmes which allow people both to explore both intra and inter community violence and the damage it causes AND to devise shared practical outcomes.

## ***J. Flags***

1. Flags and emblems are a particularly emotive area for building a shared future. They impact directly on the plausibility of ideas like shared space, on the future of interfaces and on the possibility of a serious cultural accommodation in a divided society. There is an urgent need for politicians of all parties to identify the difference between the freedom of cultural expression and the permanent marking of towns, districts and public amenities in a way that suggests that they are partisan possessions rather than part of the public realm<sup>50</sup>.
2. The flags protocol is widely regarded as ineffective. It is weak because of the absence of any political consensus on how to handle this issue. As a result, public authorities have been particularly slow to develop any systematic response to these issues. No matter how difficult, it is a political obligation on leaders seeking to make changes from division to a shared and better future to tackle these issues along with other cultural matters. The alternative is that the ongoing 'culture wars' undermine the credibility of political commitment to end division.
3. CRC recognises a number of particularly important matters:
  - Many of these cultural expressions are present all year round and thus also act as territorial markers. This impacts directly on issues of safety and equal access to public amenities, housing and workplaces.
  - There is a relationship, either perceived or actual, between paramilitary groups and some of these displays. Even where intimidation is identified, there can be problems with identifying which agencies have responsibility for dealing with such practices. The failure of the state to regulate this issue contributes to the ongoing appearance of the weakness of the rule of law.
  - Clearly some cultural practices are part of local community 'traditions' and are to a degree popular. However, there is survey and anecdotal evidence that people also feel intimidated by many displays. There is a need for formal regulation of this balance.
  - Inappropriate displays of flags and emblems can lead to economic damage. Particular attention needs to be paid to making town centres safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.<sup>51</sup>
4. As part of any CSI programme, new agreements must be reached on key areas of contention. This is overwhelmingly a matter for political leadership. Currently the normalised refusal to engage on this contentious matter is

retained in CSI. Despite the commitment to review the flags protocol, there is no detail on current monitoring or if things have improved under the current protocol. The absence of action and implementation plan creates a situation in which the reviewing and updating of the protocol could be a long process. Given the role of the flags protocol in the creation of share spaces it does not bode well for the short, medium and long-term objectives of the policy.

### ***K. Community Development***

1. Through the years of violence, some of the most important inter-community work was kept alive through community organisation and community development. Indeed without community organisation it is difficult to know how communities would have been sustained. The same pattern was repeated during the peace process. The PEACE programmes invested heavily in community life across Northern Ireland and the border region while politics remains polarised or unable to agree on institutions. There are now dense networks of inter-community projects and cross-border initiatives. Inter-church organisations were often pioneers in reconciliation, women's organisations took risks developing new links, interfaces saw important community-led initiatives and rural communities were held together and challenged by new community initiatives.
2. Often community organisations were to the fore in pioneering partnerships, new relationships with statutory bodies and, above all, spreading participation in peacebuilding. This legacy needs to be built on and expanded. Community development organisations often made the important connection between peace-building and social inclusion which was recognised across the peace programmes.
3. In recent years the many more community organisations have come to the fore. Groups founded by providing services to victims and survivors and ex-prisoners and ex-combatants made a unique contribution to addressing the legacy of the past. Minority ethnic organisations and groups coming from often hidden constituencies and hidden voices have made an important contribution to ensuring that the future is built on a plural rather than a bi-polar basis.
4. The CSI document does not comment on community organisations or their future. CRC believes that time is right for new partnerships in which the learning in some community settings is transferred to the public and private sectors. For too long community organisations have ploughed a lonely furrow. It is time for recognition and engagement.

5. At the same time, it is time to change the paradigm of parallel development. Real community requires open and transparent relationships locally, connections and partnership with neighbours and allies and the building of close and practical links with statutory organisations and elected representatives. Yet community development has too often evolved in Northern Ireland into parallel self-organised 'community organisations' which generally seek to represent community activity from within the framework of parallel community identity. As a result, communities may become competitive, focused on protecting control over local assets rather than driving a system-wide agenda about the development of people and possibilities. A review of community development would protect the huge quantity of good practice but set a new context for public support and for new partnerships and priorities.
6. As peace becomes established, it is vital that community development takes this unique opportunity to return to its purposes, to ensure the participation of the poorest and most vulnerable in decision making, to ensure a quality of life in every neighbourhood and to create access to key tools such as education, health and employment.
7. The CSI document says little about community development, or about the important need to create shared resources, strong partnerships and networks to prevent deprived areas becoming more marginalised. Vulnerable people are trapped behind walls and barriers which were put there to defend them but have now become accepted boundaries of 'us and them'. CSI offers a real way to review the principles and organisation of community development, to emphasise its first principles of participation and inclusion, and to move away from the necessity of territorial organisation which has limited access to assets and stunted the creativity and opportunity of the people living in some of our poorest districts.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN: WHAT WORKS FOR COHESION, SHARING AND INTEGRATION**

#### **Introduction**

The ultimate test of the programme for *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* is 'will it work?' A meaningful answer depends on answering at least two further questions:

- What are we going to do? - Is there a comprehensive policy framework backed by real resources and energy?
- How are we going to make it happen? - Do we have the necessary leadership, development and delivery structures to drive change and the measurements to demonstrate that it is working?

It must be a basic assumption that the structures which emerge must be 'fit for the purpose for which they are designed'. Confusingly, the CSI documents offers four 'delivery options' in chapter 11 alongside an apparently settled design in chapter 10.

#### **Ministerial Leadership**

CRC believes that the dedication of political leadership to reconciliation, to putting an end to sectarianism and racism and to eliminating division, discrimination and violence is the core political achievement of the peace process. Since the Belfast Agreement of 1998, there has been steady popular support for shared government, finally achieved by devolution in 1999 and 2007. Every other important goal, including the commitment to building prosperity and a secure economy, must be understood as contributions to the ultimate goal of creating a shared society where everyone can live in freedom, equality and security.

For CRC, therefore, one of the most important and encouraging elements of the CSI document is the commitment to direct ministerial leadership. This has already been shown on numerous occasions, in difficult times following acts of violence or in many symbolic gestures of enormous resonance. What is important now is that all the parties in the executive wholeheartedly embrace the goals of cohesion sharing and integration in practice.

An unresolved ambiguity in the CSI document is whether it is a document binding only the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) with its relatively small community-focussed budgets or a broad Executive policy, binding all Ministers into shared commitments and specific actions. While there are examples in the documents of actions by the Department of Social Development (DSD) and the Department of Justice (DoJ), the proposed ministerial structure appears to be led by the two Junior Ministers in OFMDFM. CRC believes that this ambiguity should be resolved by placing responsibility for CSI with the Executive as a whole, led by the First and Deputy First Minister, with every Minister energetically seeking to ensure that all policy is consistently aimed at securing real reconciliation. This would ensure that each Minister reports on progress in relation to the actions which fall to their Departments, with overall accountability being taken by the First and Deputy First Ministers.

### **Inter-Departmental Co-ordination**

The importance of inter-departmental co-operation can only be resolved through political commitment and Executive agreement. What is clear however, is that no serious issue in cohesion, sharing and integration can be tackled by one Department alone working in a silo. For example:

- Significant change in the pattern of housing will require changes in safety, policing, transport, education and the location of public services.
- Shared space will require actions by the Departments of Social Development, Regional Development, Culture, Education, Justice and by local government.
- There will be no change on the interfaces if there are not changes in planning, regeneration, transport, employment and education.
- Tackling the past will involve actions for health, employment, community relations, justice and education.
- Race equality is clearly a matter of serious inter-departmental action.

Every cohesion and sharing issue will need to be tackled in this way. The CSI document does not yet comment on the complex practical implications of a policy requiring this degree of co-ordination. However, failure to achieve inter-departmental co-ordination will result in much reduced credibility and effectiveness in this commitment.

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Current policy introduced the notion of a Triennial Action Plan in which it was intended that the actions of Departments would be identified and co-ordinated against agreed outcomes. In practice Departments have failed to deliver any action plans since 2007. The current system of Public Service Agreements (PSAs) could potentially achieve the same result, but it is important that the effectiveness of these proposals is tested against the overarching obligations of reconciliation.

