

# T:buc

Changing for the better, together



## People and Place

September 2024



Northern Ireland  
Executive

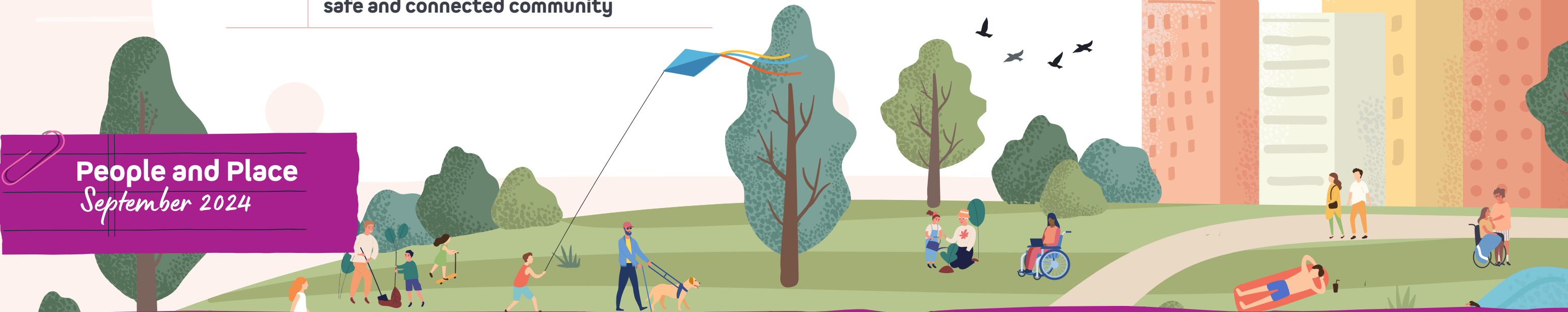


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People and Place  
September 2024



## Foreword



Welcome to the latest edition of our T:BUC Engagement Forum Newsletter in which you will find a selection of articles and stories which showcase the fantastic work that continues to be carried out through T:BUC and wider Good Relations Delivery.

As we make our way through the year, it is important that we stay connected, informed, and take the time to remind ourselves of the inspiring work being delivered on a daily basis. Today's Engagement Forum is the perfect way for us to do this under the theme of 'place'. In our rapidly evolving work, the concept of 'place' holds greater significance than ever before, it embodies not just the physical spaces we inhabit but also the communities we foster, the connections we nurture and the impact we collectively strive to achieve within our local and global landscapes. 'Place' is where our values take root and where our efforts to create lasting change truly begin.

We have all seen recently how division and hatred can impact the place we call home. We have also, encouragingly, seen the power of communities coming together to condemn such acts as local organisations continue their efforts to create a place which is welcoming to everyone.

Today, we will have several insightful presentations from our speakers covering a range of topics. These presentations are designed to inform, inspire and engage all of you and will be followed by table discussions where you can connect with each other to share ideas and provide feedback in a collaborative setting.

Hopefully by sharing stories, we can be reminded to keep the importance of our 'place' at the forefront of our minds, ensuring that every step we take brings us closer to a truly equal and thriving society.

And of course, this Engagement Forum takes places during Good Relations Week. This year's theme is 'OpportUNITY' and is a call to action to create a brighter, more inclusive future for all. There are over 200 events scheduled across the week and I encourage you to check out what's on.

**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.**

*Chris Gardner*

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

## CRC News Stories

### Sustainable Peace in Northern Ireland – Peace Monitoring Report 6

*Written by Professor Ann Marie Gray, Ulster University, co-author of the Peace Monitoring Report 6*

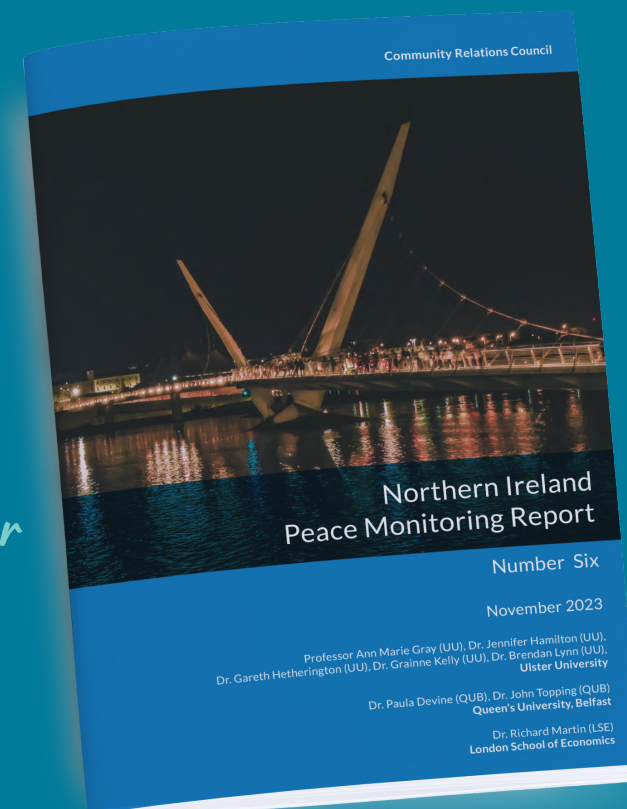
The Sixth Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report published in December 2023, as with previous reports, provides an independent assessment of progress towards sustainable peace in Northern Ireland.

