

North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme

Programme Report

2023/24

Foreword

The purpose of this report is to tell you about the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme (NBSGRP), and to give you some examples of what it has achieved during the last year.

The NBSGRP is a good relations programme delivered as part of the Executive's wider Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

The T:BUC Strategy outlines a vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'.

Links to further information on the T:BUC Strategy can be found in the Key Facts section of this report.

The Programme is delivered by 10 contract holders and their partner organisations, with the key aim of improving relations between and within communities in North Belfast.

In 2023/24, circa £600,000 was allocated to 43 good relations projects impacting around 11,750 direct project participants across all communities in North Belfast.

The NBSGRP is delivered in partnership with the Community Relations Council (CRC).

The Executive Office is responsible for the strategic direction of the Programme, with CRC managing the administration and co-ordination and evaluation of the Programme.

The reports submitted by the NBSGRP contract holders suggests that the programme is successful as evidenced by the positive outcomes achieved by the Programme.

Each contract holder has a section within the report where you can find out more about the good relations programmes delivered, and the positive impact they are making to good relations in North Belfast.

The Programme has a strong focus on outcomes – in each project it is possible to clearly identify what difference is being made and to see how relations have been improved.

Each case study included in this report clearly shows how a project has had a positive impact, and quotes from participants give a personal perspective on how projects have made a difference to their lives.

The promotion of good relations is a task for everyone – we all have a part to play and we can all make a contribution to the inclusive, welcoming and united community we all want to live in.

The Programme is funded by The Executive Office. In 2023/24 funding allocated to the Programme and enabled the delivery of over 40 good relations interventions across the four key themes of the T:BUC Strategy.

1. Children & Young People
2. Shared Community
3. Safe Community
4. Cultural Expression

During the reporting year projects were delivered with a focus on at least one of the T:BUC themes resulting in over 20,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries aged from 5 five to 80+.

Ardoyne Youth Enterprises

Good Relations Programme

Overview

Ardoyne Youth Enterprises were able to facilitate five key programmes through the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme this year. These included an Intensive Mentoring programme for young people in Ardoyne and the wider area of North Belfast, a range of Open College Network qualifications for young people and practitioners in Youth Work, Mentoring, Mental Health Awareness and Community Relations, a YOUTH INC Diversity and Empowerment programme for young people from Ardoyne and Shankill, study visits to Manchester and Liverpool to share and learn best practice in working with BAME and newcomer young people, and multicultural community bonding events as part of our Welcoming Newcomers Programme. We delivered programmes directly with young people from areas including Ardoyne, Shankill, Rathcoole and New Lodge, along with our partners including New Lodge Youth Centre, RCity, North Belfast Alternatives and Ardoyne Youth Club. There were more than 380 direct participants in our programmes and more than 350 indirect beneficiaries who attended our events.

Engaging Youth Through Diversity Programme is designed around the TBUC priority of improving attitudes between young people from different community backgrounds.

Contact:

11a Flax Street
Belfast
BT14 7EJ
T: (028) 9074 1479



T: BUC Journey - Abbie Harrison RCity participant, Youth Inc Project

Our mission is to maximise the opportunities and resources available to young people through an inclusive approach to youth services where best practice and youth participation are crucial to delivery.

We manage outreach and detached youth workers who work with young people on the streets and signpost them to existing services.

We run youth community transport services.

We manage and facilitate good relations initiatives and youth governance programmes across the area.

We deliver on the action plan for the Crumlin Ardoyne Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, and we facilitated and drove a community partnership process which brought a state of the art 3G football pitch to Marrowbone Millennium Park.

We are currently developing a number of regeneration proposals.

We are continually developing strategic collaborations and communication between local providers to develop and secure youth service resources and opportunities for local young people.

Case Study:

YOUTH INC Diversity and Empowerment Programme

Project Summary:

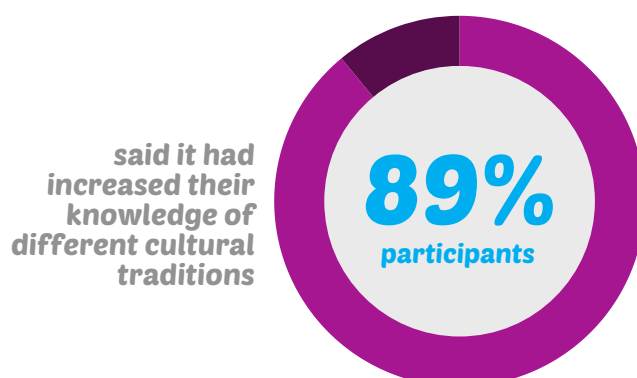
This 6 months programme was delivered for young people from Ardoyne and Shankill to build up strong bonds through joint activities and work together on a project that does not focus mainly on CNR/PUL identities but involves a wider exploration of what good relations mean, with sessions on identity, community and diversity awareness.

Participants:

 **20+**
Young people took part and completed the programme

participants from both main communities 

What difference did we make?



How much did we do?

- 2** staff held preparation meetings
- 26** young people recruited through AYE and RCity Youth
- 7+** different activities for young people to get involved in
- 1** celebration event to showcase the young people's achievements and progress.