CRC believes that it is important that the final policy

- ensures that the principles of CSI are agreed by all the parties in the Executive,
- identifies specific Departmental Actions including Public Service Agreements (PSA), and
- ensures mechanisms for reporting and monitoring.

Currently, the time lines in the document are vague. The section identifying short, medium and long term actions makes little practical sense and the absence of any action plan or implementation timeframe is a serious fault. Added to this there is no detail on outcomes, monitoring and measurement, but rather it refers to the current good relations indicators as tools for measuring progress.

### **Peace as a change for everyone**

The CSI document makes clear that we should expect changes for both people and places. Ultimately this will also depend on changes *by* people *in* places. The changes towards a shared and better future which have taken place over the last two decades have always depended on widespread civic leadership, participation and support. Investments in peace by the EU PEACE programme, the International Fund for Ireland, and trust funds have surpassed all previous support for peace in any peace process anywhere in the world. Until devolution the political element of the process was the most vulnerable aspect of peacebuilding. The PEACE II programme was conceived on the basis that political co-operation was secure yet it was enacted in a context of profound political insecurity. Momentum for agreement was sometimes sustained in the interim by civic action, international support and leadership in communities and public institutions. None of this effort is fully acknowledged in the document.

The CSI document does not contain a formal review of current delivery mechanisms. This makes any assessment of the proposals difficult, as no evidential base for change is provided. Currently the functions which CRC undertakes as a regional body are:

- assisting Government in the development of its plan and actions for good relations;
- delivering on actions falling to it as a result of those plans;
- promoting, in partnership with ECNI, good relations actions in the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors, youth sector, church and other faith-based sectors within their respective areas of responsibility;
- providing training and development, support, advice, guidance and a source of specialist expertise to district councils in the development of their good relations plans;
- providing a challenge function to district councils on their good relations plans;
- working in partnership with departments to promote cultural diversity;
- acting as main funding source for voluntary and community organisations to provide innovative community and race relations programmes;
- promoting high risk action e.g., developing and supporting interventions at interfaces and other 'at risk' areas;
- developing and producing good practice advice;
- commissioning and undertaking research;
- preparing a three-year assessment on the 'health' of community relations in Northern Ireland which will form part of the Government's main triennial report which the Assembly will be invited to consider, debate and report; and
- ensuring that best practice in addressing division and the problems of diversity in Northern Ireland is of international standards, and encourage the flow of ideas and practice on North-South, East-West, European and international levels.

If reconciliation is a serious goal, CRC believes that all of these functions continue to be vital and continue to require a robust and licensed independent body to co-ordinate them.

In contrast to this clear outline of tasks, the CSI document merely asserts that the current landscape of delivery is 'complex' and conveys the impression that tasks are undertaken by a bewildering variety of equally represented groups and organisations without clear roles and responsibilities. This is not only misleading but totally inaccurate, diluting CRC's stated lead role as the regional delivery body for community relations policy.

For CRC, the elimination of a coherent and independent regional civic institution committed to a shared and better future would be a major retrograde step for a variety of important reasons:

- The particular nature of political institutions here leaves little room for designated opposition or holding government to account. Mandated independent institutions, with a task of challenge and engagement on agreed themes are an important and available mechanism to ensure that difficult conversations take place and are not suppressed under the weight of political interest.
- The issue of reconciliation in Ireland is acutely and particularly vulnerable to short term political interest, and we should not subordinate this vital overarching goal to short-term party political interests. Policy and decision making will always remain with government. But it is in the interests of all that this is formed in the context of a commitment to take decisions having considered the implications across civil society for an inclusive and interdependent future.
- The move from embedded division to secure reconciliation here cannot be a simple question of top-down central direction based entirely on political knowledge and interest but of learning to do what we have never been able to do. Learning from business is that in such circumstances, the critical tool is a network for open learning, ensuring that knowledge is gleaned from as wide a variety of sources as possible, including the most marginal communities, key institutions and plural political perspectives with the central structures acting to bring coherence and insight allowing for effective policy. A regional body must be mandated by the Executive to develop practice, enhance and develop learning and research and offer advice based on this experience.

The existence of CRC has been acknowledged as a significant innovation in international peacebuilding. The combination of civic independence with a public function represents a unique and delicate balance which remains critical. Above all the focus on practical development work, advocacy around key values, learning in a context of uncertainty and advice to the whole system- public bodies, community and voluntary groups, public policy consultation, local government and central government- has created a unique network of expertise which cannot be reproduced through a tendering of grants to NGOs or by civil service activity.

The reduction of the functions of the civic institution in public policy to 'funding and advice to government' is short-sighted and certainly insufficient for what this society needs. The distribution of reduced budgets through tenders, or the elimination of an independent voice, would represent a significant loss in a mandatory coalition government.

CRC is disappointed by the lack of formal analysis of these factors in the CSI document.

**Option 1** maintains that all tasks can be carried out by central government. Unless the list of tasks currently understood as the functions of a regional body is dismissed, CRC does not believe this to be possible.

**Option 2** suggests that the funding function can be tendered out. This may be possible in the context of an arrangement to maintain the other core functions of a regional body. Simply dividing current grant aid into a series of tenders will be neither effective nor efficient.

**While options 3A and 3B** mention CRC directly, the body described appears to be very different from the creative, independent critical friend carrying the confidence of political leadership which the tasks require.

Without further clarification and more detailed information, CRC is currently unable to recommend any of the options under CSI, finding them all to be retrograde and regressive.

By separating the members of the advisory panel from any responsibility for action or access to resources for learning and advocacy there is a risk that political leadership may be mistaken for political control of all independent voice.

CRC's concerns about the models offered for consultation should not be mistaken for an unwillingness of CRC to engage in reform and renewal. Indeed CRC strongly believes that this is the necessary opportunity for that debate to take place. The questions which CRC believe need to be addressed are:

- How does CRC ensure that it is broadly representative of the entire community? Currently the board is recruited through regular open public appointment processes regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. For a number of years OFMDFM has not taken up the existing option of directly recruiting up to one third of the board's

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membership. CRC would wish to see parties and social organizations encourage a wide application to CRC's board.

- The full scope of this policy created by the use of the term 'cohesion' in the document is still to be fully resolved. The institutional response will therefore need to reflect the conclusion of the consultation. . However the relationship of sectarianism and the commitment to an inter-cultural future are clearly important aspects of this debate. Currently CRC is of the view that cohesion requires a more complex institutional response to the many challenges. However the question remains: should CRC include the representation of other cohesion issues? CRC is confident that its skills will enable it to meet this challenge.
- Should a reformed CRC have a different statutory basis? Currently CRC values the guarantee of independent voice which its independent status brings. Statutory change would have to specifically reflect and safeguard that important principle.
- Should CRC relate more formally to statutory bodies responsible for Human Rights and Equality which have a legal and more narrowly defined responsibility for some aspects of these issues?
- Is community relations still the best term to describe the work of securing a shared and better future?

All of this could usefully be reflected in a final CSI programme. CRC believes that the absence of such an assessment represents the major structural risk of implementation.

CRC believes that the functions of the regional body need to be retained, and believes that it has done this efficiently and effectively to date. Therefore, CRC suggests that the current options be reconsidered. More constructively, a review of existing structures should follow the publication of policy principles with a mandate to ensure that the structures which emerge are fit for purpose, effective and efficient for the critical tasks required, broadly reflective of the whole community, honest, independent and transparent. CRC is confident that it can meet those principles.

## **District Councils**

CRC has been working with District Councils over the many years and more recently took a leading role as part of a consortium with Pobal in advising District Councils in the establishment and development of their EU PEACE Partnerships.

Under the existing policy, it was intended that District Councils, supported by the regional body and OFMDFM would make a significant contribution to the delivery of changed services and relationships. Unfortunately, the expected Review of Public Administration (RPA) has not taken place and the transfer of powers to local authorities has come to a halt. This is reflected in the CSI document through a very short acknowledgement that District Councils have a role to play.