This report covers the period from October 2018 to May 2023, a turbulent period globally and locally. As has been the case with previous reports, progress is examined across four dimensions - political progress, a sense of safety, poverty and inequality, and cohesion and sharing, with a contextual discussion of demography and economic progress.

The focus on cohesion and sharing and broader social policy issues in the report reflects the importance of economic and social progress to building a lasting peace.

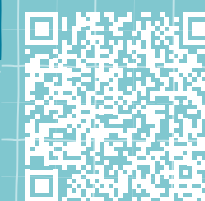
Undoubtedly in many of these areas progress has been limited. The findings indicate that the fragility of the political institutions, marked by long periods of collapse, has had a negative impact on progress across a range of areas. This has been exacerbated by the inability of the Executive and Assembly to tackle long standing challenges such as legacy issues and persistent social and economic inequalities.

However, there were also examples of what could be achieved – including the passing of Northern Ireland's first climate change legislation. The report identifies many of the challenges confronting the recently re-established Executive and Assembly, including achieving tangible improvements in community relations.

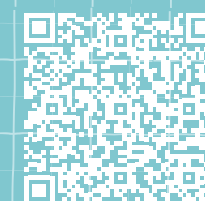


*Discover More*

**Read the full report:**



**Find out more:**





## 'Northern Ireland Now: Contemporary Collecting' Project Launched | Nerve Centre

*Northern Ireland Screen has launched its latest archive collection initiative, "Northern Ireland Now: Contemporary Collecting." The innovative project seeks to address underrepresentation in the Digital Film Archive, championing equality, diversity and inclusion, while fostering collaboration and advancing the skills of those working in the field of moving image curation in Northern Ireland.*

The project is in collaboration with Nerve Centre. The Community Relations Councils supports Nerve Centre through the [Core Funding Scheme](#).

Since 2000, the Digital Film Archive team at Northern Ireland Screen has carefully curated thousands of hours of moving image footage from 1987 to the present day. However, recognising that the archive lacks contemporary material related to several key themes and communities – including ethnic minorities, diversity of religious belief, disabled people, neurodivergent people, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and working-class communities, especially young men – Northern Ireland Screen is calling for contemporary content submissions to ensure the Digital Film Archive is a more accurate and representative reflection of contemporary life in Northern Ireland.

Francis Jones, Head of Heritage and Archive at Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive, said: "We've been carefully curating the Digital Film Archive for over 20 years and engaging with communities across Northern Ireland exhibiting our cultural heritage, through community,

school and historical society presentations and engagement sessions showcasing the history of Northern Ireland's traditions, customs, and artistic expressions. However, we recognise we need to address collection gaps and rectify underrepresentation within the archive and by embracing the power of partnership, the "Northern Ireland Now: Contemporary Collecting" project will ensure the archive better reflects contemporary themes and the diversity of life today."

Northern Ireland Now: Contemporary Collecting will collaborate with organisations and individuals across Northern Ireland. Through an outreach engagement programme led by Nerve Centre, groups will be empowered to contribute their voice to archive during sessions that will explore areas such as content curation, cataloguing, digital preservation and promotion.



Niall Kerr, Head of Heritage and Community Relations at the Nerve Centre, said: "Nerve Centre is passionate about engaging communities and individuals from all areas of Northern Ireland through innovative, digital approaches that encourage people to have an active say. This project is a unique opportunity for interested groups to share their love of film and use the medium to enhance and better reflect their own backgrounds, in turn building a more cohesive view of modern society."

**Once all of the contemporary content has been collected it will undergo thorough cataloguing and contextualization to ensure public access and understanding before being added to the Digital Film Archive to allow for digital preservation and public access.**

### Discover More

**The Northern Ireland Now project will run until spring 2025 with opportunities for a wide range of organisations, groups and individuals to get involved. Read more about:**



## Birds of a Feather project launch with Partisan Productions

*Partisan Productions are involved in a groundbreaking cross-border initiative to unite women from across Ireland through creativity. The project was recently launched in Ennis, Co Clare.*

The Community Relations Council supports Partisan Productions through its [Core Funding Scheme](#).

The Birds of a Feather Project brings together women from Ballymac Crafty Ladies in East Belfast with other women's groups in Ballinasloe, Inishboffin Island and Mná Ag Gaire in Ennis, Co Clare.

The project involves face-to-face and online workshops and discussions, as well as opportunities to share life experiences and build genuine friendships.

"The Shared Island Initiative is a testament to the power of collaboration and creativity in bringing communities together," said Hilary Tonge from Mná Ag Gaire in Ennis. "By providing a platform for women from diverse backgrounds to work together, we aim to foster mutual understanding, respect and friendship, ultimately contributing to a more cohesive and inclusive society."

One of the key aspects of the project is the development and staging of a major theatre project developed by Partisan Productions and led by the women. It aims to explore the complex experiences and perspectives of women from the north and south of the island of Ireland.

Fintan Brady from Partisan Productions said: "By involving participants in all aspects of artistic and technical development, we aim to create a work that is both surprising and engaging, showcasing the transformative power of the arts. The importance of arts collaboration across this island cannot be underestimated. We need more opportunities like this."