How well did we do?

"After the good relations project, I am feeling very content with how things went throughout. I feel a lot more positive and comfortable to speak out in front of others and not be afraid to make my opinion known. I enjoy mixing with people from different cultures and backgrounds as it makes me more aware and it allows me to learn new things".

Ashton Community Trust

Good Relations Programme

Overview

Ashton is an award winning social regeneration charity that works to deliver real benefits for local people. It was formally established in 1991 with a mission 'To promote positive change and improve the quality of life of the North Belfast community.' Located in the New Lodge area of North Belfast it works to address severe levels of social and economic deprivation. These health and life inequalities are further compounded by the legacy of the conflict. Within one square mile of the Ashton Centre for example 635 people were killed and over 2,500 injured.

Over the last 34 years Ashton has supported thousands of people through its community accessible programmes. These services are delivered by Ashton's departments which include: Bridge of Hope, FabLab, Kinderkids Daycare, New Lodge Arts, New Lodge Youth Centre, Social Enterprise Hub and Training & Employment Services. The organisation, underpinned by a strong community development commitment, aims to provide a one-stop-shop for local needs. This holistic approach includes services that work to support educational, employment and training requirements; childcare needs; physical and emotional health as well as cultural and arts expressions.



Ashton's policy of reinvesting in the North Belfast community means the majority of their 170-strong workforce are local people which in turn has brought stability to the area. The organisation has sought to regenerate not only by creating jobs but also by turning derelict pieces of land into thriving social spaces.

Ashton is viewed internationally as a model of best practice for its community regeneration achievements. In 2013 and 2017 it was appointed NI Social Enterprise of the Year and was recognised for its community ethos and social impact. It currently holds ISO9001:2015 certification and in 2015 was awarded the prestigious "Excellence 5 Star" accreditation by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). In January 2016 a further assessment was completed by EFQM in which Ashton were awarded an Ireland Excellence certificate for its culture of excellence, robust systems and processes as well as its capacity to drive innovation and continually improve results.

Contact:

Ashton Centre
5 Churchill Street
Belfast
BT15 2BP
T: (028) 9074 2255



Case Study:

North Belfast Lantern Festival

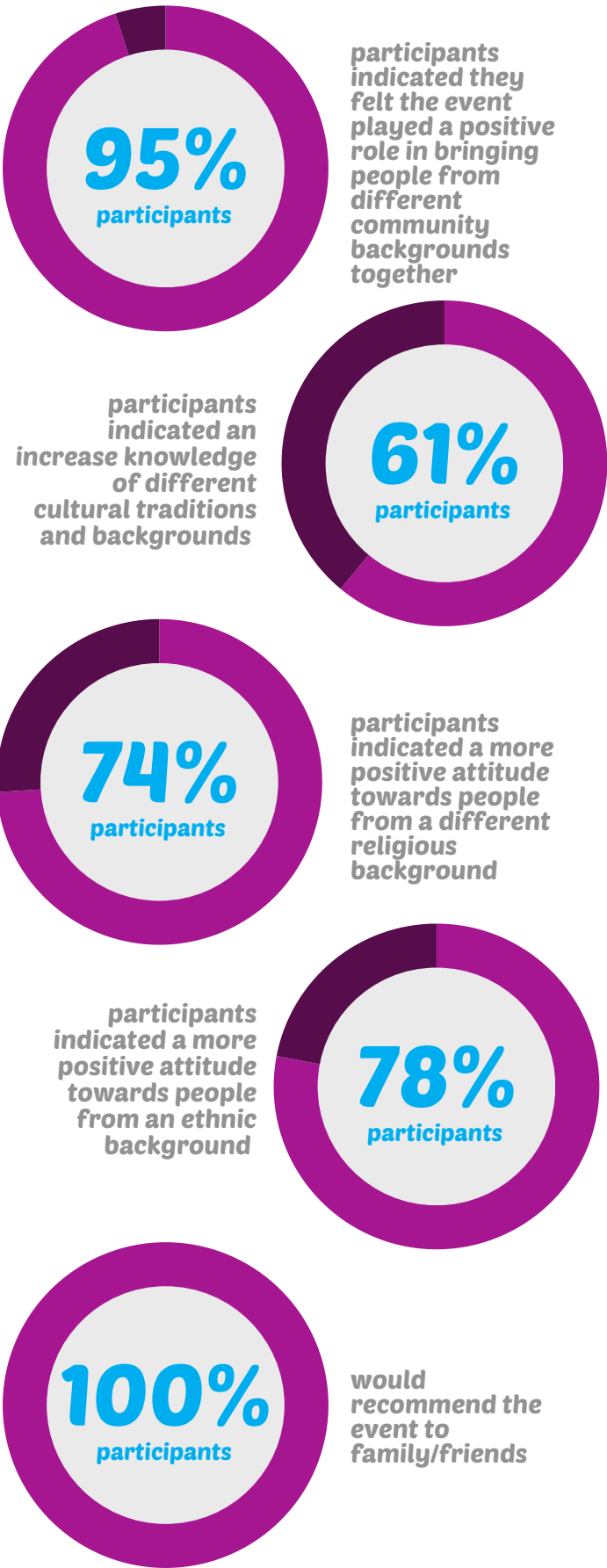
Project Summary:

An adaptation of the Lantern Festival, this Light Festival event will include an outreach programme and event in a local park. The outreach programme will incorporate a range of activities including costume making, dance and drama. The main outcome is to increase in the number of participants who feel comfortable socialising in a shared space or space they would not traditionally visit. The festival is held in Alexandra Park and has encouraged people to see the park as a shared space.