CRC is disappointed that the structure and development of work to promote a shared and better future has been weakened by these developments. In particular the loss of the well-being power, under which Councils were to promote area community planning would have been an effective tool to mainstream cohesion, sharing and integration into real decisions at local level. CRC believes that it is crucial role of the regional body to enhance and develop the relevance and quality of work through partnerships with the District Councils.

CRC hopes that any review of District Council Good Relations Programme will seek to build on the good practice developed through the existing Programme and through the PEACE Partnerships. CRC also hopes that this work will become a direct responsibility of elected members and senior officers within Councils with the support of regional expertise.

### **Resources for Reconciliation**

The 'default position', the normal expectation, is that many services in Northern Ireland are provided on the basis of parallel provision for divided communities. This is neither sustainable nor desirable. Cohesion, sharing and integration offers the opportunity to place public spending under a new lens, ensuring that all public assets such as housing, health facilities, leisure facilities, retail zones, youth services and educational services are equally available to all. CRC is only too aware that this is not the case, with widespread evidence that fear and chill factors continue to exclude people and shape choices. Serious inroads into separation and apartheid will require serious budgetary change to mainstream services. The current public spending review offers an opportunity to ensure that value for money is also assessed against the obstacles to peaceful and normal interaction. None of this is attempted in the document, allowing the impression that the document does not see any connection between cohesion, sharing and integration and the economic condition in which we find ourselves. Furthermore, it is clear that any request for additional money from the UK treasury under current circumstances will be more convincing with a plan that demonstrates

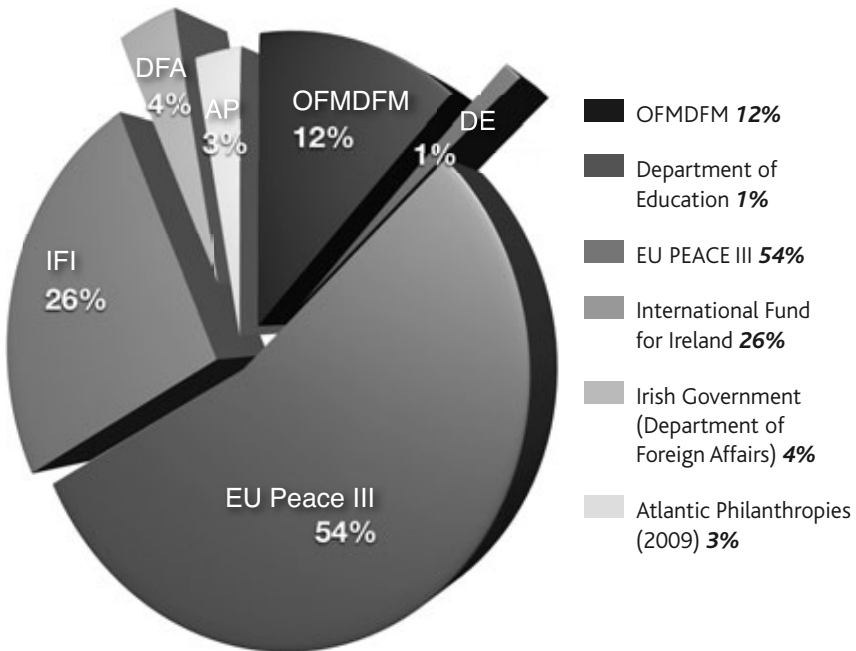
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that, over time, additional resources will be used to reduce segregation and dependency rather than to maintain them.

In the fiscal climate the absence of any commitment to future resources is a worrying aspect of the document. The consultation would have provided an opportunity to indicate the level of future financial resources for the implementation of this programme.

**Figure 1 - Who pays for Peace?**



Unfortunately, the CSI document does not contain a review of expenditure, with no reference to potentially important documents such as the 'Cost of Division'. There is no review of the current resources devoted to inter-community work, nor any future planning. CRC is aware that the inter-community infrastructure of the most volatile areas of Northern Ireland has been built up over many years by communities in co-operation with CRC. Much of it rests on international donor support which is scheduled to end by 2013-15. Currently more than 75% of the resources committed to inter-community work through CRC come from these sources (see figure 1 opposite). The focus in the document on the reallocation of smaller OFMDFM budgets is therefore potentially dangerously misleading.

Experience with the approach of the Department of Education to funding its responsibilities in the areas of inter-community youth and schools work has set a worrying precedent. In spite of ongoing international donor support and a domestic budget of £3.6m per annum (around £5 per pupil per year) this area of work was identified as a target for in-year savings, reducing the budget to £1.1m. This has essentially removed a potentially significant budget to ensure inter-community interaction among young adults and children.

The absence of a resource review in CSI leaves a fear that this area of work is vulnerable under the comprehensive spending review. The absence of investment in inter-community 'bridging capital' would not only be unfortunate, has potentially serious long-term consequences for the future.

## CONCLUSION

1. The critical test of the proposals in the CSI document must be: 'Do they work to promote cohesion, sharing and integration?' CRC has concluded that the proposals do not meet this test.
2. The document should include a formal definition of reconciliation aligned to the definition in the EU PEACE III programme already approved by this Executive in 2007. The EU has been the most significant investor in peacebuilding in the whole region and has developed a coherent framework of learning and analysis. The Executive should remain committed to this vision if the CSI document is to be plausible.
3. Ministerial leadership is an important principle. If this is an inter-departmental document, then the leadership should reside with the Executive led by the First and Deputy First Minister.
4. Arrangements for inter-departmental co-ordination are vital if this is to be more than a paper exercise.
5. CSI must not only be delivered, but developed, learned and advocated for. This is not reflected in the document or in the structures proposed for delivery.
6. Broad civic engagement is vital, with a protected capacity to speak honestly, even when this runs contrary to short-term political interests. There is a danger that the current proposals confuse political leadership with political control.
7. The role of regional body is far more than that of funding and advice to government. All of the current functions listed for CRC in the last public policy on this area of work need to be retained.
8. The proposals for delivery and funding are all retrograde. CRC believes that they should all be reconsidered if the principle of 'fit for purpose' is to be fulfilled.
9. The programme will not be plausible without a serious resource review and commitment of resources. This goes beyond funding for community based activity into a rethink of much larger and significant budgets such as education, housing, community development, regeneration, justice and culture. Without this rethink, commitment to reconciliation is likely to remain merely rhetorical.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Examples of CRC's work and achievements over recent years**

1. The development of a sustained and vibrant regional infrastructure for community and good relations work across the region through OFMDFM core funding, PEACE II, PEACE III and IFI Community Bridges Programme is recognized as being of world class . This includes the development of capabilities and key skills such as mediation, training, public dialogue and work with public institutions. CRC has also shaped the development of community relations work in key thematic areas such as the workplace, sport and churches. CRC has taken a keen interest in ensuring that this work builds on the enthusiasm of a variety of constituencies, including young people and women. CRC has invested in volunteer and residential capacity as well as community relations work in the most contested areas, such as interfaces, and in local areas across the towns and cities of Northern Ireland and beyond. It also includes the development of CRC as a leading agent for the support and development of cross-border peace building in Ireland.
2. The establishment, support and development of a dense network of interface peace projects across Belfast including programme, practical support and innovation. Practically all of this work has been undertaken through schemes managed by CRC. This has become the core for inter-community dialogue in the most contested areas of the city and beyond and a vital resource for stability.
3. Development of innovative community projects which have become exemplars of best practice in community relations and the base for wider initiatives- e.g. Springfarm, Hazelwood Partnership, Rural Enablers Programme.
4. Development and co-ordination of statutory-voluntary partnerships to tackle the most difficult residual issues in peace building: The Interface Working Group and the Beyond Belfast project into rural segregation.
5. The sensitive and professional development of systematic and inclusive advocacy and service delivery structure by victims for victims of the conflict.
6. Development of important services for victims and survivors such as volunteer befriending, caring and respite for carers and engaging victims in the most sensitive complex issue of peacebuilding and a shared future
7. Support and development for the establishment of 14 local PEACE Partnerships covering all of Northern Ireland and the 6 Border counties. (in consortium with Pobal)

