

T:buc

Changing for the better, together



Review of T:buc *September 2023*



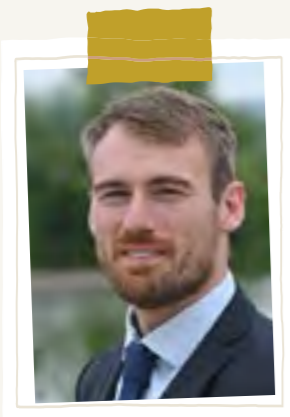
Northern Ireland
Executive

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Foreword



I am pleased to present the latest issue of the T:buc Engagement Forum newsletter. This issue contains some good news stories from The Executive Office, the Community Relations Council and across the T:buc Headline Actions showcasing advances in community regeneration, education, employment and housing. It is wonderful to see the continued positive impact being made within local communities and the ongoing commitment from all involved in delivering the various programme and projects.

The theme of today's Engagement Forum is the Belfast Good Friday Agreement (B/GFA). This year marks 25 years since it's signing and I want to use today's event to look at it from different perspectives – firstly to explore aspects of the B/GFA and its impact on Good Relations since it's implementation. And secondly, to look to the future and consider where we want to get to in the next 25 years. Today's event will include several presentations, including from Urban Villages and Shared Housing. We will also see a panel discussion hosted by someone who hopefully won't need to shout, 'Give My Head Peace!', Belfast's legendary writer and comedian, Tim McGarry.

Upon closing the more formal part of this Engagement Forum, we have extended proceedings into the afternoon where attendees will have the opportunity to venture out on either a whistle stop tour of community-based Good Relations projects in the local area; a tour of the Ebrington site and Peace Bridge; or take part in a networking opportunity with a range of participating groups and organisations, exploring a range of topics including Social Value.

The Engagement Forum is always a great occasion for us to get together and share our thoughts and feelings about our part of the world and today's event is particularly special as it is being held during Good Relations Week, the theme of which is 'Together.' There is a fantastic range of activity planned across the week and I encourage you to check out the Good Relations Week website and support events in your local area.

I am very pleased that we are all here today, united in our mission to move forward in making Northern Ireland an even better place, together. On behalf of both the Executive Office and the Community Relations Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank for you coming along today and I hope you enjoy the event.

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Chris Gardner

Head of T:buc & Good Relations Division
The Executive Office

TEO News Stories

Midlands Boxing Club

Staff from Good Relations and T:buc Division within TEO were delighted to receive an invitation to the celebration event for the re-opening of a community hub in the Tigers Bay area of North Belfast.

Midland Social and Recreation Association is home to a range of clubs including Midland Boxing Club, Midland Senior Citizens, the 'Nifty 50s' group and Midland Art Club and has recently re-opened following a major upgrade.

The boxing club has been in Tigers Bay for over 50 years and was quite run down so the investment has really transformed the boxing club and regenerated the entire area.

This project really shows the power and commitment of local volunteers in the community, particularly Sam Cochrane, the Chairperson of Midland Social and Recreational Association, who should be applauded for the commitment shown in achieving funding for this major refurbishment.

The project was funded and delivered by Belfast City Council who provided £700,000, with additional support from the Garfield Weston Foundation. A grant from The National Lottery Spaces and Places Fund has also enabled the club to transform a derelict piece of ground into a new community garden.

The investment has seen boxing facilities upgraded – including the addition of new female changing rooms and a second ring – while the social space within the building has also been redeveloped – including the addition of new accessible toilets and access ramps.

It was great to see the whole community and clubs from other parts of Belfast, young and old coming together to celebrate the club's success.



The District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) is a match funded good relations funding programme delivered jointly by The Executive Office (TEO) and District Councils as part of the wider Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy. The key aims of the programme are to improve relations between and within District Council areas and to support local solutions to local good relations issues.

As part of the DCGRP, Midland Boxing Club and Limestone United delivered a good relations summer programme which included delivering a series of diversionary events: workshops, activity evenings and a residential, engaging with a group of young teenagers from across the interfaces of North Belfast - Tigers Bay, Limestone Road, New Lodge.

Susan Nicholson from TEO, said:

“This is a really great asset for the community in North Belfast creating a space where people can meet and take part in a wide range of programmes.

This is the place where Carl Frampton began his boxing career and he of course helped put Belfast on the map through his achievements in the sport.

The club is grounded in the local community, and it is a great facility for the people of Tigers Bay.

The investment is a real boost for local boxers in particular. The sport is as popular as ever and women’s boxing is going from strength to strength, so the addition of new female changing rooms and a second ring means that girls and women considering taking up the sport will now have a new home.”



Julie McCormack and Susan Nicholson from TEO

TEO News Stories

East Belfast Mission – Skainos Centre

On Friday 30th June, staff from across The Executive Office Good Relations and T:buc Division, came together with colleagues from the Community Relations Council to support the work of the East Belfast Mission.

East Belfast Mission is based in the Skainos Centre on the Lower Newtownards Road in East Belfast. For over 20 years, they have provided services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. They deliver a range of projects which provide people with opportunities to learn new skills, meet people, regain lost confidence and to break out of homelessness and maintain independence.

The groups delivered by the East Belfast Mission include; a football project (run in partnership with Street Soccer NI), Going Green (gardening and environmental group), health and well-being groups, art groups, and more.

During the morning, TEO & CRC staff were involved in cleaning, maintenance, weeding and planting around the on-site community gardens. We also met with many staff members, they explained their challenging but inspiring roles, their commitment to supporting people to get out of the trap of homelessness was inspirational.



The tour also included a visit to the on-site Re:Store shop and a wider discussion with staff about their sustainability. Belfast City Council were also in attendance to provide information on their One Million Trees Project. This project aims to double Belfast's tree cover by 2035, helping to fight climate change in the city, increase the health and wellbeing of the population and increase the beauty and the amenity of the city.

Chris Gardner, Head of T:buc & Good Relations Division who participated on Friday morning said,

"It is great to see such a strong turn out of staff in attendance this morning to strengthen relations with our colleagues in CRC and to lend a helping hand in the on-site community gardens."



Citizens Wallpaper | Captivating Photographic Exhibition by APAC

A captivating photographic exhibition by APAC – Associated Photojournalism for Art and Culture, in association with Community Arts Partnership (CAP) and Ballymoney camera clubs – will display 24 representations from its Citizens Wallpaper project.

The Community Relations Council supported the project through its [CR/CD Small Grants Scheme](#).

Understanding and Respect

APAC was formed to promote understanding and respect between cultures using visual and performing arts, especially photojournalism and documentary photography, drama, performance and music.

APAC have been supported over many years for their Citizens Wallpaper project spanning from its beginning in 2012 to its completion date of 2021. CRC's Small Grants Scheme has supported each year as it developed through each stage.

The project encourages communities throughout Northern Ireland to visually record their lives and culture to join an ever-expanding documentary reflecting Northern Ireland's diversity in a positive and respectful way.



Discover More

View the online gallery:
<https://publish.exhibbit.com/gallery/66043493/atrium-gallery-16872/>

Find out more about Citizens Wallpaper:
<https://sharedfuture.news/citizens-wallpaper-a-co-produced-community-visual-story/>

T:buc Headline Actions Updates

T:buc Camps Programme



Programme Summary

The T:buc Camps Programme provides opportunities for young people to come together to build positive relationships across divided parts of our community. The camps challenge historic positions, encourage debate and discussion and provide a way for young people to get to know each other, try new experiences, have fun and help to build longer term relationships. Camps are delivered on a cross- community basis.

Programme News

The T:buc Camps Programme is one of the seven headline actions of the wider T:buc (Together: Building a United Community) Strategy.

The Programme is delivered in partnership with the Education Authority (EA) and the Department of Education (DE) with EA acting as Programme Administrator on behalf of the Executive Office (TEO). Good Relations learning

is at the heart of every T:BUC Camp. It provides opportunities for young people aged 9 - 25 from all backgrounds to come together, try new experiences, have fun, and build longer term relationships.