Participants:



What difference did we make?



Ballysillan Community Forum

Good Relations Programme

Overview

Ballysillan Community Forum (BCF) has been involved in delivering Northern Ireland Executive funded programmes for 17 years, staff at the centre endeavour to work with everyone across North Belfast bringing development learning programmes to the community alongside other services.

In this funding period we have seen an increase in people hearing about programmes we deliver, we achieve this through working with all programme partners, community organisations, schools, churches and using social media outlets Facebook & Twitter.

All work we do at the centre is focused on a cross community basis and we also open doors to new people who have arrived to settle in Northern Ireland from other countries.

All programmes funded by the NI Executive Office have been successful and lots of positive feedback has been recorded. We have also learned over the years that the value to learning has no age barriers.

Here at BCF we value the financial assistance given by the funder and also the support NI Executive office staff give to the programmes we deliver.



“

**We are all at the
School of Life.**

”

- Albert Haslett
(Programme Participant)

Contact:

925-927 Crumlin Road
Belfast
BT14 8AB
T: (028) 9039 1272



Case Study:

Shared Community Learning Programme

Project Summary:

The programme contributes to the TBUC themes and building good relations across communities. These programmes allow participants to feel safe and more socially mobile not just in North Belfast but across a wider geographical area. It also provides a continued opportunity to reduce social isolation particular for those who live alone. Participants can learn about new cultures and traditions, ask questions in a safe environment and discuss their feelings and opinions on some of these issues with other participants. BCF are experienced in delivering this programme and feedback from participants to date has been very positive. We believe the programme contributes to individuals having respect and acceptance to all cultures and backgrounds that may differ from their own particular circumstances.

Participants:



76

Senior Citizens from across north Belfast

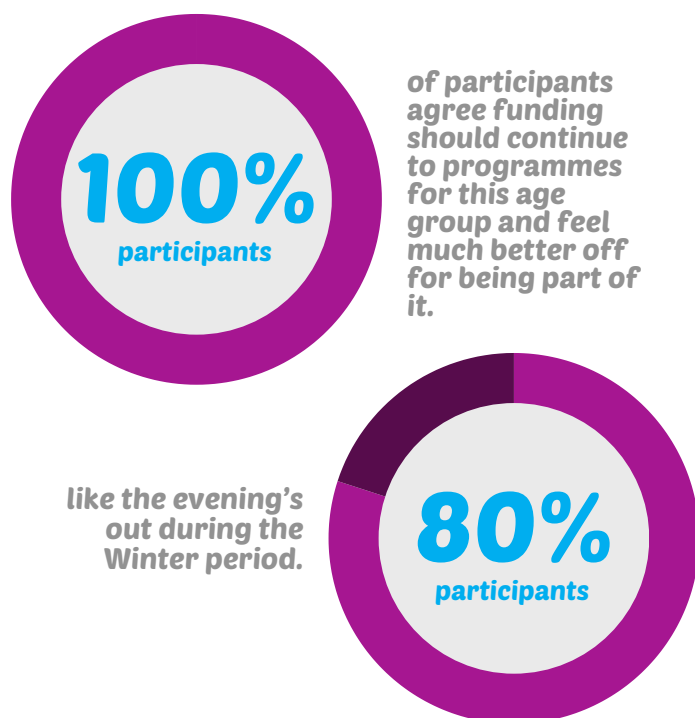
participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

- 6** historical / well being visits
- 4** Doorstep deliveries
- 2** Theatre Visit
- 3** Cinema Visits
- 3** Good Relations Events

What difference did we make?



How well did we do?

"Cannot believe I have never entered such a beautiful building almost on my doorstep, loved every minute of this visit and a gorgeous sunny day too"

"Working with the older generation on shared community issues is vital – they play a vital role in educating and guiding the adults of tomorrow"

Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum

Good Relations Programme

Overview

Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum is a grassroots community organisation which works mainly in the Waterworks local council ward. The Waterworks ward is the No.1 most deprived ward in the North of Ireland – out of 462 wards. Child poverty is running at 57% – that means two out of every three children in the area live in poverty.

There is a low level of educational qualifications and skills. 53% of the population have low or no qualifications. The percentage of the working age population out of work or economically inactive is almost 60%. The Cliftonville community is an interface community and the existing peace wall runs from Cliftonpark Avenue across Manor Street and up to Rosapenna Street and the Oldpark Road.

Our Outcomes

Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum works towards three key Outcomes:

1. Regeneration: We want our people have decent jobs, wages and a good standard of living
2. Peace Building and Good Relations: We want a community that is peaceful, shared and diverse
3. Children and Young People: We want our children and young people have the best start in life

Contact:

185 Cliftonpark Avenue
Belfast
BT14 6DT
T: (028) 9074 9147



These Outcomes are inter-related and central to our work. All projects must work towards the achievements of these outcomes. Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum uses Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) tools to track the difference we are making within our community.