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8. One of the most innovative, creative and responsive small grants programme for community relations, cultural diversity and emergency response in Northern Ireland.
9. Co-operative institutional partnership on critical issues such as Re-Imaging Communities, Creating Common Ground, Shared Neighbourhood Scheme, Good Relations Forum, Shared Education Programme, North Belfast Community Action Unit and Belfast City Council Good Relations Unit.
10. Systematic policy response to shared future, community relations and cultural diversity issues.
11. Participation in reviews of some of the most difficult topics e.g. the Ashdown Review on Parading, the Crumlin Road Gaol/Girdwood Advisory Panel and the Sentence Review Commission.
12. Establishment of broad public platforms for a shared future and against hate crime, such as Community Relations Week, Unite Against Hate and the One Small Step campaign
13. Practical and intellectual support for community relations work and policy:
  - establishment of Shared Space research journal;
  - numerous research publications on key topics such as interfaces, education, young people, planning and shared space and the embeddedness of sectarianism;
  - public conferences on key themes such as cohesion, sharing and Integration, business and economic development, young people and a shared future; sustainability in community relations work and the future of victims and survivors work ;
  - training events ranging from support for financial and programme management, evaluation and monitoring, to sectarianism and racism;
  - seminars on key research and core themes such as shared space, housing, cohesion arts and community relations, and the work of key thinkers on peace building
  - 5 Practitioners forums per annum; and
  - public challenge, newspaper and journal articles and advocacy across Northern Ireland and the border region. International learning support through the AMBIT programme and the Outward and Forward-looking Region programme of EU PEACE II extension.

14. Advice to government departments on numerous issues of inter-community concern including Ministerial working group on North Belfast, Flags Protocol Monitoring Group, North Belfast Community Action Group, Good Relations Panel, DE Shared Future Advisory group, DoE Migration Advisory group, DSD, BRO, DCAL and numerous District Councils.
15. Establishment of the Rowntree Monitoring project on the progress of peace.

### **Best Practice models**

Examples of models of best practice developed by groups and organizations through support and encouragement of CRC include a huge range of projects and initiatives.

Some of these are published in separate CRC publications and all are listed in CRC's Annual Reports and Reviews which can be viewed at [www.nicrc.org.uk](http://www.nicrc.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX II**

### **DOMESTIC LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

#### **PUBLIC ORDER (NI) ORDER 1987 ARTICLE 9 AND 19,**

##### **Use of words or behaviour or display of written material**

9.—(1) A person who uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or displays any written material which is threatening, abusive or insulting, is guilty of an offence if—

(a) he intends thereby to stir up hatred or arouse fear; or

(b) having regard to all the circumstances hatred is likely to be stirred up or fear is likely to be aroused thereby.

(2) An offence under this Article may be committed in a public or a private place, except that no offence is committed where the words or behaviour are used, or the written material is displayed, by a person inside a dwelling and are not heard or seen except by other persons in that or another dwelling.

(3) In proceedings for an offence under this Article it is a defence for the accused to prove that he was inside a dwelling and had no reason to believe that the words or behaviour used, or the written material displayed, would be heard or seen by a person outside that or any other dwelling.

(4) A person who is not shown to have intended to stir up hatred or arouse fear is not guilty of an offence under this Article if he did not intend his words or behaviour, or the written material, to be, and was not aware that it might be, threatening, abusive or insulting.

(5) This Article does not apply to words or behaviour used, or written material displayed, solely for the purpose of being included in a programme broadcast or included in a cable programme service.

##### **Provocative conduct in public place or at public meeting or procession**

**19.—(1)** A person who in any public place or at or in relation to any public meeting or public procession—

(a) uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour; or

(b) displays anything or does any act; or

(c) being the owner or occupier of any land or premises, causes or permits anything to be displayed or any act to be done thereon, with intent to provoke a breach of the peace or by which a breach of the peace or public disorder is likely to be occasioned (whether immediately or at any time afterwards) shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under paragraph (1) shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or to both.

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**THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE (NO. 2) (NI) ORDER 2004 AND ITS DEFINITION OF HATE CRIME ARTICLE 3, PROTECTION FROM HARASSMENT (NI) ORDER 1997**

**Prohibition of harassment**

**3.—(1)** A person shall not pursue a course of conduct—

(a) which amounts to harassment of another; and

(b) which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.

(2) For the purposes of this Article, the person whose course of conduct is in question ought to know that it amounts to harassment of another if a reasonable person in possession of the same information would think the course of conduct amounted to harassment of the other.

(3) Paragraph (1) does not apply to a course of conduct if the person who pursued it shows—

(a) that it was pursued for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime;

(b) that it was pursued under any statutory provision or rule of law or to comply

with any condition or requirement imposed by any person under any statutory provision; or

(c) that in the particular circumstances the pursuit of the course of conduct was reasonable.

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## **POVERTY AND NEED**

*There is no statutory 'obligation' to tackle 'objective need'. Rather, it is a long standing policy commitment (through **TSN** and **Lifetime Opportunities**), was re-affirmed in the St Andrew's Agreement, and is central to the Programme For Government 2008-2011 (appendix 2).*

### **LIFETIME OPPORTUNITIES: Government's Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland** [www.OFMDFMNI.gov.uk/antipovertynov06.pdf](http://www.OFMDFMNI.gov.uk/antipovertynov06.pdf)

*Executive Summary (p.10) - Government is determined to eliminate the scourge of poverty which blights the lives of so many people in Northern Ireland. The Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy, Lifetime Opportunities, aims to build on progress to date and address continuing challenges. It recognises different priorities at different stages in people's lives and the need for policies and programmes to be tailored to these specific needs and targeted at those in greatest objective need.*

8. Alongside tax and benefits policy, government has and will continue to seek to strengthen and support the Northern Ireland economy, target resources at those areas, groups and individuals in greatest objective need, and legislate where necessary to protect the vulnerable from discrimination. (page 4)

19. Policy needs to focus on the most persistently and acutely deprived areas on the basis of objective need and to tailor and develop strategies, working in close partnership with these communities. It needs to stop the downward spiral of deprivation and offer communities a realistic prospect of regeneration of their neighbourhoods and improvement in their lives. (page 8).

171. The Irish and UK governments are committed to developing and promoting further North/South consultation, co-operation and common action concerning policies on poverty and social exclusion over the period of this plan. To this end, a report outlining common and current areas of cross-border work and initiatives

between Northern Ireland and Ireland will be prepared. Potential areas suitable for further cross-border co-operation will be identified as will the mechanisms by which this work could be undertaken and delivered. (page 50)

172. The Central Anti-Poverty Unit (CAPU) within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the overall impact of the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy. This Unit will also provide the secretariat to the Ministerial Poverty Forum. (page 50)

173. An Inter-departmental Equality and Social Need Steering Group which is chaired by a senior official in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will be the principle mechanism for co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating across departments and Agencies. Members of this group will also represent their department on the Ministerial-led Poverty Forum. The Central Anti-Poverty Unit will also provide Secretariat support to the Equality and Social Need Steering Group. (page 50)

174. The Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion strategy, retains the key principle of New Targeting Social Need which is to direct resources within government programmes at those areas, groups and individuals in greatest objective need. For some programmes, such as Neighbourhood Renewal, this is done through the use of objective indicators of need. For others, including those involving significant spending on roads, education or health infrastructure, the process may be less straightforward and guidance will be provided particularly when these programmes are being delivered through Public Private Procurement initiatives. (page 50).

192. Government is determined to eliminate the scourge of poverty which blights the lives of so many people in Northern Ireland. The Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion strategy aims to build on progress to date and address continuing challenges. It recognises different priorities at different stages in people's lives and the need for policies and programmes to be tailored to these specific needs and targeted at those in greatest objective need. (Page 56)

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**THE FLAGS REGULATION (NI) 2000** has defined the use of the Union Flag for designated government buildings on designated days, however, it does not apply to District Council buildings:

Flying of flags at government buildings on specified days

- (1) The Union flag shall be flown at the government buildings specified in Part I of the Schedule to these Regulations on the days specified in Part II of the Schedule.
- (2) The Union flag shall be flown on the days specified in Part II of the Schedule at any other government building at which it was the practice to fly the Union flag on notified days in the period of 12 months ending with 30th November 1999.
- (3) In paragraph (2), "notified days" means days notified by the Department of Finance and Personnel to other Northern Ireland Departments as days for the flying of the Union flag at government buildings during the period of 12 months ending with 30th November 1999.
- (4) Where a government building specified in Part I of the Schedule has more than one flag pole, the European flag shall be flown in addition to the Union flag on Europe Day.
- SCHEDULE Regulation 2 – PART I – SPECIFIED GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS
- Adelaide House, Adelaide Street, Belfast.
- Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast
- Churchill House, Victoria Square, Belfast.
- Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast.
- Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast.
- Netherleigh House, Massey Avenue, Belfast.
- Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, County Down.