Since the programme began in 2015 nearly 900 Camps have been delivered to over 30,000 young people with a total investment from TEO of over £10.5m. A further 109 groups have been offered funding to deliver a Camp in 2023/24 with a total budget of over £1.4m.

The Programme provides opportunities and experiences for young people, which support them in their good relations learning and enable them to explore their own, and each other's, sense of identity. Many groups will also explore issues that are mutually interesting and important to the young people, such as mental health and the environment. As an example, T:BUC Camp Ambassadors supported the T:BUC Trees environmental initiative, resulting in over 600 trees being planted over 2 sites.



The Programme has been very successful. The latest available data indicates that:

91%

felt more favourable towards people from a different religious/ community background.

88%

felt more favourable towards people from a different ethnic background.

96%

of participants who feel a personal benefit from the experience (e.g., confidence, skills, participation).

88%

who have a better understanding of other cultural traditions and backgrounds.



Qualitative feedback from participants provides further evidence of the positive outcomes of the Programme for young people:

“It was a fantastic programme to be involved in. It opened my eyes and was educational in a very fun way. I loved the trips as there was so many places I haven't been before. I have made so many new friends and I wish I joined sooner.”

Participant

“I have actually really enjoyed T:BUC way more than I thought I would and think it was definitely a good learning opportunity for myself and everyone else attending. I'd definitely recommend other people join T:BUC next time.”

Participant

“With the many different cultures and backgrounds in the group I was able to learn more about others. I will still have a relationship with others from the group after this programme has passed.”

Participant

Discover More

Please see below the infographic on the T:BUC Camps 2022/23 Programme Outcomes or to find out any more information about the T:BUC Camps Programme or any of our programmes, please click on the link below;

[About Together: Building a United Community \(T:BUC\) | The Executive Office \(executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/about-together-building-a-united-community-t-buc/)



T:BUC Camps Programme Outcomes 2022/23

The T:BUC Camps Programme is one of the seven headline actions of the T:BUC Strategy. The programme is delivered in partnership with the Education Authority (EA) and the Department of Education (DE) with EA acting as Programme Administrator on behalf of the Executive Office (TEO). Good Relations learning is at the heart of every T:BUC Camp. It provides opportunities for young people aged 9-25 from all backgrounds to come together, try new experiences, have fun and build longer term relationships.

How much do we do?

3,819

young people participated in T:BUC in 2022/23

117

camp successfully completed



How well did we do it?

76%

of the participants feel they gained a personal benefit from the experience (e.g. confidence, skills and participation)

77%

of participants feel they would like to be more involved in peace building activities in the future

What people are saying

“ 10/10, T:BUC was lots of fun, I liked playing games and meeting new people and I made new friends. ”

“ Loved being involved in the programme and getting to know different people. ”

“ I loved learning new skills and leaving my mark on my local community hub. ”

Is anyone better off?

91%

of participants feel more favourable towards people from different religious / community backgrounds

88%

of participants feel more favourable towards people from different ethnic backgrounds

90%

of participants feel that culture and traditions of different backgrounds add to our richness and diversity

Scan for more information



Planned Interventions Programme

Programme summary

Delivered annually as part of the Executive's wider "Together: Building a United Community (T:buc) Strategy", the Executive Office's Planned Interventions Programme provides funding for community activity to divert young people from anti-social and potentially criminal behaviour around contentious parades and public assemblies, and to deal with heightened tension around interfaces during the summer period. The Planned Interventions Programme is administered by the Education Authority.



Programme News

The Planned Interventions Programme (PIP) funds community activity to provide positive alternatives for young people at risk of becoming involved in anti-social and other negative behaviours.

The Programme is delivered annually as part of the Executive's wider 'Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC)' Strategy. It is funded by The Executive Office and administered by the Education Authority.

PIP aims to engage the 'most at risk' young people between the ages of 10 to 25. Projects are tasked with operating at key times, when the likelihood of social unrest is high, or tensions between communities are heightened. PIP also seeks to develop the capacity of young people to meaningfully take part in structured cross community engagement and relationship building programmes, such as T:BUC Camps.

Since its inception in 2015 over 650 projects have been delivered to over 31,700 young people with a total investment from TEO of over £3m. 77 projects were completed under the 2022/23 Programme benefiting around 1500 young people. Applications for this year are now closed. Following assessments, 70 groups have been offered funding in 2023/24 over £400,000 and groups are in the delivery stage.

A survey of participants on the 2022/23 Programme indicated

92.7%

felt that they had improved self-confidence through participation.

84.3%

of participants indicated they now feel more favourably about young people from other religious/community backgrounds.

95.2%

of young people said that due to the impact of their projects, they were less likely to be involved in negative behaviour.

Qualitative feedback from participants reinforces the positive outcomes shown by the data collected:

“

This project ran over summer for the younger seniors in our area. This helped keep them off the streets and away from trouble and also let us teach them about things that could potentially get them into trouble.”

“

The Planned Intervention Funding enabled us to focus on particular groups of young people and all too often young women get left behind. This grant has enabled us to provide a developmental experience for them.”

Every effort is taken to make the Programme inclusive and equal. Efforts by TEO and EA to address underrepresentation in the Programme have centred around the recent ‘Road to 40’ Initiative. The overall target was to incrementally increase representation of PUL groups from 20% in 2022/23 to 40% over time.

The initiative provides structures to facilitate engagement with stakeholders such as the PSNI, EA, District Council Officials and other groups to raise awareness of the programme and address misconceptions. The initiative has proven to be very effective. Following assessments, the PUL representation within groups offered funding in 2023/24 is 31%, an increase of 11 percentage points on the previous year.

The initiative also seeks to address underrepresentation geographically. In 2023/24, there were successful applications from all 11 Council areas, demonstrating the positive impact of the Road to 40 Initiative in ensuring all areas have access to the benefits of PIP.

Uniting Communities Programme



Programme summary

The Uniting Communities Programme uses sport, physical, and creative activity to break down divisions in society and deliver and embed key good relations messages with an emphasis on tackling sectarianism, racism and promoting equality of opportunity.



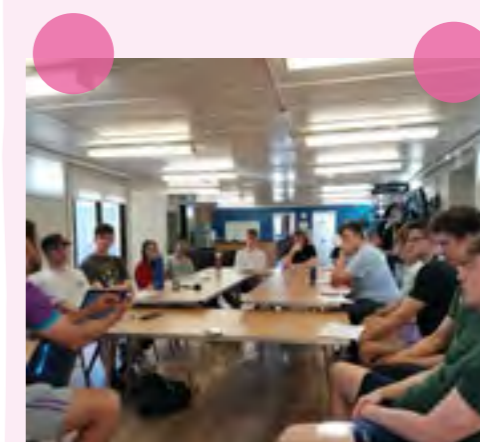
Programme News

Linked to Employment

From April to September T:BUC Uniting Communities Ambassadors across South Belfast and Lurgan/Portadown engaged in the Embedding Sustainability phase of their respective programmes. Having completed their OCN Uniting Communities through Leadership Level 2 Award over 30 Ambassadors were tasked with designing and delivering their own good relations activity and social actions projects in their own communities.

Co-operation Ireland, working alongside Todds Leap and Scotch Street Youth and Community Centre, provided this opportunity that helped these future community leaders put into practice their recent learning.

Social action projects focussed on addressing the cost of living crisis, working with the homeless and an environmental clean-up as well as leading sports sessions including boxing, basketball and taking responsibility for creative activity using art to explore good relations issues. The aim is to inspire these T:BUC Ambassadors to get involved in work that will bring young people together from different community backgrounds ensuring a positive legacy of the programme remains in these areas for years to come.



TBUC Ambassadors planning session.



TBUC Ambassador leading creative session to 11-16-year-olds at Scotch Street.

Further information:

If you have any questions please contact:

tbuc@communities-ni.gov.uk

If you want to know more about the Uniting Communities Programme, check out the website:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/uniting-communities-tbuc>

Urban Villages Initiative - Building our safe and connected community

Programme summary

The Urban Villages Initiative is designed to support communities and to work collaboratively across government departments, councils, and other interested parties to achieve positive outcomes for each Urban Village area through a series of capital investment and community-led projects.