All projects answer three key questions:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

Participant Feedback: “I thought Girdwood was only for Catholics until I went to the Youth Space to take part in the Girdwood United Youth TBUC programme. Now me and my friends go every Tuesday & Friday night” – **Young female from the Shankill area**

“My girlfriend only lives five minutes up the street from me but before Girdwood we would never have met because I’m a Catholic and she’s a Protestant” – **Young Male from Kinnaid (Antrim Road)**

“I took part in the North Talks Too Local Interface project and was told I’d learn about other people’s culture but I also learnt loads of stuff about my own culture which I didn’t know” – **Young person from Lower Oldpark area**

“When we’re in the Girdwood Youth Space we don’t even think about anyone’s religion anymore. Some people are your friends and some aren’t but it’s got nothing to do with religion” – **Young Female from Cliftonville**

Case Study:

Girdwood Shared Youth Space



Participants:

240 participants per month in Shared Youth Drop-in

participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

120 drop-in sessions
500 young people contacted
60 participants in team building activities
40 participants in shared activities
80 participants in good relations workshops
12 participants in Girdwood Youth Forum
10 participants in Girdwood Youth Development Programme

What difference did we make?



How well did we do?

"I had never been off the Shankill for anything before T:BUC Camp now I've joined sport and youth programmes at Girdwood. I would never have had the confidence to do this before".

"T:BUC has helped me understand what we have in common and also our differences and that we shouldn't let our differences divide us".

Greater Whitewell Community Surgery

Good Relations Programme

Overview

The Greater Whitewell Community Surgery (GWCS) is a partnership between Greencastle Community Empowerment Partnership and White City Community Development Association.

The immediate catchment area includes a renowned interface area and communities that historically had disengaged from cross community programmes.

The GWCS operates out of premises on the Shore Road and works across a number of areas that include the Longlands, Bawnmore, Throne, Upper Whitewell and Graymount communities.

The GWCS was first established in 2010 and is currently overseen by local resident cross-community management committee, employing one full-time and two part-time members of staff.

Since its development the GWCS has based itself within a locally accessible shared space that has increased community confidence and participation in cross community activities.

The organisation has continually worked to champion the needs of local residents, facilitate programmes aimed at building cohesion and improving safety across the various communities, and put in place initiatives that have improved the health and social wellbeing of local residents.



GWCS Aims:

- To maintain a robust and transparent intercommunity partnership;
- To address quality of life issues for all residents by building, maintaining and facilitating relationships with local government, statutory bodies and the voluntary and private sector;
- To support engage all residents in processes that respect and value culture and diversity;
- To provide residents with opportunities to participate in projects that will increase civic empowerment;
- To contribute and support local regeneration initiatives;
- To raise awareness around the education and health needs of young people.

Three of the main strengths of the GWCS are:

- The large number of volunteers, many of whom were originally participants on programmes;
- The recognition that the premises is a safe space that can be accessed by any person or organisation;
- The relationships with international funders and local government

The GWCS has been, and continues to be, at the forefront of developing and implementing good relations programmes in the Greater Whitewell area of North Belfast. The following section is an opportunity to illustrate how our work is aligned with The Executive Office Good Relations Strategy and is being steered by the vision of building a united community.

Contact:

878 Shore Road
Belfast
BT36 7DQ
T: (028) 9085 9911



Case Study:

Summer Programme

Project Summary:

This is a 6-week programme which runs over the summer months with in-house and outdoor activity programmes is vital as these are the most contentious months, which through past experience has the potential of separating the young people. It also maintains friendships among the parents who get involved and volunteer in the summer programme. It also allows the young people to strengthen their friendships and respect each other's cultures.

We will have 50+ participants although no child is ever refused.

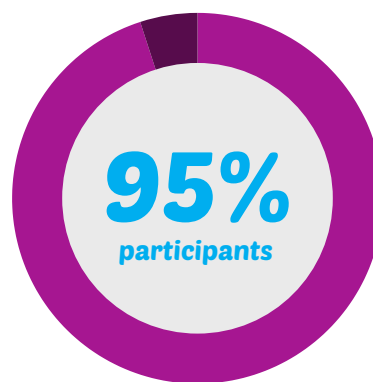
Participants:



participants
from both main
traditions and
other ethnic
groups



What difference did we make?



of participants
shared that they
enjoyed the
summer
programme.

How well did we do?

"Cannot commend this project enough, the confidence in my child has soared. It has broke down so many barriers between the kids in this area."

"The trips are fun, and free!"

"We do lots of arts and crafts and get lots of food."

"Where my friends are."

What did we learn?

We soon realised the strength of the bonds created in the APP Programme when we had taken the children out of their area as they became very protective of each other when joined with outside groups. The group saw themselves as a 'We' not them and us.

Intercomm

Good Relations Programme

Overview

INTERCOMM was founded in 1995 as a direct response to grassroots community concerns about inter-community conflict and social deprivation. Delivering a portfolio of programmes under the T:BUC Strategy through the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme. We proactively work to combat the social, economic and political problems created by over 30 years of conflict and help construct a concrete and viable peace. We are a solution-focussed peace building organisation that has developed an organic peace building practice and model. What we have learned is that peace building must operate along three interdependent and connected strands:

INTERVENTION: INTERCOMM has developed organisational integrity and credibility by working with communities in times of heightened tensions or as a response to emerging needs.