## ENDNOTES

1. NI Executive (2008), *Programme for Government 2008-2011*, Page 12.  
<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfgfinal.pdf> We will bring forward a programme of cohesion and integration for this shared and better future to address the divisions within our society and achieve measurable reductions in sectarianism, racism and hate crime. Programme for Government 2008-11.
2. **CRC's principles and values**  
The CRC is founded on the following values and principles:  
**Equity and Equality:** CRC is committed to fair treatment for all, through open access to resources, structures and decision-making processes at all levels of society, as an essential basis for good community relations.  
**Human Rights:** The CRC is committed to upholding the human rights of all as a fundamental basis for good community relations.  
**Diversity:** CRC is committed to the promotion of inter-cultural respect and freedom of expression and movement (whether expressed through religious, ethnic or political background) and supports the peaceful expression of variety and difference.  
**Interdependence:** CRC recognises and affirms the interconnectedness of the personal and community experiences of all those living and working in Northern Ireland. CRC exists to promote good relations based on trust, respect and inclusion.  
**Non-violence:** CRC recognises non-violence as an essential condition for the growth of trust, dialogue and conflict transformation.  
**Openness, Transparency and Accountability:** As a provider of public services, CRC will uphold this principle in all its work.  
All of our work is conducted on the basis of these values
3. Arthur, P (1990), *Government & Politics of Northern Ireland*, Longman There have been visible connections between Unionism -with its insistence on British identity- and being born into one of the varieties of Protestantism and between Irish Nationalism and Catholic background. Indeed the connections have been strong enough to allow both religious and political terms to be used interchangeably as shorthand vernacular to describe clearly understood identities. The divide was most powerfully reflected and reinforced in voting patterns with almost no movement between apparently fixed blocs resulting in the emergence of identity politics with an apparently permanent internal Unionist majority and a consequent Nationalist minority ('the majority', 'the minority') polarised around the foundational question in politics- should the state exist or not? aka 'to be or not to be?'
4. **Case of Barankevich v. Russia Referring to the hallmarks of a "democratic society", the Court has attached particular importance to pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness. In that context, it has held that although individual interests must on occasion be subordinated to those of a group, democracy**

**does not simply mean that the views of the majority must always prevail: a balance must be achieved which ensures the fair and proper treatment of minorities and avoids any abuse of a dominant position** (see *Gorzelik and Others v. Poland* [GC], no. 44158/98, § 90, 17 February 2004). The Court further reiterates that in a democratic society, in which several religions coexist within one and the same population, it may be necessary to place restrictions on the “freedom to manifest one’s religion or belief” in order to reconcile the interests of the various groups and ensure that everyone’s beliefs are respected. However, in exercising its regulatory power in this sphere and in its relations with the various religions, denominations and beliefs, the State has a duty to remain neutral and impartial. **What is at stake here is the preservation of pluralism and the proper functioning of democracy, and the role of the authorities in such circumstances is not to remove the cause of tension by eliminating pluralism, but to ensure that the competing groups tolerate each other** (see *Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia and Others v. Moldova*, no. 45701/99, §§ 115 and 116, ECHR 2001-XII, with further references).

**Agga (no2) v Greece.** The Court recalls that freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of a “democratic society” within the meaning of the Convention. **The pluralism inherent in a democratic society**, which has been dearly won over the centuries, depends on it. It is true that in a democratic society it may be necessary to place restrictions on freedom of religion to reconcile the interests of the various religious groups (see the *Kokkinakis* judgment cited above, pp. 17 and 18, §§ 31 and 33). However, any such restriction must correspond to a “pressing social need” and must be “proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued” (see, among others, the *Wingrove v. the United Kingdom* judgment of 25 November 1996, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1996-V, p. 1956, § 53).

It is true that the Government argued that, in the particular circumstances of the case, the authorities had to intervene in order to avoid the creation of tension among the Muslims in Xanthi and between the Muslims and the Christians of the area as well as Greece and Turkey. **Although the Court recognises that it is possible that tension is created in situations where a religious or any other community becomes divided, it considers that this is one of the unavoidable consequences of pluralism. The role of the authorities in such circumstances is not to remove the cause of tension by eliminating pluralism, but to ensure that the competing groups tolerate each other** (see, *mutatis mutandis*, the *Plattform “Ärzte für das Leben” v. Austria* judgment of 21 June 1988, Series A no. 139, p. 12, § 32). In this connection, the Court notes that, apart from a general reference to the creation of tension, the Government did not make any allusion to disturbances among the Muslims in Xanthi that had actually been or could have been caused by the existence of two religious leaders. Moreover, the Court considers that nothing

was adduced that could warrant qualifying the risk of tension between the Muslims and Christians or between Greece and Turkey as anything more than a very remote possibility.

#### **Hyde Park and Others v Moldova (no. 4)**

50. In so far as the proportionality of the interference is concerned, the Court recalls that it has **stated many times in its judgments that not only is democracy a fundamental feature of the European public order but the Convention was designed to promote and maintain the ideals and values of a democratic society. Democracy, the Court has stressed, is the only political model contemplated in the Convention and the only one compatible with it. By virtue of the wording of the second paragraph of Article 11, and likewise of Articles 8, 9 and 10 of the Convention, the only necessity capable of justifying an interference with any of the rights enshrined in those Articles is one that may claim to spring from a "democratic society"** (see *Refah Partisi (the Welfare Party) and Others v. Turkey* [GC], nos. 41340/98, 41342/98, 41343/98 and 41344/98, §§ 86-89, ECHR 2003-II, and *Christian Democratic People's Party v. Moldova*, cited above).
51. **Referring to the hallmarks of a "democratic society", the Court has attached particular importance to pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness. In that context, it has held that although individual interests must on occasion be subordinated to those of a group, democracy does not simply mean that the views of the majority must always prevail: a balance must be achieved which ensures the fair and proper treatment of minorities and avoids any abuse of a dominant position** (see *Young, James and Webster v. the United Kingdom*, 13 August 1981, § 63, Series A no. 44, and *Chassagnou and Others v. France* [GC], nos. 25088/94, 28331/95 and 28443/95, § 112, ECHR 1999-III). **REFAH PARTİSİ (THE WELFARE PARTY) AND OTHERS v. TURKEY**
89. **The Court considers that there can be no democracy without pluralism. It is for that reason that freedom of expression as enshrined in Article 10 is applicable**, subject to paragraph 2, not only to "information" or "ideas" that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb (see, among many other authorities, *Handyside v. the United Kingdom*, judgment of 7 December 1976, Series A no. 24, p. 23, § 49, and *Jersild v. Denmark*, judgment of 23 September 1994, Series A no. 298, p. 26, § 37). Inasmuch as their activities form part of a collective exercise of the freedom of expression, political parties are also entitled to seek the protection of Article 10 of the Convention (see *United Communist Party of Turkey and Others*, cited above, pp. 20-21, § 43).