Creative Schools Partnership Programme Ambassador Events

The Creative Schools programme is one of the Urban Village Initiative's highlights.

Across the five UV areas it brings together creatives and students to redrew education in primary colours, to bring drama and excitement, noise and passion to school life, engaging pupils, parents and teachers in new ways of working. Recently it has been the students' turn to get together to meet one another at Ambassador events and take workshops designed to share learning, teach new skills and build confidence through the arts.

Programme News



Three Creative Schools Ambassador events were held at the end of March 2023 in Duncairn Arts Centre in North Belfast; at Linenhall Library in Belfast City Centre; and in Derry/Londonderry, facilitated by a range of artists.

The events brought together, for the first time in three years, some of the schools involved in the Creative Schools Partnership Programme. Apart from the students, what makes CSPP special is that it is a cross-government programme funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through National Lottery funding, the Education Authority and The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative. Eleven post-primary schools located in the 5 Urban Village areas in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry are currently engaged in the programme which brings professional artists into

the classroom to teach new skills, support educational learning and strengthen community connections.

Marie O'Donoghue, Creative Schools Partnership Programme Manager, commented: "These workshops were a brilliant opportunity for students to come together to meet and most importantly have some fun together by engaging in arts activities. We were delighted to be able to bring along to each session some of the artists responsible for delivering workshops in schools this year, to give pupils a flavour of the range of projects taking place within the wider programme."

Reflecting on the benefits for students taking part in the Creative Schools Programme, Tanya Wakeley, Lead Teacher, St Cecilia's College, said: "All our pupils have benefitted from this collaborative working process, as

they navigated their own mental health journey after the recent pandemic lockdowns. The skills learnt across the last two years have been varied but phenomenal as they are completely transferable, not only across the curriculum, but for the world outside the classroom. Every pupil on the St Cecilia's Creative Schools project has had the opportunity to improve their confidence, communication, and collaborative skills - learning by stealth is a valuable part of the creative process. Every pupil involved has, in their own words said, 'my confidence improved because I was able to work with my friends'. This is testament to the whole ethos of the programme."

Joan O'Hara, Director of Urban Villages & Infrastructure, commented: "Urban Villages brings a unique element to this partnership through inclusion of the wider community as a strand of programme design and development. Whilst they have engaged with their own communities as part of their respective projects, it's fantastic to see the young people themselves being able to meet up & come together with some of the artists in a joint creative experience and to share with each other what they are doing through their respective programmes. Connecting people and creating networks is vital in strengthening school and community links; the learning gained through the wide range of projects delivered can only enhance the experience of the young people involved as they continue to promote and champion good relations within and across their communities".

New Stained-Glass Window Will Celebrate Diversity at Malone College

Self-portraits created in stained glass by students from Malone Integrated College as part of a UV funded programme will soon go on display as a permanent fixture in the school.

The glass tiles, created by Year 9 and 10 students, under the guidance of visual artist Kerrie Hanna, will be forged together to create a colourful bespoke window made up of a series of individual panes.

The window is the final element of a special two-year project the students have been engaged in as part of the Creative Schools Partnership (CSP) Programme - a pioneering cross-government programme funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through National Lottery funding, the Education Authority and the Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative.

Malone College was one of eleven post-primary schools located in the 5 Urban Village areas currently engaged in the CSP Programme to develop an arts-led project which would connect with the school curriculum, support student development and engage the wider community. The programme brings professional artists into the classroom to teach new skills, support educational learning and strengthen community connections.

The students have had the opportunity to step outside of their normal school activities to take part in specially devised drama and art sessions, led by professional artists, focussing on creative learning and improving student confidence. With 26 different languages spoken by students within the school, a primary focus of the project has been on celebrating cultural diversity and promoting inclusion.





Talking about the project, teacher Lynsay-Erin Mercer said: "We wanted this project to be a collaboration, with input from myself, the artist and the children. The children wanted to look at their identity and some of the different cultures represented here within the school. The children worked with Kerrie to create the stained glass. The project has been a real success. The children have learnt new skills, different to what they would generally do in class. It's been a really worthwhile experience and the children can all say, with pride, that they have been a part of something really special."

Director of Urban Villages Joan O'Hara commented: "The Urban Villages Initiative is delighted to be able to support this innovative project. Having this beautiful stained-glass piece as a permanent installation within the school building showcases and celebrates diversity and inclusion. This will encourage students to share their voices not just within school but in their local community and will provide new life experiences and help generate new thinking which is at the heart of building good relations."

Eight Nurseries Recognised as Nursery Schools of Sanctuary for the First Time.

This year, eight Nursery Schools across the five Urban Villages areas of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry broke new ground by becoming the first to participate in the Schools of Sanctuary Programme.

June 2023 was a month of celebration as each of the Nurseries achieved Nursery School of Sanctuary (SoS) status, joining 60 primary and secondary schools, 51 of which are in UV areas, who have achieved SoS Status to date.

The Schools of Sanctuary programme supports schools to further develop as welcoming and inclusive places for all pupils and their families, where each child thrives and cultural diversity is celebrated; and a place where every child feels safe and accepted regardless of what belief or background. The programme, also supported by the Education Authority, provides opportunities for pupils to develop skills, such as tolerance and empathy, across the curriculum as well as strengthening connections with families and the wider community. Recognising the

importance of engaging at the outset of people's lives, this was the first time Schools of Sanctuary had worked with children aged 3-4 in Nursery School settings in Northern Ireland.

The Nursery Schools were presented with their awards in June 2023 by Belfast City of Sanctuary, EA and Urban Villages Co-ordinators. The award presentations took place within the Nursery Schools and fantastic weather allowed teachers, pupils and parents to celebrate in the sunshine. Each school was presented with a School of Sanctuary Plaque and Certificate and the schools provided a range of treats, including cakes & buns, for the children as part of the celebrations. The children even got involved as some helped their teachers in baking buns!

OUR Generation will reach Director of Urban Villages Joan O'Hara congratulated everyone involved in the project, commenting: "The Urban Villages Initiative is delighted to be a part of this programme, supporting all schools serving the UV areas to become warm and welcoming places for everyone. This is a wonderful achievement; these Nursery Schools have led the way in being awarded School of Sanctuary status. They are the first Nursery Schools in Northern Ireland to participate in the programme, which recognises the key role children, young people, teachers, and the whole school community have in promoting good relations and inclusion."



Good Shepherd Nursery in Colin, West Belfast



St Luke's Nursery in Colin, West Belfast



Holy Cross Nursery in North Belfast



McArthur Nursery in East Belfast



Sandbrook Nursery in East Belfast



Arellian Nursery in South Belfast



Bligh's Lane Nursery in Derry/Londonderry



The Academy Nursery in Derry/Londonderry



The Future Innovators Conference brought a slice of 'Dragons' Den' to Crumlin Road Gaol on 19 May to showcase developments in digital innovation and lead a discussion on how to improve local areas through Community Interest Companies (CICs).

14 start-up CICs shared their experiences of how funding from the Future Innovators programme helped them to identify & meet a need within their area, while at the same time creating employment and income for their communities.

The Future Innovators programme, led by Co-operation Ireland, is a cross border programme, funded by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Match-funding for the project has been provided by The Executive Office and the Department of Rural and Community Development in Ireland. Urban Villages and border areas were the location for this exciting blend of public and private sector thinking.

Of the 14 CICs established, 11 are based within the 5 Urban Villages areas: Street Soccer NI, The Multi-Cultured Club and The Diamond Project in East Belfast; Lagmore Youth Project and Suffolk Community Forum in the Colin area; Market Development Association in South Belfast; Horn of Africa People's Alliance in North Belfast; and Excel CIC, New Gate Arts, Bogside and Brandywell Health Forum and Old Library Trust in Derry/Londonderry. The high percentage of UV CICs underlines the community dynamism at the heart of UV.

Free masterclasses were also available on the day, delivered by industry professionals, to support groups interested in developing their own CICs. These included 'Creating Retail Magic', 'Digital Marketing' 'Funding a new enterprise' and 'Using your story to sell your brand'.