LEARNING: INTERCOMM has sought to give communities and agencies the skills to manage and adjust to change.

STRATEGIC: INTERCOMM has actively cultivated working relationships with politicians, lead departments, and local stakeholders to effect institutional capacity to embrace the demands and dynamics of the T:BUC Strategy through the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme.



The introduction of Outcome Based Accountability has given us a real opportunity to develop programmes that make a real difference to the lives of the people of North Belfast.

We can plot how well we are achieving our outcomes by looking at the feedback from participants on our programmes, ensuring they are in line with the overall TBUC Strategy and recording the progress made in order to inform new and developing programmes and projects.

By the end of this year's programme we will have engaged with over 2000 people from the New Lodge, Shankill, Ligoniel, Woodvale, Ardoyne, Lower Oldpark, Shore Road and Limestone including Tigers Bay.

Our Programmes delivered in 2023/24:

- 1.Support and Mentoring.
- 2.Community Youth Peace Building.
- 3.Community Keeping Safe.
- 4.Learning from Our Shared Past
- 5.Double Click for Peace (Podcasting project)

Contact:

Intercomm Ireland
Unit 24
North City Business Centre
Duncairn Gardens
Belfast, BT15 2GG



Case Study:

Community Youth Peace Building and Engagement

Project Summary:

This programme will build community confidence through the use of site visits, community engagements, learning workshops and a bespoke youth intervention programme including residentials and activities that promote understanding and help build good community relations.

This programme will link with Belfast City Councils good relations officers and community safety programmes including those funded under the new Peace programme. We also intend to link with groups funded within the NBSGRP and work and link with groups not funded under this programme e.g. Alternatives, Lower Old Park, the Hub centre Duncairn Community Partnership and groups funded under the IFI Peace Walls Programme.

How well did we do?

"With more events like this people can learn to respect each other's war dead on each side"

"My Grandfather was a staunch republican and he always bought 3 Poppy's every year for the 3 friends he lost during World War 2"

"I couldn't believe that the Poppy isn't viewed as a political symbol."

Participants:



2015

participants over the
5 programmes

participants
from both main
traditions and
other ethnic
groups



12

Workshops
delivered

How much did we do?

5

Mentoring engagements

1

Learning Workshops

1

Open Speaker Events

3

Youth Diversion Activities

2

GR Workshops

North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme Key Facts

Coverage: The Programme operates across all communities within North Belfast.

Delivery:



The North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme is delivered as part of the Executive’s wider Together: Building a United Community strategy. You can find out more about the strategy by scanning the QR code.

North Belfast


Ballysillan
Communiy Forum


Ligoneil Improvement
Association


Cliftonville Comm
Regeneration Fo


Ardoyne Youth
Enterprises


Vine Centre


Shankill
Womens’
Centre

Asht

West Belfast

Outcomes Focus:

The Programme has a strong focus on the outcomes of delivery. Every funded project has one or more defined and measurable good relations outcomes linked to the wider strategic aims of the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.





Aims:

The aims of the Programme are to improve relations between and within communities across North Belfast and to promote local solutions to local good relations issues.



Partnership Delivery:

The NBSGRP is delivered in partnership with the Community Relations Council (CRC). The Executive Office is responsible for the strategic direction of the Programme, with CRC managing the administration and co-ordinating the evaluation of project outcomes over the course of the funding cycle.



South
elfast

East
Belfast

Ligoniel Improvement Association

Good Relations Programme

Overview

Ligoniel Improvement Association (LIA) is a community based organisation whose aim, when formed in 1974, was to “initiate, facilitate and resource community participation in the improvement of the Ligoniel area”.

LIA recognise that the inequalities and disadvantages affecting Ligoniel at all levels are not only a legacy of the Troubles, but the result of a community that has survived on the periphery of Belfast.

The organisation has witnessed many changes to the area including the redevelopment of the village, changes in the residential structures, withdrawal and closure of a number of long term employers, the establishment and subsequent termination of a number of training and employment schemes.

It has been instrumental in developing the Wolfhill Centre, one of the main community re-source facilities in the area.

The foresight of the Chairperson Professor Tom Lovett saw the need to preserve Ligoniel’s rich environment history and led to a Ligoniel Neighbourhood Village Partnership, pre- dating any Government regeneration initiative in Northern Ireland by over 4 years.



Education and building capacity of residents to engage in issues directly impacting on the area has also been a key priority for LIA over the years and has resulted in the establishment of a training facility and ongoing initiatives to improve academic attainment for young people.

Ligoniel Improvement Association prides itself on delivering services and projects throughout the community focusing on community development, youth work, community relations , community safety and environmental preservation.

In 2023/24 we have developed several programmes that encompasses all of the above whilst ensuring we have met every one of the T:BUC policies.