**A comprehensive evaluation of the project will be conducted by Dr Maire Braniff from the University of Ulster, providing insights and recommendations for future collaborations and community development efforts.**



Discover More





## First Irish-medium Integrated Primary School in Northern Ireland Opens | Turas Project

*Scoil na Seolta, the first Irish-medium Integrated Primary School in Northern Ireland, will open its doors in September 2024. Scoil na Seolta is the latest achievement brought about by the pioneering work of Linda Ervine, manager of the Turas Project in east Belfast.*

The Community Relations Council supports the organisation through the [Core Funding Scheme](#).

For the previous 12 years Turas has been offering Irish language classes and cultural experiences to people who might not otherwise have been able to access them.

This new educational opportunity began with the provision of a naíscail in 2021. Despite some opposition at the beginning, the Naíscail has become deeply embedded in the local community.

*"This area of Belfast remains quite unionist," said Aodán Mac Séafraigh, the Chair of the Naíscail Committee, "but people are realising that this does not conflict with an interest in, or love for, the Irish language. It's not about politics. The language actually enriches people's connection with the place they are from."*

For the last number of years, Naíscail na Seolta has been privileged to run its provision in two local churches. But with numbers increasing, a new site has been secured in the Castlereagh/Cregagh area of east Belfast. The Naíscail offers places to pre-pre and pre-school children and from September 2024 will offer places to children starting P1. For now, Scoil na Seolta will be run on a voluntary basis and has secured funding to support this.

*"We are thrilled at the positive reception for Scoil na Seolta," said Committee member Linda Ervine. "We dropped leaflets through the doors in the local community and people were really interested in what we were doing. We cannot wait to offer more families in east Belfast the opportunity to experience the richness of bilingualism in an integrated setting. People are pleased to see east Belfast become more diverse and inclusive."*

**The motto of the Naíscail and the new Bunscoil is "Páistí sona ag foghlaim le chéile" which means "Happy children learning together". Naíscail and Scoil na Seolta are bringing new positive educational experiences to the children in their local community."**



## Young People explore "Off Limits" areas of their city through art | Youth Initiatives

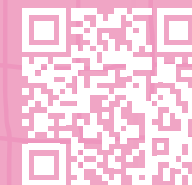
*The Youth Initiatives' youth community hub in Derry/Londonderry recently held their annual Artbridge Showcase to present art and designs made by young people throughout the year.*

The Community Relations Council supports Youth Initiatives through its [Core Funding Scheme](#). The showcase was funded by TEO Central Good Relations Fund.

The Foyle Artbridge ACCESS ALL AREAS project brought young people together from the city, enabling them to feel confident exploring otherwise 'off limits' areas of the city while expressing this experience through art. Through building relationships with young people from a different community, they were able to safely explore new cultures and break down divides to 'reclaim' the city centre as a shared space they can all feel welcome in.

Discover More:

Find out more about Youth Initiatives.



## Showcase

Here you will find a selection of some of the artworks produced by young people for the Artbridge Showcase:





# 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.

Under TBUC Camps Programme 23/24:

9 Feb

81%

of participants feel more strongly that the culture and traditions of different ethnic backgrounds add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland.

93%

of participants plan to stay in contact with friends made at camp after the project ends.

TEO has provided almost

£1.2m

of funding which has been allocated to over 100 Camps this year across all Council areas.

185

applications were received with good coverage geographically and sectorally.

## Good Practice Visit to T:BUC Camps Project

Chris Gardner, Director of Good Relations and T:BUC and myself recently visited a T:BUC Camps Programme which saw over 140 young people, from R City Youth Club and Ardoyne Youth Club in North Belfast, come together to take part in a T:BUC Camp which took place in Ballintoy, Ballycastle..

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.

During the visit to the Camp, we got the opportunity to see good relations activities mixed with all the fun and outdoor activities the young people were getting to experience.

From the moment we got there you felt the energy and buzz from all the young people, and you could tell they were having an amazing time!

A workshop that really stood out for me was the 'Purpose' session. It was held with the stunning Whitepark Bay Beach as the backdrop. The session was all about the young people reflecting on their personal journey of self-learning and development while being on the Camp, but also giving them an opportunity to branch outside their comfort zone and learning about new cultures and backgrounds through their peers. Some young people said they would never have had the opportunity to do this if it wasn't for T:BUC.

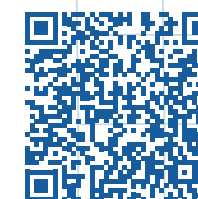
At the end of the session each young person was handed a letter that their youth worker had written to them. Each letter was personal to them and had words of encouragement on goals they had achieved and goals for the young people to challenge themselves to achieve as they continue their journey outside of the Camp. It was heartwarming and, at times, emotional for the young people as they all were courageous enough to discuss the letters with their peers.

All youth workers who currently work on the Programme have been through the T:BUC Camps Programme themselves and it is clear that this experience adds another level to their understanding and ability to support these young people through their journey.