As part of the programme, a new digital platform was developed by one of the partners, University of Essex, which will be a vital tool in creating a self-sustaining network of support. This

important resource will help empower individuals and communities to connect and come together to share their experiences, learn lessons, develop ideas and deliver their own community-based projects.

Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary at the Executive Office, congratulated everyone involved in the Future Innovators project, commenting: "Well done to the 11 groups from the five Urban Village areas and the participants from Donegal on their certificate presentation today, recognising and celebrating their achievements over the course of the Future Innovators programme. Identifying innovative ways to improve and transform communities is vital to all our futures. The Digital Platform developed through the programme will be an important tool in creating a self-sustaining network of support for these groups and their communities. These activities and relationships are at the heart of building good relations and will leave a positive lasting legacy."



Not Just For Boys Programme: Women's TEC

Women's Tec Not Just for Boys programme is a great initiative that inspires girls and young women to look at exciting career opportunities in the world of construction and IT.

Recent developments include introducing the programme to Primary 7 girls and bringing post-primary students to construction sites visits. Primary 7 girls from Mercy Primary, Holy Cross Girls PS and Wheatfield PS have joined in the primary schools sessions. The sessions give them hands-on experience and allow them to explore their creativity and develop practical skills.

Young women who study construction at GCSE level at Girls Model visited a Graham Construction site where they got to witness the various stages of construction projects and meet professionals who shared their experiences and career journeys.

A group of Blessed Trinity College students visited the site of a 15-storey student accommodation site by McAleer and Rushe. The young women study Technology and Design at various levels and got valuable insights into careers from architecture and engineering to project management and skilled trades.

#NotJustForBoys is supported by the Urban Villages Initiative.

Peer Mentors and Fresh Start Wednesdays

Young peer mentors in Mercy College have developed an excellent initiative in their school - Fresh Start Wednesdays,

with support from Youth Education Health Advice (YEHA). They designed and implemented the programme based on young people's needs and have been giving up their spare time on Wednesday mornings to help support other young people.

On Fresh Start Wednesdays, many young people have been coming into school early for a nutritious breakfast, some games, music and access to youth workers for a chat. Meanwhile, the Streetbeat peer mentors have been active in Girls' Model, Boys' Model, Belfast Royal Academy and Hazelwood College. The peer mentors take part in a programme that teaches them practical skills to help support young people and gives them the opportunity to work towards an accredited OCN qualification.

The Wraparound Peer Mentors is a joint initiative of Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership, YEHA and Streetbeat. This project is supported by the Urban Villages Initiative.



Resilience

Invisible Barriers

Invisible Barriers, by Youth Education Health Advice (YEHA) Drama Project, is a youth-led short film highlighting key moments of women's lives through the generations of North Belfast.

The film uses an artistic and documentary style to celebrate the strength and resilience of working-class women in the backdrop of difficult times. It shows how women continue to be the pillars of the community and how they help build a sense of connection and hope for future generations.

The young women hope that their film can make a difference in North Belfast by showing what the community has already achieved and the power of coming together. The film was shown at Strand Arts Centre in March. This YEHA drama project is supported with funding from the Urban Villages Initiative.

The Resilience Programme supported and funded by the Urban Villages Initiative has continued to grow. The Bogside and Brandywell Health Forum (BBHF) has been key in providing support to people within the local community and schools, showing that through the relationships they have nurtured they have been able to bridge the gap that has existed for so long between community and statutory organisations on education.

Supporting pupils and their families

BBHF have delivered 11 Resilience Programmes across the Urban Villages area and is offering additional Maths and English support within the youth clubs.

Throughout the year BBHF has continued to develop effective programmes and services in partnership with teachers and classroom assistants. The feedback from our partner Youth Clubs has been fantastic,

"The sessions went well, I had the same students each week. Everyone attended the sessions and the engagement and feedback was all good and positive." Georgina, Cathedral Youth Club

"Things are going great. Pupils are still attending weekly and are motivated." Kellie, Long Tower Youth Club

Through partner meetings with local schools and youth clubs, BBHF has identified the increasing need to address educational anxiety in young people. The Resilience Programme continues its partnership with Youth Clubs and Schools to enable BBHF to provide KS2, 3 and 4 in a range of environments, offering support for GCSE Maths and English. It was identified the need for this programme was outweighing what could be provided. The additional funding has allowed BBHF to tackle this quickly to get that much needed support into the community and to the young people.

Aileen Mc Guinness, Director of the Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum commented on the project's impact saying, "We are supporting one young person who now has the confidence to go into their math's class and not feel lost. They now have the confidence to give back to their community and they are not defined by their limitations or where they are from and this counts for so much in their young life." BBHF is excited to be looking forward in the programme planning to develop and evolve this excellent service.



Prince Of Wales' Visit to Hosford Community Homes: Inclusion Hub

The Hosford Community Homes: Inclusion Hub, a new capital project funded by the Urban Villages Initiative, was selected by the Royal Foundation for a visit on 27th June 2023. The visit was part of the Prince of Wales' UK tour to launch Homewards - a five-year locally led programme delivered by the Royal Foundation.

Urban Villages Initiative. During the visit Prince William heard about the project's mix of good relations space and apartments which offer wrap around support. The Head of the Civil Service, Jayne Brady, was also in attendance to meet the Prince of Wales. The Urban Villages team are hopeful that this visit is the beginning of East Belfast Mission's relationship with the Royal Foundation.

Representatives of East Belfast Mission spent time with Prince William at the project's premises on the Lower Newtownards Road to talk about the Inclusion Hub; their work to tackle homelessness; and their partnership with the

Urban Villages are delighted to be working with East Belfast Mission and look forward to future collaboration and partnership working on homelessness prevention through the £885,000 capital build project.



His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with Tom Dillon, Building Co-ordinator/ Hosford Community Homes Lead, East Belfast Mission.

Discover More

If you have any questions please contact:

info@urbanvillagesni.org

If you want to know more about these projects, check out the website:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/urban-villages-initiative>

Shared Education Campuses

Programme summary

The Shared Education Campuses (SEC) Programme provides capital assistance to applicant schools to facilitate shared education. There have been three calls to the SEC Programme, with five projects having been approved to proceed to planning. The projects include a mixture of designs, but all include shared education facilities as the core element of delivery.



Programme News

↓
Work continues on Shared Education Campuses (SEC) projects approved from the First and Second calls to the programme. The two post-primary projects are leading the way with construction ongoing on the new shared facilities for the Limavady SEC and now substantially complete on the Limavady High School (HS) site, with works on the St Mary's site due to be completed in August 2023.

↓
The procurement of the Integrated Supply Team was re-launched in January 2022 for the Ballycastle SEC with the appointment finalised in May 2023. The Department of Education (DE) has appointed Heron Bros contractors to build a new £70 million SEC in Ballycastle. The design and build contractor will now begin final design work with a view to commencing construction in early 2024. Demolition work to clear a section of the site has already been completed.

↓
The Brookeborough primary schools project is also progressing with the business case being submitted by the Education Authority (EA) in January 2023. The Department has reviewed this and the EA are now updating this to take account of comments raised.



Brookeborough Shared Education Campus (SEC) – Shared Education Continues to Flourish Within the Brookeborough Community

Events continue to be held and enjoyed by pupils between both schools of the Brookeborough Shared Education Campus (SEC). On 17 June 2023, pupils from Brookeborough Primary School (PS) and St Mary's PS participated in a cross-community sports event. This event was enjoyed by all pupils who took part.



Previously, on 10 April 2023, pupils from both schools participated in a **cross-community Easter Hunt** with Brookeborough and District Community Development Association. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed the event and got to enjoy some Easter chocolate from the egg hunt.



Pupils and parents from both schools took part in a cross-community litter pick where everyone worked together to tidy up the local community.

The school held a charity 'Wear Yellow Day' on 16 May 2023 where they raised £212. They held a joint presentation at Brookeborough PS where they presented the donation to Ruth Jacks from Marie Curie.