Contact:

Wolfhill Centre
148 Ligoniel Road
Belfast
BT14 8DJ
T: (028) 9039 1225



Case Study:

Women in Leadership

Project Summary:

The programme will look at the slow and gradual growth of female representation from civil society to democratise institutions. It will involve the promotion and protection of women's rights and how women developed skills needed to influence policy and legislation. Key issues identified will address policy development, 2 legislative reforms. Establish greater inclusivity and dialogue between women and politicians. Establish links and networks between civil society and parliaments To strengthen cases for reform and provide models of objective representation of women in political life.

Participants:



44

women from across north Belfast

participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

48

Training Sessions



What difference did we make?



100%
participants

have better understanding of cultural differences and beliefs

feel confident in visiting other communities



100%
participants



100%
participants

feel the Wolfhill Centre is a welcoming and safe space for all and this is evidenced by their participation in a range of other activities on offer at the Centre

How well did we do?

22 women engaged in 48 facilitated sessions

22 women engaged in training sessions online

22 women can now use Zoom and other internet services

22 Women engaged in active in policy legislation concerning local communities

Positive feedback from the group that they can work to develop change within their communities and that together they are stronger and have the same issues in common.

Mount Vernon Community Development Forum

Good Relations Programme

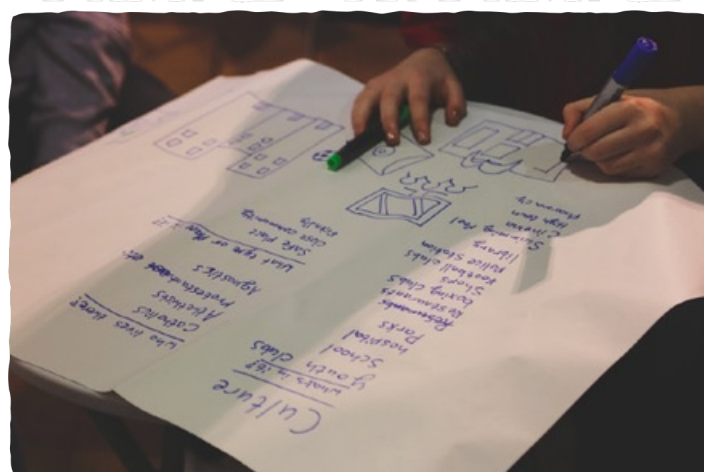
Overview

Mount Vernon Community Development Forum (MVCDF) role is to add value to the activity undertaken by groups in local neighbourhoods and to work with organisations to ensure the continued development of a resourced community sector in the MVCDF area that is recognised, valued and effective. We seek to support successful community development, encourage reflective practice and promote cooperation and locally based solutions.

It is widely recognised within MVCDF that the building of relationships requires communities to create new lines of contact and develop meaningful engagement with one another. MVCDF believes that divisions exist within and between communities and therefore argue the need to work on intra and inter community relationships. MVCDF also recognises the importance of the work to tackle the history of suspicion, mistrust and even hatred that exists within communities. MVCDF will endeavour to address these problems within its own neighbourhoods over which it has influence:

Build on existing good relations work with

- Appreciation and respect of "Difference" within a North Belfast context;
- Work towards creating confident, proud and Knowledgeable Neighbourhoods;
- Work towards creating safer and stable Neighbourhoods.



Commissioned research suggests the need for work to be concentrated on a number of issues and in particular geographical areas are high on our agenda! We believe that quality of delivery and capacity building is important.

We do this by using Action Learning. This allows the participants to plan, design and deliver projects and learn from the process and record the learning.

It also allows us to focus on community development to create the skills and cohesion within communities which builds confidence to work on inter-community issues by using Good Relations' methods.

The work is focused, Children & Young People, Shared Community, Safer Neighbourhoods and Cultural Expression.

All of this work is carried out by MVCDF using the methods above. The work we carry out is recognised by The Executive Office's key priorities within the T:BUC Strategy document.

Contact:

166-180 Mountvernion Park
Belfast
BT15 4BJ



Case Study:

Men's Forum

Project Summary:

The Men's Forum has 90 participants who are made up of 80% PUL and 20% CNR. The project has come to the conclusion that the make-up is right due to the feedback from participants that there was a need to build confidence and capacity in the PUL community. The group found people were concerned that Unionism had given everything away to Republicans. So Republicans agreed to focus on the PUL issues to get participants a better understanding of the need for Good Relations, Peace Building and Conflict Transformation. This has worked in practice and relationships have been made. The work is delivered through three separate workshops with 30 participants in each consisting of different people in each workshop. The workshops are supported by active learning! This provides the opportunity for the participants to practice in a community setting as part of their learning. The workshops consist of the following content:

- Citizenship today;
- Understanding Pluralism;
- Opposing narratives;
- Longstanding and current challenges; and understanding loyalism.

There is interaction with Republicans in the action learning element.

Participants:



126

men in total from across North Belfast

participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

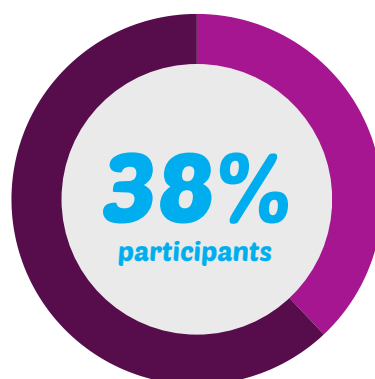


12

weeks of sessions took place

This programme provided targeted interventions, confidence building workshops, action learning, planned site visits, and shared history initiatives and connectivity with other projects to build an understanding for the complex problems that exist in the neighbourhoods

What difference did we make?



are happy with meeting and working on cross community programmes.