**Chris Gardner summarised the visit saying, 'the young people themselves are fantastic, bringing real energy and willingness to discuss difficult subjects and to make friends with people from different backgrounds. Alongside them are the volunteers who have all been through the journey before, now giving back to the young people and community, which really amplifies the impact of the work that both Youth Clubs are engaged in.'**

## Discover More

If you would like to find out any more information about the T:BUC Camps Programme or any of our programmes, please scan below:





## PeacePlayersNI Summer Jam Tournament | 2024

*Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly and Junior Ministers Aisling Reilly and Pam Cameron attended the annual PeacePlayers Summer Jam Tournament.*

Ministers enjoyed engaging with the young people and getting involved in the fun activities. While basketball was a focus of the event, there was lots to see and do including dancing and some facepainting. It was a great opportunity for Ministers to see the impact the PeacePlayers programme has on participants and to speak to the coaches.

The jam-packed event was held at Queen's University Belfast Physical Education Centre (PEC) on 1 June 2024. Over 200 children and young people from diverse backgrounds came together to play basketball as part of the Bridging Divides Camp which is funded through TEO's T:BUC Camps programme.

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The Programme provides a fun, rewarding and beneficial experience for young people. The young people embark on an immersive experiential learning opportunity that can change the way they see themselves, their relationships with peers and other groups, and ultimately their future.

Since the programme began in 2015, 978 Camps have been delivered to approximately 33,650 young people with a total investment from TEO of over £12m. A further 111 groups have been offered funding to deliver a Camp in 2024/25 with a total budget of over £1.5m. Delivery for 2024/25 is currently underway, and the young participants are engaging in opportunities and experiences which will 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.

### Discover More

If you would like to learn more about the T:BUC Camps programme and to read about other previous successful Camps please scan the QR Code:





# 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 continues to fund crucial community activity to engage those young people most at risk of entering the youth justice system and/or paramilitary recruitment. Through the provision of positive alternatives for our young people, it seeks to mitigate the impacts anti-social behaviour can have on community tensions and in turn good relations.

The latest available outcomes from the 2022/23 Programme indicate

**84%**

of young people now feel more favourably about young people from other religious and community backgrounds.

**95%**

of participants feel that they are less likely to engage in negative behaviour.

TEO allocated

**400k**

to the delivery of PIP for 2024/25

and DE allocated an additional

**300k**

funding to PIP (for 2024/25 only) to enable funding of a total of 121 groups.

On an ongoing basis, TEO colleagues analyse distribution and seek to address any gaps in funding provision.

## Dervock Youth Network Planned Interventions Programme 2023/24

The Planned Interventions Programme (PIP) funds community activity to provide positive alternatives for young people at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, sectarianism and recruitment from paramilitary gangs. It seeks to address heightened community tension around interfaces and other areas as necessary.

It aims to engage the 'most at risk' young people between the ages of 9 to 25 years in positive experiences and opportunities. The Programme is delivered annually as part of the Executive's 'Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC)' Strategy.

The Executive Office (TEO) funded 69 projects a total of £400k under PIP in 2023/24. One such project was 'Makin' it REAL', which began delivery in January 2024. The project was delivered by Dervock Youth Network in partnership with the 'Community Association' and

other groups within the village. The project focused on encouraging local young people to discuss contentious issues relating to their lives.

Examples of the issues which the participants discussed in depth with facilitators were internet safety and how young people can protect themselves from online predators. Drug awareness, including education and impact, was also discussed. Young people were invited to Dervock Orange Hall to examine and study the Drug Case to learn about the effect of drugs and enable them to make positive, informed choices.

The module "empowering kids to make sensible decisions for later in life" addressed the issue of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and how it impacts everyone in the village, particularly the elderly and vulnerable in the community. The young people were encouraged to reflect on how their actions can affect others and can have repercussions on future job applications and opportunities.

However, it was not all work for the participants. Within the programme was an essential module 'Team Building' activities, where the young people had the opportunity to try Go Karting in 'Railway Karting' Moneymore. After a 'pit-stop' in McDonald's, they also had fun joining in outdoor Laser Tag at the 'Jungle NI' developing new skills including group and personal capacity building.

*The leaders evaluated the effectiveness of the project and in the exit survey the final question was:*

“

*Do you feel that participation on the programme has made you less likely to engage in negative behaviour in your community?*

”

The response was an unambiguous 'YES' (100%), outlining the success the programme has had on those targeted young people in the community. Projects like 'Makin' it REAL' can really empower young people to learn more about themselves and the local community, while having fun and making new friends. The latest available outcomes from PIP indicate that 9 out of 10 young people feel more confident after completing the Programme.



Image left  
Parents and children examine the content of the Drug Case on display in Dervock Orange Hall

Image below  
Dervock Youth Network presented with their certificate of Achievement in Dervock Orange Hall

## Discover More

If you would like more information on PIP, please contact

[plannedinterventions@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:plannedinterventions@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)





## 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.



### Discover More

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



### Contact

If you have any questions  
please contact:

[info@urbanvillagesni.org](mailto:info@urbanvillagesni.org)

## Programme News

This year a further

# 7 schools

participated in the Schools of Sanctuary Programme, 3 of which were schools from Urban Villages areas of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

They join the

# 67 nursery

primary and post primary schools who have already achieved Schools of Sanctuary status since 2017 - 59 of which are schools serving families across UV areas.

UV Schools who received their

# awards this year

were St Anne's Primary in Derry/Londonderry on 5 June 2024; and Ravenscroft Nursery and Taughmonagh Primary in Belfast on 22 June 2024.

Other partnership schools who  
were successful in achieving

# Schools of Sanctuary

status were Chapel Road Primary and Oakgrove Integrated Primary in Derry/Londonderry; and Holy Rosary Nursery and Rosetta Primary in Belfast.