Shared Education lessons continue between both schools with some of the younger pupils taking part in an **activity based learning senses scavenger hunt** where the pupils had to put each of their senses to the test tasting different fruits and using their touch to identify different objects.

Shared Housing Programme

Programme summary

The aim of the Shared Housing Programme is to create communities of 'good neighbours' and ensure that there is greater choice open to those who wish to live in a mixed area.

Each Scheme is supported by an Advisory Group made up of local Community and Voluntary Groups, local political reps and Good Relations Officers from the Housing Executive and local Councils. The Groups also include representatives from Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and other relevant statutory bodies.

Programme News

The Shared Housing Programme (the Programme) has its origins in the Northern Ireland (NI) Executive Together: Building a United Community (T:buc) Strategy. TBUC reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society, and it represents a major change in the way that good relations will be delivered across government.

The Department for Communities (DfC / the Department) committed to delivering the T:buc Headline Action: To create 10 new shared neighbourhood developments. The shared neighbourhoods were delivered under the T:buc key priorities 2 and 3, and these priorities will continue to drive the delivery of the Shared Housing Programme ('Housing for All') throughout the 2016-2021 Programme for Government (PfG).

69
Schemes under development badged Housing for All

56
Schemes represented by an Advisory Group.

33
Shared Housing schemes completed and celebrated as Shared

15
of these are single scheme Advisory Groups and the others are merged.

44
Good Relations Plans in Development or being delivered

1038
households now living in a shared environment.



Building a better future at Crumlin Men's Shed

A Men's Shed in Crumlin set up to reduce isolation, teach new skills and encourage giving back to the community is offering a series of workshops to local people thanks to support from Clanmil Housing.

The Clanmil's funding contribution is part of a Good Relations programme for a new 'Housing For All' shared housing development at Lough Neagh Terrace, funded by the NI Housing Executive and the Department for Communities.

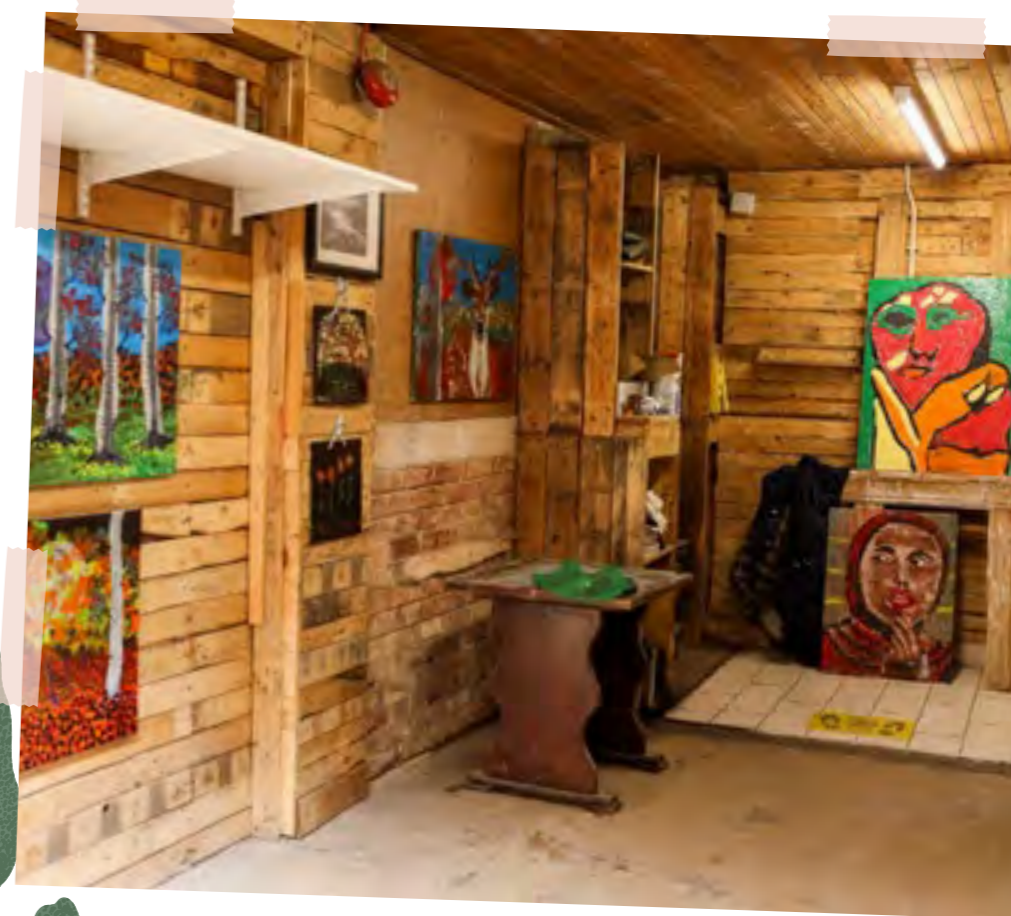
The Crumlin Men's Shed has been based at a former school building in the town since 2019 and thanks to the hard work of members, has been transformed into a multifunctional space including a workshop, art room, seating area and kitchen. Outside there are two polytunnels and raised beds where members have been cultivating a variety of vegetables, plants and flowers.

The group are preparing a programme of workshops for the summer, all of which are free for members of the local community. The workshops - art, car maintenance and home improvement - will be delivered by specialist tutors with input from some of the regular members, who include an amateur artist, a mechanic, a joiner, and a former garden centre owner.

Jim Anderson, Secretary of the Crumlin Men's Shed, is a retired electrician and has been involved with the group for a number of years. He said the support from Clanmil has been much-needed:

"It's been a welcome injection of help for us. We realized that if we wanted to run workshops and invite members of the public in, we needed to improve the facilities. We've already been able to upgrade our polytunnels with an irrigation system (which has proved very useful with the recent dry weather) and add raised beds. Inside the main building we've almost completed upgrading the toilets which will make the premises more comfortable for people visiting."

The Men's Shed movement started in Australia in the 1980s with the aim of bringing men aged 18 and older together to share their interests and socialise.



The art room at Crumlin Men's Shed



While the Crumlin Men's Shed encourages the sharing of knowledge and learning new skills, it's an important social space for men of all ages to gather. Whether someone wants to come in and create something in the workshop, tend to plants in the polytunnels or simply have a chat and a cuppa in the lounge area, everyone is welcome.

The group have also benefited from visiting speakers delivering topics ranging from mental health and wellbeing to staying safe around the home.

Jim added: "Many of us are retired and some live on their own, so we do look out for each other. We don't force people to come in every day or take part in things, and it's up to each individual. But if someone hadn't been in for a while, one of us would pick up the phone and check they're OK."

Austin Kelly, Community Cohesion Officer at Clanmil said: "Clanmil is pleased to support the Men's Shed project because as well as encouraging further learning and sharing of skills, the project reduces isolation and improves the wellbeing of members. It's also important that the group are involved in the local community and welcome people of all backgrounds. When we bring a new 'Housing For All' development to a community, we aim to build strong links with the people who live here and encourage the cross-community ethos from the beginning. We look forward to continuing to work with the Men's Shed and wish them every success in the future."

Lough Neagh Terrace is a development of 19 apartments being built in Crumlin and will be supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme. The Programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

Funding of £387,485 has been provided by the Department for Communities to support a five year Good Relations plan for the development. A range of cross-community activities are being set up as part of this plan. The new homes will be ready for handover to residents in autumn 2025.

Discover More Your Clanmil Neighbourhood Team



Link to short video promoting the project:
Crumlin Men's Shed
<https://biteable.com/watch/3942933/109066a2affed1fa9f8e2e4375aace04>



Radius Housing Rolls Out Accredited Training to Shared Housing Schemes and Beyond

Radius Housing rolled out a suite of accredited training courses as part of their good relations activities delivered through the Department's and Housing Executive Shared Housing Programme.

The projects delivered worked with 250 participants and resulted in 380 formal accreditations. While each project had a specific theme, they were all underpinned by themes including, Training, Education and Employment, Arts and Culture, Health and Wellbeing, and Advice and Advocacy.