How well did we do?

"The programme was excellent, I enjoyed it and it made me feel more able to go out and make a difference."

"For future programmes we now know the landscape, what people are doing, and how we can sustain improved relations into the future."

Additional team building activities took place at Mount Vernon Community House. These were a development that the participants suggested and were carried out as an in-programme development.

Shankill Women's Centre

Good Relations Programme

Overview

The Shankill Shared Women's Centre opened in June 2024, marking a new chapter through the partnership of Shankill Women's Centre and Clonard Women's Group.

The creation of this building was led by Belfast City Council, and funded by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). The PEACE IV Programme aims to create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.

The Department for Communities in Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development in Ireland provided match funding for the project.

Values & Principles - Shankill Shared Women's Centre is underpinned by a set of values and principles that support its role in championing women:

Good Relations:

We will promote Good Relations and challenge sectarianism/racism in all aspects of our work and our relationships with others.



Partnership:

We will work collaboratively with other agencies, both locally and in the wider sphere, in order to progress our aims

Quality Assurance:

We will develop our organisation to the highest standards and work towards long-term sustainability

Local involvement:

We will continue to involve local women in the management and staffing of our Centre and will respond appropriately to community need

Our History

Shankill Women's Centre formed in 1987, is located in a disadvantaged ward in North Belfast. It arose because of an expressed local need for women specific education, support and training.

Originally located in "The Hummingbird" on the Shankill Road, the Centre formed the first community/statutory partnership of its kind through its move to the Shankill Centre with the North and West Health and Social Services Trust.

After many years at the Shankill Centre, the organisation resides in Shankill Shared Women's Centre since June 2024

Contact:

Shankill Shared Women's Centre
3 Mayo Link
BT13 3EP
Belfast



Case Study:

Cross Community Classes

Project Summary:

SWC Cross-Community classes will engage with 200 PUL/CRN and BME women from across North Belfast to take part in educational programmes that will help to increase their personal development, educational attainment and confidence levels whilst creating organic friendships that are formed whilst focusing on the same learning outcome. Research from Queens University Belfast has stated that "Education facilities can play significant role in post-conflict peacebuilding between segregated communities. They offer a unique safe and neutral environment that can foster individual and cross group cohesion as classes work together with common purpose and common goals

Participants:



175

total women enrolled in classes.

participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

17
Cross-community classes



What difference did we make?

Social inclusion with the emphasis on learning new skills. Understanding and learning new skills in a safe secure environment benefits the individual and has a positive trickle-down effect for family members. Good relations through friendships is formed and hard topics are treated respectfully due the nature of the close relationships forged during the structured learning

How well did we do?

"I have made a friend for life"

"I don't know where I'd be with the women's centre"

"learning how to communicate through sign language means I am no longer afraid to approach a deaf person, this has really opened my eyes to what different people suffer everyday"

"learning how to communicate through sign language means I am no longer afraid to approach a deaf person, this has really opened my eyes to what different people suffer everyday"

Vine Centre

Good Relations Programme

Overview

The Vine Centre was established in 1970 as an Advice Centre, and over the last number of years has extended the range of services and facilities it provides. All projects now operate out of a new purpose-built centre as previous premises had become unsuitable for all our activities. The Centre has a Christian ethos as reflected in the non-judgmental, unconditional service we offer to all. The Centre is managed by a Management Committee with the daily operations being the responsibility of a Centre Manager who reports to the Centre's Director.

Present activities include:

- Advice Centre
- Afterschools Clubs
- Family Education
- Women's Project
- Lunch Clubs
- Senior Citizens Meetings
- Adult Education Classes
- Volunteer Development Programme

We provide practical assistance to local people, and organise outings for the community along with Summer Schemes for the children and young people in the area. Community involvement is encouraged whenever possible in all projects and celebrations.



The following organisations formed the North Belfast Advice Partnership:

- Ligoniel Improvement Association
- Ballysillan Community Forum
- Ardoyne Association
- Tar Isteach
- The Vine Centre



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Case Study:

Welfare Rights Programme

Project Summary:

This programme focuses on bringing participants together on a shared issue that enables them to connect and build relationships. This programme works within and across communities. It removes the mental corridors and physical boundaries, and encourages participants to be more socially mobile across North Belfast and access more facilities and services, that otherwise would be unknown to them. An example of this is that through the workshops we have been able to recruit participants for ICT training and have asked them happy to another centre, with 95% of them saying yes, they would go to another NBAP centre as the Welfare Reform workshop and meeting people from another background has helped them to breakdown any barriers that may have been previously there.

Participants:



176

total programme participants

participants from both main traditions and other ethnic groups



How much did we do?