90. For the purposes of the present case, the Court also refers to its case-law concerning the place of religion in a democratic society and a democratic State. It reiterates that, as protected by Article 9, **freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of a "democratic society" within the meaning of the Convention. It is, in its religious dimension, one of the most vital elements that go to make up the identity of believers and their conception of life, but it is also a precious asset for atheists, agnostics, sceptics and the unconcerned. The pluralism indissociable from a democratic society, which has been dearly won over the centuries, depends on it.** That freedom entails, *inter alia*, freedom to hold or not to hold religious beliefs and to practise or not to practise a religion (see *Kokkinakis v. Greece*, judgment of 25 May 1993, Series A no. 260-A, p. 17, § 31, and *Buscarini and Others v. San Marino* [GC], no. 24645/94, § 34, ECHR 1999-I).
91. Moreover, in democratic societies, in which several religions coexist within one and the same population, it may be necessary to place restrictions on this freedom in order to reconcile the interests of the various groups and ensure that everyone's beliefs are respected (see *Kokkinakis*, cited above, p. 18, § 33). **The Court has frequently emphasised the State's role as the neutral and impartial organiser of the exercise of various religions, faiths and beliefs, and stated that this role is conducive to public order, religious harmony and tolerance in a democratic society. It also considers that the State's duty of neutrality and impartiality is incompatible with any power on the State's part to assess the legitimacy of religious beliefs (see, *mutatis mutandis*, *Cha'are Shalom Ve Tsedek v. France* [GC], no. 27417/95, § 84, ECHR 2000-VII) and that it requires the State to ensure mutual tolerance between opposing groups** (see, *mutatis mutandis*, *Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia and Others v. Moldova*, no. 45701/99, § 123, ECHR 2001-XII).
5. Council of Europe, 2008, White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "*Living together as equals in dignity*" Strasbourg,  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper\\_final\\_revised\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf)
6. For example the Pla Barcelona Interculturalitat ( Barcelona Intercultural Plan), Barcelona, Adjuntament de Barcelona, March 2010
7. Commission for Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, Department for Communities, London:2007.
8. *The Agreement* (1998), NIO. <http://www.nio.gov.uk/agreement.pdf>
- **Declaration of Support – Page 2**
  - **Pledge of Office – Page 12** - (c) to serve all the people of Northern Ireland equally, and to act in accordance with the general obligations on government to promote equality and prevent discrimination;

**Code of Conduct – Page 13** - Ministers must at all times operate in a way conducive to promoting good community relations and equality of treatment;

9. *The St Andrews Agreement (2006)*. [http://www.nio.gov.uk/st\\_andrews\\_agreement-2.pdf](http://www.nio.gov.uk/st_andrews_agreement-2.pdf)  
Page 2 & 3, Paragraph 8 Human Rights, Equality, Victims and other issues. Section 8 states 'Both Governments have also discussed other matters raised by the parties. Some of these relate to the final implementation of the Agreement and others have been raised in the context of the Preparation for Government Committee. The British Government has also agreed to take forward a number of measures to build confidence in both communities and to pursue a shared future for Northern Ireland in which the culture, rights and aspirations of all are respected and valued, free from sectarianism, racism and intolerance'.
10. *The Hillsborough Castle Agreement - Securing a better future for all (2010)*  
[http://www.nio.gov.uk/agreement\\_at\\_hillsborough\\_castle\\_5\\_february\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nio.gov.uk/agreement_at_hillsborough_castle_5_february_2010.pdf)  
**Comments from First & Deputy First Minister:** Today's Agreement is the surest sign that there will be no going back to the past. - Peter Robinson First Minister. We need to make life better for our children and for our grandchildren. That is what this Agreement must mean in practice. - Martin McGuinness deputy First Minister.
11. Hamber, B. and Kelly, G. (2004) 'A Working Definition of Reconciliation'. Occasional paper published by Democratic Dialogue, Belfast.
12. PEACE III EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, 2007-2013, Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland Operational Programme, SEUPB 2007.
13. *Programme for Government (2008)*, NI Executive  
<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfgfinal.pdf>  
Page 6 Strategic and interdependent priorities:
  - growing a dynamic, innovative economy
  - promote tolerance, inclusion and health and well-being
  - protect and enhance our environment and natural resources
  - invest to build our infrastructure
  - deliver modern high quality and efficient public services
15. The cost to communities of the continued threat of dissident activity is evidenced in response to an assembly question asked by Tom Elliott MLA, where it is detailed that for 2010/2011 and additional £37.4million will be committed to the PSNI to deal with the dissident threat. Further the cost of replacing the Armoured Land Rover (ALR) is estimated having a capital cost to replace the ALR fleet is estimated to be between £25 and £30 million. Detailed further in this chapter are some of the costs incurred due to policing contentious parades (Newsletter, 29 September 2010).

## Towards A Shared Society?

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16. *Trauma, Health and Conflict* (2008), Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation
17. *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface barriers & the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast* (2009), Community Relations Council; <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/iwg-publication.pdf>
18. *Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings* (SPED). DSD. Cost of homes purchased by the NIHE because of sectarian intimidation of the occupants (SPED) 2005-2009: 2005/06 69 (£9.88m), 2006/07 22 (£3.19m), 2007/08 22 (£4.81m), 2008/09 46 (£9.21m) (more than double than which were purchased in each of the two previous years). 2008/09 SPED costs saw an increase of 91% on the 2007/08 costs.
19. *Mapping Segregation in Belfast: NIHE Estates (2007) & Mapping Segregation outside Belfast: NIHE Estates (2009)*; Northern Ireland Housing Executive. In general 91% of estates fell into a 'very polarized category' defined as having more than 80% of one community or less than 20% of that community using community background. Highlighted lower class areas are usually considered to be more segregated than middle class neighbourhoods, and estates became more segregated from 1971-1991, and that this had changed little between the years 1991-2001.
20. Shirlow P and Murtagh, B (2006); *Belfast – Segregation, Violence & the City*; Pluto Ireland. In a survey of 9,000 individuals living within interface communities 78% of respondents provided examples of at least three publicly funded facilities that they did not use because they were located on the 'wrong' side of an interface<sup>20</sup> The survey also revealed that the vast majority of respondents in both republican/nationalist and unionist/loyalist communities (81% and 72% respectively) stated that on at least 3 occasions they had not sought a job in an area dominated by the 'other' community (page 85 & 91)
21. Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey.  
<http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/results/comrel.html#contact>  
SRELNGH: *How many of your neighbours are the same religion as you?* 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009  
MXRLNGH: *Would you prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only your own religion?* 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009  
MIXDLIV: *Are you in favour of more mixing where people live?* 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
22. *Northern Ireland had much to offer but another important step is needed. Removing the barriers is in the interests of peace and prosperity and the sooner the physical barriers come down, the sooner the flood gates of private investment will open.* " Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York , Investment Conference 8th May 2008, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/7390938.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/7390938.stm)

23. *Policing Parades*, (October 2010), Page 5, Policing Matters October 2010, Policing Board NI, [http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/nipb\\_pm\\_oct\\_10.pdf](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/nipb_pm_oct_10.pdf)
24. Australian Government Travel Advice (August 2010)  
[http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United\\_Kingdom](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United_Kingdom) & BBC News  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-11103791>
26. Integrated Education Fund, *Developing the Economic Case for Shared Education (September 2010)*, Oxford Economics.  
[http://www.ief.org.uk/archive/scoping\\_report/Developing%20the%20case%20for%20shared%20education%20lr.pdf](http://www.ief.org.uk/archive/scoping_report/Developing%20the%20case%20for%20shared%20education%20lr.pdf)  
 There are currently 50,000 empty places in schools in Northern Ireland — around 15% of total capacity. It is estimated that Northern Ireland pays a premium of up to £300m each year to have a sectoral education system — a huge sum could potentially be saved. Report notes that there are almost 1,500 schools in Northern Ireland and over the next 10 years it is estimated that around £3.6bn is needed to be invested in the schools' estate.
27. Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010, NISRA,  
[http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/nimdm\\_2010.htm](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/nimdm_2010.htm)
28. NI Executive, Programme for Government, 2008, Page 12  
<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfgfinal.pdf>
29. Wilson's 8-point concept of policy-making. These points correspond to the sequence identified by Jordan and Lenschow (2008: 12), of agenda setting (1), initiation (2), decision-making (3), implementation (4-6), evaluation (7) and revision (8). Andrew J Jordan and Andrea Lenschow (2008), 'Integrating the environment for sustainable development: an introduction', in Jordan and Lenschow (eds), *Innovation in Environmental Policy? Integrating the Environment for Sustainability* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar), 3-23.
30. Review of the Community Relations Council's Funding for Victims and Survivors, March 2010, Community Relations Council [http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/victims-reports/CRC\\_-\\_Final\\_Report\\_March\\_2010.pdf](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/victims-reports/CRC_-_Final_Report_March_2010.pdf)
31. **New Victims & Survivors Service**  
 CRC advise using the report and findings from Deloitte's Review of the Community Relations Council's Funding for Victims and Survivors ([http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/victims-reports/CRC\\_-\\_Final\\_Report\\_March\\_2010.pdf](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/victims-reports/CRC_-_Final_Report_March_2010.pdf)) in designing the key arrangements for the Victims & Survivors Service to support those in our society that have already suffered most. The challenge for the service is to continue those services that have been offered by groups. This is particularly important as it was noted in the report, that there is limited evidence of the

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statutory sector being able to deliver services such as advocacy, befriending, truth recovery and acknowledgement in the immediate future.