The "Beauty is our Business" project was delivered in South and East Belfast to 32 participants who achieved over 100 accreditations in partnership with Gems NI, Belfast Works, Utopia Learning and Capital Hair and Beauty Training.

The "Do Something Healthy" project which targeted 14- to 19-year-olds was delivered in partnership with Boys and Girls clubs in NI. The project resulted in 120 accreditations achieved across five shared housing areas. Other projects delivered included:-

70

professional beauty accreditations x 20 participants.

20

OCN Level 3 in Business Skills and Entrepreneurship.

12

Shared Housing Tenants - Driving Theory Programme.

Soccer Academy - Street Soccer (Belfast, Coleraine and Derry/Londonderry)

134 participants achieved 118 accreditations

42

IFA Level 1 Coaching Award

46

OCN in Disability

30

Introduction Certificate to Refereeing

Dungannon Youth and Resource Centre

11
11

OCN Level 2 in Good Relations and

OCN Level 2 in Mental Health Awareness (Stress Management).



Tullymore Youth Club/ Ledley Hall (Belfast)

10

OCN Level 2 in Good Relations and

8

OCN Level 2 in Mental Health Awareness (Stress Management)

10

OCN Certificate in Youth Work Practice.

Detached Service (Cookstown)

10

OCN Level 2 Good Relations and

11

OCN Level 2 Mental Health

The Hub - West Bann (Coleraine)

13

OCN Level 2 Good Relations and

13

OCN Certificate in Healthy Living.



APEX supports Match for Mental Health

‘Match for Mental Health’ featuring Manchester United Legends was held in North Belfast in June 2023.

The event, organised by mental health charity TAMHI was supported by Apex Housing Association (Apex) through its ‘Housing for All’ good relations plan for the Belfast area.

The showcase match saw Manchester United Legends, including Lee Sharpe and Jaap Stam, playing against a Cliftonville and Crusaders select. Another team made up of TAMHI volunteers and Northern Ireland’s top comedians also played the Manchester United Legends, in a team kit sponsored by Apex.

Sharon Hunt, Senior Communities Officer at Apex, commented, “We were thrilled to support the Match for Mental Health in North Belfast, which has raised funds for TAMHI’s vital work in the area. Through our ‘Housing for All’ good

relations plan for the Belfast area, we sponsored the TAMHI team’s kits, and they certainly did us proud playing against the mighty Manchester United Legends! It was great to see people from all backgrounds coming together to support and participate in this fantastic event.”

Sponsorship of TAMHI’s football kits was supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive’s ‘Housing for All’ Shared Housing Programme. The Programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

Apex’s Ballynafoy Close shared housing development in Belfast is supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. £11m was invested in the scheme’s development and associated good relations plan.



TAMHI Diverse voices join together at Northern Lights event in Dungannon

A celebration of cultures brought together singers and dancers at Ranfurley House, Dungannon to mark Good Relations Week. Northern Lights was organised by Radius Housing and Apex Housing, and was opened by Ian McElhinney, star of Derry Girls and Game of Thrones.

Ian introduced the audience to the raft of talented artists, which included Irish dancers, a Highland Piper, traditional Irish singers and musicians and a showband. School children from St Patrick’s College and Drumglass High School came together as a joint choir, with pupils representing 14 nationalities, which is a mark of the diversity of the Dungannon area.

Northern Lights was one of a number of events Radius and Apex Housing organised to highlight diversity and celebrate the wide range of cultures in communities. Among the Shared Housing developments managed by Radius is Earls Court in Dungannon, while Apex manage the Sycamore Drive development in Dungannon, and this event was part of the community relations development plan for the area.

The project was supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive’s ‘Housing for All’ Shared Housing Programme. Radius and Apex continue to work in partnership with the local Advisory Group stakeholders, and with residents to develop each scheme’s Good Relations Plan. £7m has been invested in the Dungannon shared housing developments and associated five-year Good Relations Plans.

Speaking at the event, Geraldine Dougan from Radius Housing said

“The Dungannon area is known to be one of the most multi-cultural in Northern Ireland, and this event was a chance to celebrate the diversity of the area. The rich history of music and dance from these islands and from much further afield makes for a great evening’s entertainment, and with stars like Ian McElhinney, it has proven to be a wonderful event.”

Teresa McCloskey from Apex Housing said:

“Dungannon continues to lead the way in recognising the multi-cultural background of its residents, and the success of this event was a shining example of that. It was fantastic to see music, dance and performances from different cultures and traditions all under the one roof. The audience was made up of Dungannon residents and people from other countries who have made Dungannon their home, and it was great to

see the evening being enjoyed by all. We look forward to continuing our good relations work in the Dungannon area.”

Both Radius and Apex have shared housing developments across Northern Ireland. Good Relations Plan includes ‘Bridging’ events which are delivered to the wider community to encourage a range of good relations outcomes which include Health and Wellbeing, Education and Training.



Kids take a leaf from older people in Forest School project



A pilot programme which brings school children and older people together to explore the outdoors has been launched. Radius Housing is working with Northern Ireland Forest Schools Association (NIFSA) and Kylemore Nursery to run an intergenerational forest schools programme from May to June 2023.

Forest schools is a recognised model of education which takes learning to the outdoors environment, engaging and motivating children through outdoor exercises linked to the curriculum.

The pilot, which is the first in NI, will bring together children from Kylemore Nursery, Coleraine, their parents & grandparents and older people from Radius's Independent Living schemes in Coleraine, Portstewart and Portrush for a programme of learning and sharing. The intergenerational work will see the older people tell their stories and memories of outdoor play and learning, as the children undertake their own outdoor activities in forests and green spaces. The idea is that the older people pass on their ideas of outdoor creativity and fun to the young children.

The workshops, led by NIFSA and supported by the teachers of Kylemore Nursery (who are accredited in the Forest schools programme) will involve 52 children from the nursery. They will each participate in a planting workshops and 2 Forest schools workshops at The Cornfield, Ballysally. A celebration event will be held at the end of the programme to highlight learning and achievements.

As well as the obvious benefits of learning and intergenerational sharing, the programme has clear good relations benefits with different religious and ethnic backgrounds mixing and learning together. Parents, grandparents and children have the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with others of different backgrounds and nationalities.

NIFSA has tailored resources for the pilot, linking to the curriculum, in this case KS1. This will include evaluation workbooks to reinforce learning. The hope is that the pilot scheme will allow for a wider programme to be developed for the future.

Speaking at the start of the program, Melanie Rintoul, Senior Communities Officer, Radius Housing, said "Radius Housing are really excited to be part of this pilot programme. The programme knits together different elements which are key to developing good relations or in our communities, education, linking generations & using our natural environment."

The Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Councillor Ivor Wallace, said "I am delighted to come along today and witness first-hand how this new pilot programme will benefit both young and old from within our local area. The intergenerational element is especially heart-warming to see. It is to be commended that this programme will help children learn how previous generations enjoyed the outdoors and no doubt encourage them to appreciate it for themselves. Well done to all involved in bringing this exciting programme to the Borough."

Yvonne Thompson, Scheme Co-ordinator of Rathain Fold in Coleraine, whose residents are participating in the programme, said "We were delighted to be invited to join with these children and others as our tenants are very actively involved in their local community and schools and welcome the opportunity to interact and pass on our memories of childhood outdoor play and the games we loved - some of which are not played by children any longer. The tenants have a great wealth of knowledge and experience to pass on to the next generation and they are looking forward to this programme of events."

Brian Poots, NIFSA, added "This is such an exciting project. I witness first-hand the joy that Forest Schools bring to children every day. I know that this inter-generational Forest School will bring excitement to everybody involved. I also think it will be very powerful, invoking memories for the older audience of the time when they were children and how they used to play without so many restrictions as we have today."

Hilary Hutchinson, Principle, Kylemore Nursery, concluded "We are all really keen to have the opportunity to participate in this project and wish to thank Radius for the opportunity. Our staff parents and children know that it will benefit our preschool children in valuing the elderly by forging relationships with the Radius tenants, developing a caring nature as we share skills and find out more about how outdoor play was valued by previous generations."