19

total Workshops delivered



What difference did we make?



said that the workshop improved their knowledge of the work of and services provided by NBAP across the north of the city

said that, if they needed it, they would be willing to access support wherever it was located



said that they would change the way in which they managed their money as a result of the workshop

How well did we do?

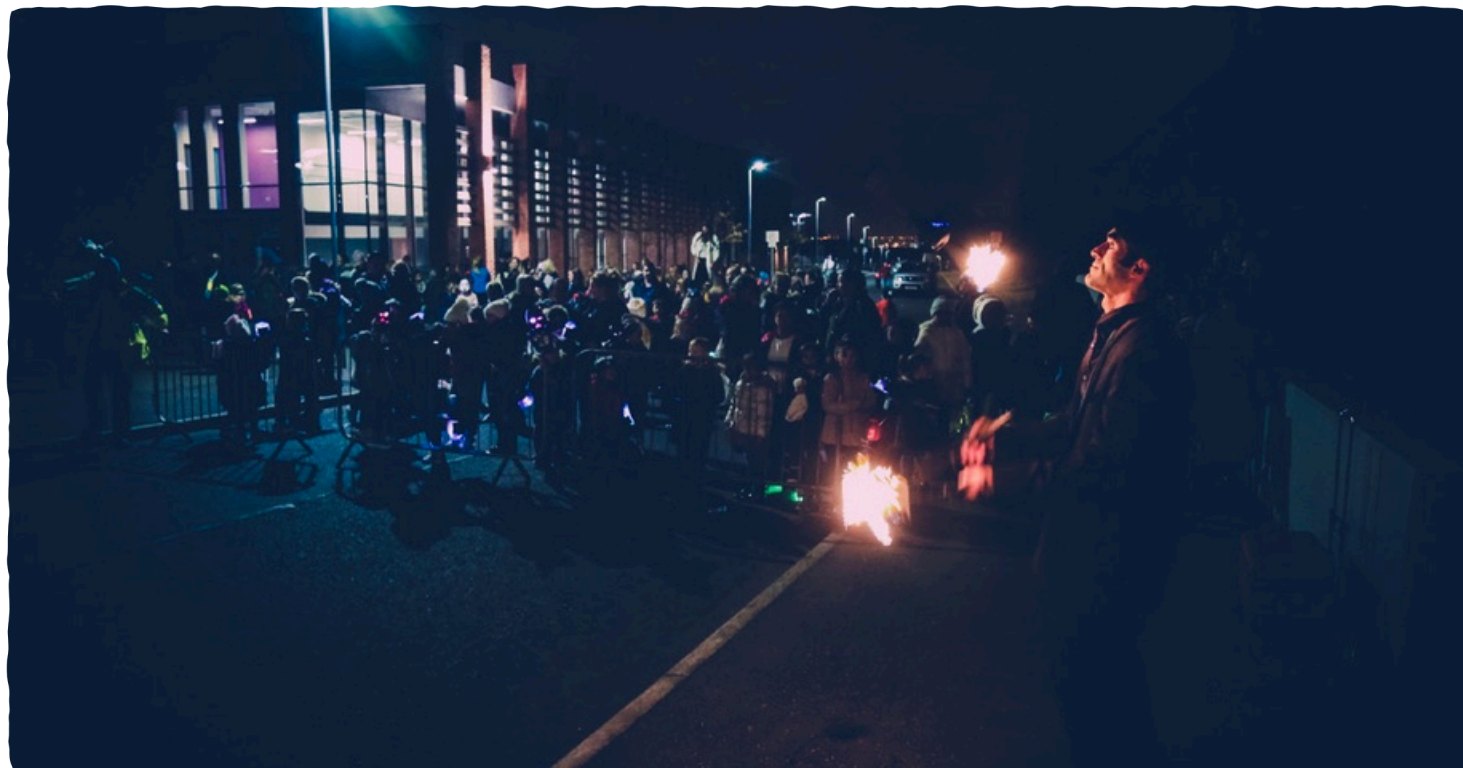
"These sessions should be rolled out across all communities as together we need to prepare for change and support each other."

"These workshops should be more regular and frequent, this is great way of bringing people together to discuss real issues that impact on communities."

"Excellent workshop and concerned for community and the implementation of the changes and impact on everyone."

2023/24 North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme Overview

Key Facts & Figures



20,000+
Participants

43
Good Relations
Programmes

Impacting over **200** different areas across
the **10** community organisations within
North Belfast.



Working in Partnership:

The on-going partnership between the Community Relations Council and The Executive Office with respect to the management of the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme (NBSGRP) has worked well over the past number of years utilising the expertise and experience of both organisations.

Through the working relationships that CRC has developed with all contract holders, programmes were also supported through small grants and core funding schemes in addition to the NBSGRP.

During the 2023/24 reporting period CRC staff witnessed the impressive wide range of programmes that were delivered including after-schools programmes, political awareness workshops, detached youth work outreach, shared history projects and intensive mentoring interventions. All these projects have been building on measurable outcomes and this report clearly highlights the many successes that have been achieved.

CRC recognises the vital peace building role that each of the contract holders has and will continue to look for ways to maximise their contribution to the community relations sector.



North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme



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Executive**

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**COMMUNITY
RELATIONS
COUNCIL**

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North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme
Programme Report 2023/24
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