It is also important that in the preparation for the new service the following takes place:

- Management of recommendations from Governance Review – support to groups working with victims & Survivors on Good Governance & Financial Accountability
- Focusing on end-users **needs** in order to tender and bid for services.

The Council understands that:

- Adequate resources need to be allocated for this purpose.
- Appropriate training on good governance following governance review.
- Workshops/training on 'what to expect re: tendering for services' by way of preparation for groups providing services/activities to individual victims and survivors.
- A seamless transition is vitally important so that services to individual victims and survivors are unaffected.
- Requirement for appropriate lead in time to ensure there is 'phasing in' of the new V&S Service whilst 'phasing out' of the old CRC Core/Development Grant Schemes.
- Exit Strategy would be a key requirement for unsuccessful groups.

### **Connection to Need. Relationship between identifying need to meeting needs.**

The Council understands that:

- Focus should be placed on ensuring needs are evidenced-based, informed by the emerging conclusions of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment undertaken by CVSNI.
- Training and development support should be provided to groups supporting victims and survivors to enable the capture of appropriate, acceptable and standardised evidence/data.

### **Demonstrating Benefit**

The Council understands that there should be training to groups to support them to be better able at:

- providing descriptors of how work is delivered and
- showing a benefit/positive impact to individuals victims and survivors in relation to coping mechanisms to the adjustment to their lives and their path towards healing.

### **Arrangements for Volunteer Based Groups and Non-Professionally based Services**

The Council understands that:

- In designing new Victims & Survivors Service planning is required to ensure work undertaken by such groups is valued and not lost.
- Such groups should not be required to be pushed into a more professional tender-based bidding process for services to end-users.

**Central Services**

- Consideration to One Stop Shop support/new support structures for groups supporting end-users and funded through the new Victims & Survivors Service i.e. photocopying, audit/book-keeping support, etc.

**Partnership working/shared services**

- Links to other groups/agencies providing services to meet needs of individuals.

**Rationalisation of the Sector**

- There is a need to ensure that there is protection of the services that best meet the needs of end users. Adequate funding support is provided to those best equipped to manage such services.

**Review of transgenerational work with young people**

- As time goes on, such needs are likely to become more significant, not least if later generations are fated to become victims/survivors themselves. Their lives must not be blighted by the legacy of the troubles.
- This is an issue for the future however there is also an ageing profile of victims and such needs will change, particularly for those injured, having pain management issues, etc.

**Legacy of the Past**

- Dealing with the legacy of the past is clearly an important part of the healing process for many individual victims and survivors that we are engaged with.

**Forum for Victims & Survivors**

- The transition forum has dealt with highly contentious and sensitive issues with respect to NI's troubled past, with sub groups focusing on Dealing with the Past, Services and Needs. By the participation in this forum many representatives spoke about their own changes in attitudes and perceptions of others, this undoubtedly has created a ripple effect within the communities and organizations that these individuals come into contact with. This has an instrumental impact within communities and would appear to assist in the whole cohesion, sharing and integration policy. The Forum did focus on Dealing with the Past (as well as other issues) and government(s) and political leaders should seek to address the main issues outlined within Eames/Bradley's report.

33. Newly published by STEP. Research to Identify Additional Difficulties Faced by Minority Ethnic Groups and Migrant Workers Because of the Conflict in Northern Ireland Commissioned by Peace III Cluster South West Partnership January 2010 explores these issues in some depth. While there is theoretical debate about the link between racism and sectarianism, they suggest they have similar structures, manifestations and outcomes in terms of identity-based power structures (ibid. 99). The findings of the research suggests there is significant evidence of the conflict presenting additional barriers to minority ethnic (and faith) populations through the

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use or fear of violence as a mechanism; the political system based geared towards sectarian identity (and therefore limited engagement with the implementation of good relations and race equality policies) and structural legacies such as community segregation.

34.STEP. Research to Identify Additional Difficulties Faced by Minority Ethnic Groups and Migrant Workers Because of the Conflict in Northern Ireland Commissioned by Peace III Cluster South West Partnership January 2010.102

35.The experience of prejudice members of immigrant and migrant worker communities across the UK and indeed Europe was generally found to mirror the experience in Northern Ireland. The report reviews a number of small scale studies in Dungannon, Aughnacloy, Fermanagh, Cookstown and Magherafelt and by the Rural Community Network. The research highlights the patterns of exclusion and isolation experienced by new populations in Northern Ireland. It suggests "this impacts on every aspect of life, including access to services, health provision, education, housing, employment rights, access to leisure facilities, interactions with the local population and the experience of discrimination, exploitation, racism and abuse" (ibid.92).

Complex issues (ibid.85-93) are identified particularly in relation to how health, education and childcare services are accessed and experienced. Language proficiency may not stretch to specialist language regarding matters such as tax, benefits, healthcare, obtaining driving licences etc. Translation services can be problematic and are not always utilised. Access to information about administrative systems, services, legal rights and responsibilities was deficient. Prejudice and discrimination, language barrier, difficulties in integrating and a sense that the host community was not welcoming are identified as key issues.

The research suggests that there is sufficient evidence to conclude "the systemic nature of disadvantage and the apparent ubiquity of common negative themes indicate a society that is not yet coping with or accepting demographic" (ibid.92). This is not withstanding positive efforts and good practice that is developing in an ad hoc fashion in schools, communities and by agencies and district councils.

Depending on their legal circumstances the issues facing people of minority ethnic backgrounds differ. The implications of this and the cultural sensitivities required in order to address the needs of people of different ethnic, cultural and faith backgrounds is insufficiently understood.

36.CRC has a long history of work with Parades and Protests, Arts, Sports, Festivals and Museums. Recent examples include:

- Consistent long term work both directly and through funded organisations with parades, protests and local disputes.

- Partnership with the Arts Council on Cultural Diversity and Re-Imaging Communities
- Strategic and local support for festivals and community arts and sports initiatives including the Belfast St Patrick's Day festival, Orangefest, the Mela, the Maiden City Festival, Feile an Phobail, Football for All and Peace Players International.
- Partnership with museums on conflict, cultural diversity, symbols, religious diversity.
- Limited funding support for faith and minority ethnic groups to support engagement.

38. Integrated Education Fund, *Developing the Economic Case for Shared Education (September 2010)*, Oxford Economics.

[http://www.ief.org.uk/archive/scoping\\_report/Developing%20the%20case%20for%20shared%20education%20lr.pdf](http://www.ief.org.uk/archive/scoping_report/Developing%20the%20case%20for%20shared%20education%20lr.pdf)

39. Good Relations Forum (April 2010), *Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts - A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st Century*, CRC & ECNI.

<http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/crc-good-relations-forum-booklet-final-21-april-2010-pdf.pdf>

*School and Local Level:*

- Compulsory good relations programmes in schools;
- Good practice to be shared and publicised;
- Capacity building programmes for existing school teaching staff;
- Capacity building of parents and local communities;
- Keeping local communities fully informed of the opportunity for possible collaboration, where school are at risk of being closed or new schools are planned.