Awards were presented by representatives from Belfast City of Sanctuary, and Education Authority. Junior Ministers Aisling Reilly and Pam Cameron were available to attend the Belfast sessions and helped present the awards to those schools.

## 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.

**191**  
applications  
received requesting  
**£6.5m**

**£2.275m**  
awarded to  
**59 projects**  
with approx.  
**24,000**  
people taking part.

**Delivery taking  
place across each  
council area**

The Central Good Relations Fund is now closed for applications for the 2024/25 year, and projects will be notified of their outcomes once a budget has been confirmed for this year.



## Programme News

### Fusion+ Youth Mentors Case Study

In 2023/24, Springboard Opportunities Ltd were awarded funding to deliver the Fusion+ Belfast and Fusion+ North west Project through the Central Good Relations Fund, to 86 young people in schools within these areas. The young people taking part had the opportunity to meet others to learn about difference, diversity and working together.

Youth mentors supported Springboard staff in delivering workshops for students to help them explore stereotypes, discrimination, identity, communities, hopes, fears and expectations, new communities and environmental issues. Between 8 and 12 sessions were delivered in each of the participating schools.

The Fusion+ Youth Mentor opportunities were provided to young people aged 18-24 recruited from areas of socio-economic deprivation. These young people have lived experience of the impact of division and have experience of being positively impacted by good relations projects. Some of these individuals were early school leavers and had been out of the education/employment system for some time.

The mentors gained practical experience of working with their peers in schools, as well as confidence and qualifications in facilitating groups to come together to explore issues which are core to Good Relations. In 2023/24 Fusion+ had two paid youth mentors with a further two supporting in volunteer roles.

The young people successfully achieved qualifications such as NOCN Level 2 in Uniting Communities Through Leadership, NOCN Level 2 Good Relations & OCCNI in CRED (Community Relations, Equality and Diversity within Youth Work).

Project staff work closely with Peer Mentors to develop them as peer leaders within the schools where they can positively impact on the students involved. The mentors are supported by project staff to develop leadership skills, mentoring skills and facilitation as well as gain training and qualifications. Mentors also receive one to one supervision and regular feedback from project staff to aid their development.

**All four of the youth mentors gained employment because of their involvement in Fusion+, including two who have gone on to further their career in Youth Work.**

*An indication of the impact this programme has had on the lives of Youth Mentors is evident through their testimonials:*

66

*If it wasn't for programmes like Fusion+ I wouldn't be sitting in University and now also working within the youth and community sector in a youth centre in North Belfast. I'm so grateful for this opportunity and the experience I've gained as well as qualifications I achieved.*

99

*Elisa*

66

*Fusion+ gave me the opportunity to share my experience of growing up in a divided society with other young people in schools. I wanted to help them how I'd been helped by Good Relations projects. Its so important to bring young people together to talk about what divides and unites us. This programme has not only helped me develop personally but professionally too, by giving me hands on practical work experience and qualifications.*

99

*Marie*





## The 4 Corners Festival

The Central Good Relations Fund (CGRF) supports constituted voluntary and community sector groups to deliver good relations projects where there is evidence of identified good relations need.

In 2023/24 the Central Good Relations Fund provided funding to assist in the delivery of The 4 Corners Festival.

The 4 Corners Festival seeks to inspire people from across Belfast to help the City make the transformation to a peaceful society that supports the inclusion and well-being of all. It featured innovative events designed to entice people out of their own 'corners' of the city and into new places where they encounter new perspectives, new ideas and new friends.

The Festival takes place annually in February. It comprises a range of events featuring discussion, music, prayer, drama, poetry, walking tours, knitting groups and story-telling in venues across the city of Belfast and brings approximately 3,000 people together in-person over its duration (with approx. 2,500+ logging in online).

The Festival has a highly positive impact on those fortunate to attend as reflected in the comments of a participant:

*"The closing event was emotional tonight. People from 4 Corners of Belfast were sitting as friends and meeting new people. I have met some from the other three corners every night and feel enriched. Just to sit beside a total stranger and conversation is no problem. It's been a wonderful week and long may it continue".*

An important element of the Festival therefore was the Youth Programme's 'Shared and Sacred Space' which is a response to an identified a need to improve young people's connections with each other and with shared spaces in Belfast.

This aspect sought to promote a sense of social responsibility and shared ownership of the city. West Belfast Priest and Festival Co-Chairperson Fr Martin Magill was aware that some members of the community from a PUL background did not feel comfortable visiting family graves in Belfast City Cemetery. A need to improve the perceived accessibility of some shared spaces was therefore recognised.

*"It helps me understand more about the graveyard and the history in the community. It changed my views on the graveyard and helps me respect it".*

### What was done to address this need?

An invitation was extended to youth groups across Belfast to take part in a social action event in West Belfast to help create a sense that the Cemetery was a shared, safe, welcoming environment for all people of the City

Young people from different backgrounds met together to learn about the history of Belfast City Cemetery before undertaking clean-up activities within the Cemetery and the nearby Forth Meadow Greenway which was recently developed with Peace IV funding with the aim of improving community relations through a shared space that could be used by all.

These activities enabled the young people to familiarise themselves with the shared spaces, learn more about them and develop a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for their environment.