The pilot programme was supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme. The Programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. A total of £3.0 M has been invested in Laurel Hill Gardens and associated five-year Good Relations Plan.



Spring Launch of Three New Shared Housing Developments

April and May saw the launch of three new shared housing developments; Glenwherry Court, Newtownabbey, Fountain Hill, Antrim, and Belfast Road, Newry.

Clanmil Housing Association's Glenwherry Court shared housing development was officially opened by the Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Alderman Stephen Ross. Allocations to the new homes in Glenwherry enabled Clanmil to work in partnership with the NI Health and Social Care Trust to provide homes for young people leaving care.

Alderman Ross said: *"I have very much enjoyed meeting everyone here today and it was a great honour to officially open this new development at Glenwherry. It's wonderful to see how everyone is settling in and I wish them all the best for the future."*

Carol McTaggart, Group Chief Executive of Clanmil Housing added:

"I am delighted to celebrate the official opening of these new homes. Shared neighbourhoods such as this offer people the choice to live alongside people from many backgrounds and traditions, and Clanmil is committed to delivering modern, quality homes that are welcoming to all."

The Department for Communities Permanent Secretary, Colum Boyle, officiated the 'sod-cutting' at Choice Housing's new shared development at Fountain Hill in



Antrim. The new development will deliver approximately 38 new homes, with 16 delivered in the first phase.

Choice Group Chief Executive Michael McDonnell said, *"As a housing association, Choice continues to show real leadership in shared housing. Choice is determined to create and sustain diverse, integrated and ultimately more stable and thriving neighbourhoods, grounded in mutual respect."*

Colum Boyle, Permanent Secretary at the Department for Communities, added, *"The Shared Housing Programme aims to improve choice and remove barriers to accessing quality homes across the region. This new development in Antrim makes an important contribution to this and we are pleased to be partnering with Choice on this project."*

Arbour Housing launched its first shared neighbourhood at Belfast Road in Newry. The launch was supported by Councillor Michael Savage, chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Kieran Matthews, CEO of Arbour Housing said,

"The developer and contractor have produced a lovely apartment block and the feedback from our tenants on both the accommodation and service provision has been very positive. As this is a shared housing scheme, all tenants will benefit from good relations projects and events that will support them in settling into their new home and surroundings."

For more information about the Shared Housing Programme please visit:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-housing-programme>

Peace IV and Peace Plus

Programme News

Peace IV is now in its final year of delivery and all projects are to be concluded by 31 December 2023. TEO is the match funder and Accountable Department for €110m in PEACE IV funding for Investment Areas that contribute to Good Relations. These include three Local Authority Action Plans strands - Children and Young People, Building Positive Relations and Shared Spaces and Services, as well as the Regional Building Positive Relations and Victims and Survivors investment areas.

As of July 2023, all 17 local authorities in Northern Ireland and the border areas of ROI have successfully completed their Children and Young People and Building Positive Relations strands. 13 councils have now also finished their Shared Spaces and Services projects. 19 out of 21 Regional Building Positive Relations (BPR) projects have been completed. All remaining projects are on track to complete by December 2023.

The PEACE IV programme is making a key contribution to building peace and reconciliation here and in the six border counties of the ROI. Through the Regional BPR projects, to date almost 115,000 participants have engaged with the projects

promoting meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between people of different backgrounds. Through the Local Authority Action Plans over 23,000 children and young people engaged in projects aiming to help them reach their potential and maximize their contribution to a more cohesive society. Each Council has developed initiatives to make public spaces in cities, towns and villages more inclusive and rolled out projects to promote reconciliation, cultural diversity, conflict transformation and equality in their communities.

The new £1 billion PEACE PLUS Programme was launched in June 2023. It will continue to promote peace and prosperity in the region, building on the legacy of PEACE IV and its predecessors. Nine out of 22 calls for PEACE PLUS are now open for applications, including Local Authority Action Plans and Victims and Survivors.

The remaining calls for Investment Areas will be opened throughout 2023 and 2024. A full list of current funding opportunities under PEACE PLUS can be found on the SEUPB website along with a comprehensive range of pre application and application support resources.

Good Relations Capacity Building

- A review of the GR Capacity Building Pilot 2018/19 is underway.
- Work has included looking at hate crime incidents (racist, sectarian, homophobic) over a period of time to ward level.
- Engagement has taken place with relevant stakeholders i.e. TEO GR Programme Managers, Council GRO's, CiT, DoJ and CRC and further engagement is required.
- It is beneficial to hear from those with the experience and knowledge of their areas what are the current issues, what are the gaps, as well as what is needed to address.
- Every area/community is different. People are at different stages of the GR journey with some perhaps not having started it just yet.
- On completion of the review, a report will be presented to senior management with options for going forward.
- Report will be beneficial to the Review of T:BUC which is also currently underway.
- Good Relations Delivery Team is keen to hear from anyone who would wish to share thoughts/ideas around GR Capacity Building going forward.

New PEACEPLUS Programme Now Open For Applications

Twenty-five years after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in which the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) was introduced as the Managing Authority with overall

responsibility for the Peace Programme, the European Commission has made provision for a new € 1.1 billion PEACEPLUS Programme which was recently launched in June 23.

PEACEPLUS is a funding partnership between the European Union, the governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Executive administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

PEACEPLUS will continue to provide investment to Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland to protect stability, drive prosperity, and support peace.

The PEACEPLUS Programme has been divided into six themes each of which aims to address longstanding social, environmental, and economic challenges which have and continue to impact our community. Within each theme there are several investment areas - these will have a more specific focus and target organisation such as local authorities or community groups.

The TEO Peace team recently had the opportunity to attend the first two PEACEPLUS Roadshows which were held in Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. The Roadshows, which are already attracting huge interest, provided an opportunity to hear more about the PEACEPLUS Programme, as well as explore the Funding Calls that are currently open for applications. They also provided an opportunity to speak to SEUPB staff around the thematic areas. Further roadshows across Northern Ireland and the six border counties of Ireland are planned for the Autumn.

There are currently **nine** funding calls open, you can find more information on application support and guidance for completing an application is available through the link : [Current funding opportunities](#)

Other Calls under the Programme, including theme 1.3 Building Positive Relations, will open later in 2023 and in early 2024.

PEACEPLUS Programme Thematic Areas

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities	Delivering Socio-Economic Regeneration and Transformation	Empowering and Investing in Our Young People	Healthy and Inclusive Communities	Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future	Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration
€250m	€170m	€123m	€172m	€303m	€52m
Investment Areas					
1.1 Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plans (€110m) 1.2 Empowering Communities (€30m) 1.3 Building Positive Relations (€35m) 1.4 Re-imagining Communities (€75m)	2.1 SME Development and Transition (€25m) 2.2 Innovation Challenge Fund (€65m) 2.3 Programme Areas Skills Development (€50m) 2.4 Smart Towns and Villages (€30m)	3.1 Shared Learning Together Education Programme (€51.3m) 3.2 PEACE PLUS Youth Programme (€47m) 3.3 Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing (€25m)	4.1 Collaborative Health and Social Care (€97m) 4.2 Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion (€50m) 4.3 Victims and Survivors (€25m)	5.1 Biodiversity, Nature Recovery and Resilience (€40m) 5.2 Marine and Coastal Management (€24.8m) 5.3 Water Quality and Catchment Management (€21m) 5.4 Water Quality Improvement Programme (€22m) 5.5 Geothermal Energy Demonstration Programme (€20m) 5.6 Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity (€165m)	6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement (€32m) 6.2 Maintaining and Forging Relationships between Citizens (€20m)



Discover More

For further details on PEACEPLUS visit

[PEACEPLUS | SEUPB](#)

Central Good Relations Fund

Programme summary

The Central Good Relations Fund (CGRF) supports constituted voluntary and community sector groups to deliver good relations projects where there is evidence of good relations need. Since 2016, £15million has been awarded to support over 460 projects. In the last three funding years alone over 100,000 direct participants have been positively impacted by programmes using activities like sport, music and crafts to engage local communities.