*Strategic Level:*

- Strategic leadership - the Minister of Education and the Department of Education to give greater strategic direction to the schools sector to ensure that the teaching and practice of good relations is successfully mainstreamed across all schools.
- Culture change - by creating a culture of co-operation, partner schools and colleges can bring considerable resources and skills that both add value to the learning experiences of children and young people, and crucially, help schools to do things differently.
- Budget commitment to good relations programmes - the Department of Education to identify and commit a long-term and appropriate budget to supporting all schools to provide good relations modules within Citizenship programmes.
- Good Relations lens – the entire curriculum to be good relations proofed, at least in those subject areas where it is both relevant and appropriate to do so.

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- Targeted support and resources - the Department and ESA to offer more targeted support and resources for those schools in areas that continue to experience considerable community conflict, segregation and disadvantage.
- Greater focus on sharing and collaboration within service delivery - the Department, ESA and other key educational stakeholders to focus on maximising value for money and avoiding duplication of educational provision, by placing a greater focus on existing drivers, policies and practices that encourage greater sharing and collaboration, particularly on a cross-community basis.
- Developing tools that measure change – the Department to develop a set of targets, as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the changes to the level of collaboration and cooperation between local schools. This should be published yearly and publicised widely.
- Teacher, head teacher and governor training - the Department to ensure that amendments are made to the various training programmes by relevant regulatory and training bodies, making good relations modules compulsory components of study.
- Greater sharing and collaboration between teacher training colleges – the Department and ESA to encourage stronger collaboration between the different teacher training institutions, to ensure all student teachers, whatever their community background, have the appropriate time and opportunity to experience other sectors and school ethos. All initial teacher training courses/programmes to encompass an element of teaching from different sectors on a cross-community basis.
- Mapping future opportunities - Audits would help identify geographical areas for potential growth in integrated or shared education and changes in public attitudes, thus, providing a strategic context within which the transformation of schools might take place.
- A generic commitment to 'collaboration' cannot be allowed to disguise the imperative for inter-sectoral sharing which must result. Of course, some schools will have more opportunities than others to engage on a cross-community basis and there are already a number of schools delivering this in practice. However without an obligation to explore all options some schools may opt out of this opportunity. This collaboration cannot be allowed to occur on an ad-hoc basis - this could simply come down to it being easier to engage/collaborate cross sector (not cross community) and also happen at the discretion of Board of Governors or the Principal.

40. Connolly P, Smith A, Kelly B (2002) *Too Young To Notice – the cultural and political awareness of 3-6 year olds in Northern Ireland*, Community Relations Council;  
McAlister, S., Scraton, P. and Haydon, D.(2009) *Childhood in Transition: Experiencing Marginalisation and Conflict in Northern Ireland Belfast*: Queen's University, Save the

Children, The Prince's Trust, November 2009.  
[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54\\_9666.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_9666.htm)

41. McEvoy-Levy, S (2006) *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peace Building*. University of Notre Dame Press.
42. Magill, C., Smith, A. & Hamber, B. (2010) *The Role of Education in Reconciliation*. University of Ulster, [http://unesco.ulster.ac.uk/PDFs/ed&rec\\_report.pdf](http://unesco.ulster.ac.uk/PDFs/ed&rec_report.pdf)
43. Eames, R. a. (2009). *Report of the Consultative Group of the Past*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Office, <http://www.irishtimes.com/focus/2009/troubles/index.pdf>
44. While the Community Relations Council does not fund or do youth work it provides support both financially and developmental to organisations which do have this remit.
45. *Mapping Segregation in Belfast: NIHE Estates (2007) & Mapping Segregation outside Belfast: NIHE Estates (2009)*; Northern Ireland Housing Executive. These reports reveal the level of segregation in houses owned and managed by the authority. In general 91% of estates fall into a 'very polarized category' defined as having more than 80% of one community or less than 20% of that community using community background. Areas which are less well off are usually considered to be more segregated than middle class neighbourhoods. Estates became more segregated between 1971-1991. Changed little between 1991-2001.<sup>2</sup> Outside of Belfast there are similar patterns of segregation: Using religion, following Belfast, in terms of segregation follows Craigavon, Dungannon, Derry, Cookstown and Lisburn; and Armagh, Newtownabbey and Omagh are all more segregated than the figure for NI as a whole. When using community background Belfast, Derry & Mid Ulster have high levels of segregation.
46. *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface barriers & the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast (2009)*, Community Relations Council; <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/iwg-publication.pdf> It evidenced that while there were only a few interfaces they have multiplied over the years, from 18 in the early 1990s to, according to research for the Belfast area, there is up to 88 security and segregation barriers, 44 PSNI CCTV cameras and 6 intrusive security measures at police stations. It alarming that two weeks before the renewal of devolution there were 46 officially recognised 'peace walls' (plus 11 gates) dividing working class communities, the most recent being constructed at an integrated school (Hazelwood, North Belfast). Interfaces, Donnelly, Paul (2006), *Sharing Over Separation*, Community Relations Council; <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/part-b-p-donnelly.pdf>. This review of interface issues highlighted the need for government to work with interface communities to develop a long-term vision for the areas, with reference to

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regeneration, development and working in partnership, and also identified the importance of working with young people, capacity building and mapping existing resource and service provision.

47. CRCs work in these areas has included the establishment of the Interface Working Group and Community Partners Group, Hazelwood Community Partnership as a model of community based planning and good practice, and research including *Towards Sustainable Security*, consultations and the Challenge of Change conference, plus currently Beyond Belfast research project due for publication. We provide development support and funding to a range of grass root community groups and organisations to create positive change at practical and ground level across issues impacting those living in interface areas. This has been a core role for CRC in terms of influencing both policy and practice, with the goal of creating the conditions for the removal of barriers through building community confidence and safety.

48. *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface barriers & the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast* (2009), Community Relations Council <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/iwg-publication.pdf> - CRC, brought forward a framework for the regeneration of Interface areas and advocated that it was fundamentally important to develop local strategic approaches to barriers, safety and security and this must be based on two key elements: These were:

- it must be inclusive and thus involve community representatives and local residents, as well as local representatives of key agencies;
- and locally grounded approaches must be developed to meet each specific local context.

50. Community Relations Council have supported organisations like REACT who are involved in a number of initiatives in Armagh aimed at reducing tension and creating better relationships in and between communities and between communities and statutory bodies such as the *Flags and Banners Project*.

51. Wide community consultation will be an essential aspect of a new approach to flags and emblems. Within a policy on flags and emblems which contains general principles, local agreements on community festivals will be required. Locally based projects which seek to work with communities within the context of community development and/or environmental improvement have shown significant results in both reducing displays of flags, emblems and murals and/or reducing the period over which displays take place, and transforming the context in which the displays are viewed.

52. OFMDFM, Draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, July 2010, [http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/reformatted\\_final\\_print\\_version\\_csi\\_-\\_26.07.10.pdf](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/reformatted_final_print_version_csi_-_26.07.10.pdf) The CSI Document states

11.3 Across the equality and good relations landscape, there are currently a number of bodies that are responsible for providing advice to Government and challenging existing policy, including

- Equality Commission
- Community Relations Council
- Community Organisations

11.4 Additionally there are a number of bodies distributing funding and services to specific groups as well as to the public

11.5 Within such a complex landscape, the importance of clearly defined roles and responsibilities is vital. This is particularly so in times of uncertainty when resources must be used with maximum efficiency to deliver the best possible outcomes.

53. See for example ACCORD (2003), *Northern Ireland: Striking a balance*;  
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/docs/accord99.htm>

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Response to the consultation on the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

In July 2010, the Northern Ireland Executive released its draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration for public consultation. In October 2010 the Community Relations Council (CRC) responded.

Given this marvellous opportunity for real debate CRC has decided to publish its own ideas on a way forward as part of its public obligation. They are the result of long and thoughtful discussion within the Council and with many people across society, and they are rooted in CRC's participation in peace-building at local level and as participants in the £2bn EU PEACE Programmes and IFI Community Bridges Programme.

This is a vital area of public policy. Without a serious programme to enact change, broad and vague commitments to 'peace' in the abstract will eventually look naked and unconvincing in practice. CRC hopes and believes that serious debate and action on this issue will go on for many years. It hopes also that this publication can make a useful and constructive contribution to coherence and development in policy.

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