Prior to the closing event, members of the public were invited to submit a request for the grave of their loved ones to be tidied. Each request was allocated to the young people to tidy and mark that particular grave on the day so that they could be visited by family and friends after the event.

The concluding event at St John's Parish Hall was a great opportunity to join together to enjoy food in a relaxed, inclusive environment, while building friendships and discussing the hopes the participants had for themselves and for Belfast.

Councillors from all political parties were invited to attend to witness the work of the young people and engage with them as they considered their hopes for the future.



### What difference did this make?

The invitation to the public to have a grave tidied in preparation for a visit to their loved ones grave along with the clean-up activities had a positive impact on creating the sense of a genuinely shared space while improving the quality of the environment. . This important project has helped improve perceptions that this space is safe and welcoming to all sectors of the community.

Those who had their loved ones graves tidied expressed their deep appreciation to the Festival for helping them to locate the sites and to the young people for the work they carried out with such willingness to tidy and mark the graves.

One person who attended the cemetery for the first time to see the results of the young people's efforts also discovered additional connections that they had previously been unaware of and plans to visit again.

The young people involved in the project met people from other backgrounds and improved their connections with each other and with shared spaces in Belfast. The impact of the project on the participants is reflected in the highly positive outcomes that were delivered and demonstrated through survey data:

**75%**

said that they had learned about our shared history.

**73%**

felt that the event played a positive role in bringing people from different backgrounds.

**73%**

said that their knowledge of cultural traditions/ backgrounds improved.

**60%**

said that their attitude towards people from a different ethnic background had improved.

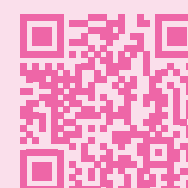
**73%**

said that their attitude towards people from a different religious background had improved.

The 4 Corners Festival has been successful in securing funding from the 2024/25 Central Good Relations Fund.

Discover More

Further details on the upcoming Festival can be found here:





## Peace IV and Peace Plus

### Programme News

The PEACEPLUS programme was launched in June 2023. TEO is responsible for 3 good relations focused investment areas, with investment totaling

# €170m

of which TEO will contribute

# 14.88%

in match funding. Under 1.1 Co-Designed Local Authority Action Plans which accounts for

# €110m

all 11 of the Councils here along with the 6 border counties have now submitted their applications to SEUPB for assessment. 6 action plans to date have been approved at Steering Committee. These are Derry City and Strabane District Council, Cavan County Council, Causeway Coast and Glens District Council, Donegal County Council and Belfast City Council.

Derry City & Strabane District Council is the first council to receive their letter of offer worth £8,047,327 of PEACEPLUS funding.

The call for Investment Area 1.3, Building Positive Relations at a regional level, closed on the 13th June 2024. 36 applications were received. All eligible applications are now progressing through assessment.



### *Derry City & Strabane District Council PEACEPLUS Action Plan Launch*

Derry City and Strabane District Council and the PEACEPLUS Partnership Board held the launch of their £8,047,327 (€9,254,427) Co-Designed PEACEPLUS Action Plan on the 6th June 2024 in the Waterfoot Hotel.

Junior Minister Cameron and Junior Minister Reilly from The Executive Office were guest speakers along with the SEUPB CEO Gina McIntyre, Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council Cllr Lilian Seenoi-Barr, Catherine Cooke (Foyle Women's Information Network / Chair of the PEACEPLUS Board) and Martin Duffy (Derg Local Growth Partnership / Co-Chair of the PEACEPLUS Board).

DCSDC's Local Co-Designed Action Plan, developed through an intensive co-design process in partnership with local communities, will enable 58 projects across the council area to be delivered. It includes a diverse range of projects that have been tailored to meet the specific needs and aspirations of the local community – for example: community and voluntary sector training and volunteering opportunities, youth inclusion projects in rural and urban areas, projects empowering interface residents, active environmentalism, heritage, upcycling, music, dance, Irish language, farming, street art, an Intercultural Café, a Food Poverty Kitchen and World War Memorials.



## 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

### District Council Good Relations Programme: Regional Shared Learning Forums

The District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) team in The Executive Office (TEO) recently co-ordinated a series of Regional Shared Learning Forums, bringing together TEO staff, Community Relations Council (CRC) representatives, and local government Good Relations officers. These events provided a platform for attendees to discuss a range of common issues and share information and good practice on Good Relations delivery.

All the attendees work to implement aspects of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy, focusing on the strategy's key priorities and how their own projects can contribute to them. The DCGRP sits within the T:BUC strategy as a match-funded programme, jointly delivered by TEO and the District Councils to support local solutions to local Good Relations issues. TEO provides strategic oversight of the programme, while the councils have responsibility for the design and delivery of individual projects that comprise their local DCGRP action plan.

The most recent regional forums took place in Newtownabbey, Newry, and Armagh.

Each Forum included an update from CRC, followed by a presentation from TEO colleagues on the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) strategy. This is a hugely important piece of work, and we are very grateful to the EVAWG team, who provided an insight into the challenges of this work and the strategies being used to address them.

Each Forum also included a case study from a Council on a project from their latest Action Plan. With topics ranging from Pupil Voice delivered by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Irish Language Week from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, the One World Festival delivered by Derry City & Strabane District Council and the Ceili Programme delivered by Fermanagh and Omagh Council, the scope and variety of projects was apparent.