Programme News

The CGRF is extremely competitive and demand for funding always exceeds available resources. In 2023/24

In 2023/24
201
applications totalling
£7.36m
were received.

- Unfortunately, The Executive Office (TEO) was faced with extreme budgetary pressure this year, like all Departments across Government, and we were in a position where particularly difficult decisions have had to be made.
- As a result, CGRF's budget allocation for 2023/24 was confirmed as £1.4m, representing a significant reduction on previous years. Consequently, in any year, it is not possible to support all worthwhile projects. This issue is particularly acute this year.
- To inform our decision-making process on how we allocate our budget, TEO conducted an Equality Impact Assessment. Initial feedback received through the EQIA public consultation considered and £1.4m has been allocated to projects within CGRF
- A report on Phase 1 of the consultation process, summarising the feedback received to date, has been published on our website.
- Phase 2 remained open until 12 August and further information on this will be published on the website/has also been published on the TEO website.
- Delivery of 41 projects are now currently underway.
- Groups can use a wide range of activities such as sport, music, drama, arts and crafts, to engage with and make a difference in local communities, whilst contributing to peacebuilding and reconciliation. These projects can also provide important opportunities to develop new skills, gain qualifications, build self-confidence and develop new friendships, as well as celebrate and embrace cultural diversity.
- Small Grants of up to £1,500 are available for good relations projects to be delivered by 31 March 2024. Please note applications must be received at least 4 weeks before the event/project commences. Further information can be accessed on the TEO website.
- TEO is grateful to the voluntary and community sector for the important contribution which these key projects are making to delivery of the TBUC Strategy by building relations within, between and across communities here.

The Springboard Opportunities Ltd - "Fusion+ Belfast" Project

In March this year, community group, Springboard Opportunities Ltd, successfully completed delivery of their schools-based Central Good Relations Fund project, 'Fusion+ Belfast'. The group was awarded £45,000 by The Executive Office to deliver the project. Forty pupils from 4 Belfast schools - Malone Integrated College, Colaiste Feirste, Glengormley High School and Edmund Rice College - completed the project.

The programme got underway with a series of workshops in which the young people explored topics such as self, identity, stereotypes, cultures, diversity and community. These sessions provided a strong foundation of learning for the participants who then went on to engage in shared learning opportunities with participants from each of the other schools.

The shared activities included teambuilding, a residential, a social action day, and creative workshops as well as rehearsals for a finale showcase event. The shared activities also gave the young people many opportunities to learn, grow in confidence and cement relationships with one another.

The social action activity and the showcase event ensured that the project had a positive impact not only on the young people but also on family members, the wider community and each of the schools. A promotional video of the showcase event, entitled "An Alternative World", can be seen at the following link:

https://youtu.be/2T_ARw2HdIE



The following comments from participants illustrate the positive impact of the project:

"Looking back to the start of Fusion+ I can't believe the difference in me. I was defensive at the start because I thought the other side hated us but these past few months have taught me so much."

"It's made me change how I think about other people who are different than me, I've definitely changed for the better. I mix with people from everywhere now."

"I would never have walked through a different community

in case I was jumped but now I'm happily calling for my new friend from Fusion+ and walking through her area with no issues at all."

"Before this programme I used to get involved in rioting and hated people from their side now some of my closest friends are from there."

Throughout the project the participants were supported by 4 youth mentors. As well as gaining valuable experience in youth work, they each achieved: an OCN Level 2 in Youth and Community Work; an OCN Level 2 in Uniting Communities through Leadership; and an OCN Level 2 in Understanding Mental Health.



District Council Good Relations Programme

Programme summary

The key aims of the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) are to improve relations between and within Council areas and to support local solutions to local good relations issues.

Programme News

T:BUC District Council Good Relations Programme provides funding support to Pupil Voice

The District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) is a match funded good relations funding programme delivered jointly by The Executive Office (TEO) and District Councils as part of the wider Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy. The key aims of the programme are to improve relations between and within District Council areas and to support local solutions to local good relations issues.

The Education Authority (EA), through Shared Education Partnership working, is seeking to develop the Pupil Voice across each District Council Area. Partnerships have engaged in a number of Pupil Voice initiatives which promote the voices of young people, explore sensitive and controversial issues, build confidence, resilience, citizenship, leadership skills, and help raise awareness about diversity in an ever-changing society.

Earlier this year, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CCGBC) hosted a very successful pilot Pupil Voice project, culminating with an

event that provided young people with the opportunity to speak directly with elected members about a host of important local issues. This project helped embed Shared Education across 11 schools in Ballymoney, Limavady, Dungiven, Coleraine, and Ballycastle. It gave pupils from all backgrounds the opportunity to work with their current partner schools, but also the chance to meet and collaborate with students in other local schools.

Feedback from the young people involved in the project was very positive. One commented, "It was good to speak directly to elected members and bring their

attention to local issues the youth in our communities face". Another young participant said, "Today gave us an opportunity to hear the views and opinions of others and it gave us a new perspective".

Elected representatives also valued the experience, with CCGBC Councillor Ivor Wallace commenting after the event, "Pupil Voice is an important project for both elected

members and pupils. It gives us all the opportunity to have discussions about what matters in local communities while helping to encourage positive change around issues that impact young people and their peers".

EA hope to see the development of a range of Pupil Voice projects throughout all 11 District Council areas. The DCGRP Team is currently working with EA to support

the initiative with a view to piloting the programme across Councils in the coming year.

The link below provides a short video of the CCGBC event, and provides evidence of young people representing their school and the wider community to create a powerful momentum for positive change: [Pupil Voice Event](#)

It was wonderful to see so many young people from all backgrounds enjoying and engaging at the event and to experience the positive impact of TEO funding through the District Council Good Relations Programme.



Discover More **If you have any questions please contact: District.CouncilGR@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk**

The Race Relations Order

In March the Department launched its consultation on the review of the Race Relations Order. The event was held at the Stormont Hotel and was attended by representatives of relevant sectoral groups. The consultation was the result of several years of work by the Race Equality Legislation Team (RELT) and aims to enhance protections for ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland.

Launching the consultation, Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary said: "We are committed to making Northern Ireland a welcoming and fair society. However, we understand there is still a need for redress if people are not treated how they deserve to be. This review of the current race relations legislation will ensure that anyone who has been discriminated against, because of their ethnicity, will have the best protection possible. It should never make a difference who we are, what we look like, or where we are from."

The consultation included over 50 proposed changes and covers a wide range of areas including:

- **education;**
- **employment**
- the provision of goods, services and housing;**
- **enforcement; the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI);**
- **general provisions &**
- **the introduction of Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM)**

To encourage engagement across the community the Department encouraged members of the Racial Equality Subgroup and other interested parties to host consultation events which it then presented to and fielded questions from. In total there were 9 consultation events across the country.

The main consultation documentation was downloaded from the website over 400 times with the easy read version being downloaded on over 200 occasions.



RELT Launch Dr Denis McMahon Perm Sec TEO

To obtain views from children and young people the Education Authority conducted a further eight events on the Department's behalf. These consultation events were divided into two groups and included four schools and four youth groups from a disparate geography.

Throughout the consultation period, the Department used social media channels and events to promote the consultation and encourage individuals and organisations to respond. This approach resulted in nearly 15,000 impressions being achieved in relation to posts on the consultation.

In addition to the invaluable feedback garnered at the events we received multiple written responses to the consultation which RELT are currently analysing.

The Department would like to take this opportunity to thank all those stakeholders who responded and who assisted in making the consultation events so worthwhile.



RELT Launch



ACSONI Consultation event



Artseka

*Review of T:buc
September 2023*



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Discover More
Visit the new T:BUC website for further information on the T:BUC Strategy at:
www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/tbuc



Good Relations Awards 2024
Launching mid - October 2023

More information available at:
goodrelationsawards.com

T:buc - in pictures

Photos from: Good Relations Awards & Engagement Forum Event (March 2023)



#GRW23

TOGETHER GOOD RELATIONS WEEK 2023

18th - 24th September

Register an event at goodrelationsweek.com

Review of T:buc
September 2023

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Further information on the T:buc Strategy may be found at www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/tbuc