The day concluded with an Action Learning session, in which some specific challenges individual councils faced were addressed directly. Action Learning is a method of problem solving that includes a process of insightful questioning and reflective listening. The process involves first asking questions to clarify the exact nature of the problem, reflecting, and identifying possible solutions, and only then acting

**The Regional Forums take place on a regular basis, allowing those involved to build connections and to continue to share good practice. The DCGRP team were delighted that event attendees had a positive experience at the events, and we were impressed by the energy, dedication, and creativity of the council Good Relations staff working to maximise the positive impact of the DCGRP within their local areas.**







## 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.

# Shared Housing Programme



## Programme News

**Greater Shantallow Community Arts and Studio2 delighted to be supported by Radius Housing Association to deliver our amazing**

## *All As One Children & Young People's Good Relations Summer Camps Programme 2024*

Greater Shantallow Community Arts have been delighted to have been supported by Radius Housing Association to enable them to provide 200 Children and young people from across all our communities with the opportunity to experience a two-week long magical program of arts-based creativity and fun at Studio2 Youth & Community Art Centre in Skeoge.

Speaking today, Ollie Green, Arts Director at Studio2 said, "We are extremely grateful to Geraldine and the wonderful team at Radius Housing Association for coming on board to support this amazing experience for so many of our children and young people".

"Throughout this incredible two-week period, our children have experienced the magic of the arts through music, dance, drama, singing, arts and crafts allowing each child to unlock their unique creative potential whilst making new friends and sharing wonderful fun filled experiences. This has been an integrated experience, sharing it with other children from different communities that they may never have had the opportunity to meet and get to know. They have built new friendships and enjoyed the cultural diversity that makes our city and region so special".

Mr. Green went on to say, "Our 'ALL AS ONE' Summer Camps programs builds on the ethos of communities that Play Together, Stay Together. It illustrates how there is nothing better than Community Arts for inspiring the confidence and resilience of our children especially those from marginalized and socially deprived communities who sometimes miss out on the opportunity to experience the magic that only the Arts can deliver. We are truly thankful to Radius Housing Association for their kind support, and we look forward to working together in building a positive future for all our children to enjoy and thrive".

Speaking about the programme Geraldine Dougan Radius Housing Communities Officer said, "We are delighted to have supported this programme, to see so many children from across the community come together to make new friends and enjoy a fun filled two-weeks of music dance and drama. It's proved very fruitful, and we hope to continue building relationships with these young people and their families through other good relations programmes and activities in the future".

The All As One programme is being supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme. The Programme had its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy, which reflected the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

**Radius Housing currently has 14 shared housing developments across Northern Ireland. Approximately £4.6m has been invested in the Ebrington Oaks shared housing development in Derry/Londonderry and the associated five-year good relations plan. Radius Housing continue to work in partnership with the local advisory group stakeholders and residents to develop and deliver a good relations plan for the area. The Ebrington Oaks 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 & celebration of diversity in arts and culture.**





## Press Release



Title:  
**Official Launch of Shared  
Housing Programme  
(Ogle St., Armagh)**

Release Date:  
**July 2024**

Tuesday 2nd July saw the official launch of Ark Housing Association's 'Housing for All' shared housing programme at St. Malachy's Court, Ogle Street, Armagh.

This £6.5m development, which consists of 42 homes, is a transformative and award-winning housing scheme that embodies Ark Housing's commitment to providing quality homes for all members of the community. The scheme, which picked up this year's Chartered Institute of Housing's All-Ireland Social Housing Best Development Award, was part funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) with a Housing Association Grant. It is situated in the heart of Armagh City and has revitalised a once unused site into a thriving hub of modern living.

As part of the DfC and Housing Executive's Shared Housing programme 'Housing for All', the development also serves as a catalyst for bringing people together. The 'Housing for All' programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the NI Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. The aim of the Shared Housing 'Housing for All' programme is not about forcing people to live in a certain way or in a certain area, but rather to improve the choices that are available to people by tackling the barriers that prevent them from opting to live in shared neighbourhoods.

This development marks Ark Housing's seventh such project, and through its Community Invest Team, it will deliver its 'Housing for All' programme at St. Malachy's Court over the next five years. Ark Housing's property development and community investment teams worked closely in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Department for Communities to successfully deliver the investment of £4.1m in the shared housing development.

The programme will be delivered in partnership with a local advisory group which will steer and support the organisation in the delivery of their good relations plan for the area and it will also engage a range of key stakeholder groups from across the community. The good relations plan will include 'bridging' events with the aim of delivering a range of positive outcomes focussed on areas such as health and wellbeing, education, advice and advocacy, arts and culture and community sustainability.

Mr Jim McShane, Chief Executive of Ark Housing commented at today's launch that the social housing organisation was looking forward to strengthening their ties to the Armagh area through the delivery of this programme and thanked the local community groups and other stakeholders in attendance for their continued support in ensuring the successful delivery of the programme.

Ark Housing Association Northern Ireland Ltd. is a registered housing association and charity established to provide homes and support services to those in housing need. Our accommodation is situated throughout Northern Ireland and comprises of a wide range of house types and apartments, providing affordable and high-quality homes to families, couples, and single persons.

Ark Housing Association is registered with, and regulated by, the Department for Communities (DfC 50), the Financial Conduct Authority (IP306) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (104457).

## Discover More

If you would like to learn more contact below.

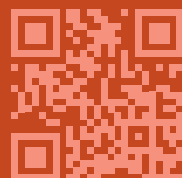
**The Corporate  
Services Officer,  
Ark Housing Association,  
43 Stockmans Way,  
Belfast, BT9 7ET**

Email:

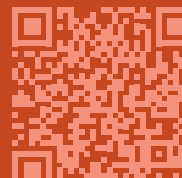
[info@arkhousing.co.uk](mailto:info@arkhousing.co.uk)

Tel: 02890752310

**NIHE Delivery Partners:**



**Shared Housing  
Programme:**



**Together Building  
United Communities:**



## EMSONI Confederation Cup 2024

The EMSONI Confederation Cup is an 8 week programme with 38 matches being played across 5 locations in Belfast and also 2 matches in Dungannon. It includes 16 teams across 20 cultures and includes LGBTQIA and this year there is a Northern Ireland Team made up of representatives of the cultures now living here. The Confederation Cup is supported by a number of partners and through the 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme across Belfast and Dungannon with Radius Housing and Apex Housing Association.

The Confederation Cup 2024 was officially launched at Windsor Park International Stadium on 12th May with speakers from IFA, Radius, Apex, and the opening ceremony and first kick off match was held in Midgley Park, Linfield FC grounds at Olympia Leisure Complex on Sunday 9th June. This event included a BBQ and multi- sports activities for families followed by a fantastic opening ceremony and leading into the first match of the project between Poland and East Timore.

The Opening Ceremony and First Kick off match at Midgley Park had over 300 attending. There will also be a Cup Final and Cultural Festival Event on Saturday 3rd August at Ulidia Playing Fields, Ormeau Road.

EMSONI is not only the first ethnic minority led community multisport organisation in Northern Ireland but also the leading and a multi-award winning sport development organisation for the ethnic minority community in Northern Ireland with the aim of promoting participation to diversify the face of sports.





## TEO Good News Stories

### Belfast women capture local scenes on camera

A group of Belfast women have captured some of the city's best-known buildings and landmarks through a camera lens, as part of a project supported by Clanmil Housing's good relations programme in south Belfast.

The women, who live in and around the city's Ormeau Road and Annadale areas, took part in the 14-week project led by photographer Kelly Morris.

Their work, and an accompanying book, was showcased at an exhibition in April in the Northern Lights, Ormeau Road.

The participants learned skills in photography and storytelling, as well as enjoying the social aspect of working together as a group. Using disposable cameras with black and white film, the women captured images relating to a different theme each week, including local landmarks in the city and scenic places outside Belfast. Group discussions formed the basis for the weekly themes, and the participants were given tasks related to the themes by Kelly. Journal writing was another aspect of the course that complemented the storytelling and group discussions.



Kate Nicholl, MLA with Kelly Morris and Paula Bradshaw, MLA at the photography exhibition

Facilitator Kelly Morris said the course has encouraged the women to learn new skills and has increased their self-confidence:

*"I really enjoyed working with the group and encouraging them to explore their creativity and notice the landscape, people and places in the city. The women's journaling and storytelling throughout the process, as well as their group and individual confidence, has grown so much over the 14 weeks. The group bonded really well and had great fun, which was fantastic to see, as they are a range of age groups and come from different community backgrounds. It was a similar course to one I facilitated for a group of women in Cookstown which Clanmil also supported, and we look forward to welcoming the Cookstown women to the exhibition to meet the Belfast group."*

Sheelagh Murphy is one of those who took part. She said:

*"I thoroughly enjoyed the course, and Kelly is a delight as a facilitator. It was great to get together with a group of like-minded people, who are now good friends. I hadn't learned how to take photos properly before, so Kelly really opened my eyes and encouraged me to notice the world around me. Unlike the usual way of taking photos on a phone, where you do it quickly then delete it if you don't like it, this was about taking your time before taking the photo."*

Danielle Smyth also took part in the course. She said: Danielle Smyth also took part in the course. She said:



Guests and course participants at the photography exhibition listening to compere Tim McGarry



Paula Bradshaw, Philip Whyte (Clanmil), Kelly Morris, Tim McGarry, Kate Nicholl and Sharon Murphy

*"Clanmil owns the Port Building in Annadale, south Belfast and supports a number of cross-community projects in the area, as part of a Good Relations programme funded by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive."*

Phillip Whyte, Community Investment Officer with Clanmil said:

*"Following the success of a similar project that we supported in Cookstown, we were pleased to work with Kelly again and involve people living in and around our shared neighbourhoods in south Belfast. Projects like this are so important for strengthening connections between communities, creating new friendships, and boosting people's confidence."*

Clanmil manages nine shared housing developments in Northern Ireland including the Port Building in Annadale in south Belfast and is promoting a further three.

The project was supported through 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. The Port Building shared housing development in Annadale, south Belfast is also supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

**£3.5m was invested in the Port Building's development and associated five-year Good Relations Plan. The aims of the Good Relations programme include promotion of health and wellbeing activities and encouraging people from different backgrounds to work together. Good Relations activities are developed in collaboration with an Advisory Group and residents of The Port Building.**

Discover More

Further information on the T:BUC Strategy may be found here:







# People and Place

September 2024

