

The Path Ahead: Our Collective Role

The restoration of the Assembly and the Executive's renewed commitment to peacebuilding are vital steps forward for Northern Ireland. As the new T:BUC policy emerges, the Community Relations Council remains confident in our role to support government and communities in achieving sustainable, long-term peace. The time has truly come for everyone to accept their individual role in embedding peace into our everyday lives, recognizing the immense benefits a fully socially cohesive community infrastructure brings to our entire economy and society. We look forward to co-designing the actions in the refreshed T:BUC strategy with The Executive Office, ensuring our collective efforts continue to build a future that benefits everyone.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Investing in Peace | Fostering Connection | Building Our Future

Find out how the many activities of the Community Relations Council have made a lasting difference to peacebuilding throughout the region during 2024-2025 year.



Who we are

The Community Relations Council (CRC) is an Arm's Length Body of The Executive Office (TEO), serving as a **key delivery agent** of the Executive's Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy. Established by government in 1990 as an independent charity, we are dedicated to **improving community relations** and fostering a more **united and shared society**. Our aim is to advance education in, and understanding of, the different cultural traditions of the people in the region.



What we do

Our work focuses on **distributing funding** to community-based organisations delivering essential peacebuilding across local communities. We champion **learning and best practice** in peacebuilding and reconciliation to help facilitate vital **community engagement** and also share that expertise among groups and with government. CRC believes that effective public policy and service delivery depends on the relationship between policy, practice and continuous reflective evaluation to sustain good community relationships.



How we do it

This year, CRC operated three grant funding programmes to invest in community-based organisations delivering peacebuilding in local communities. We also bring together our funded organisations to share their learning and expertise with each other and TEO. An example of this is the **T:BUC Engagement Forum**, which we deliver on behalf of TEO. In addition to this, we also deliver **Good Relations Week** and the annual **Good Relations Awards**.



T:BUC Engagement Forum

T:BUC Engagement Forums are a great way to hear from practitioners and organisations in the local community about how they are involved in the delivery of T:BUC and the promotion of Good Relations.

Pictured at a recent T:BUC Engagement event in Lisburn is (l-r): Jacqueline Irwin, CEO, CRC; Emma Little-Pengelly, deputy First Minister; Lisburn Mayor Amanda Grehan; Aisling Reilly, Junior Minister; and Martin McDonald, MBE, CRC Chair.

CRC in Action

We are committed to developing industry best practice principles, as well as showcasing peacebuilding organisations within the region. As such, we regularly bring organisations together through conferences, seminars and shared learning forums.



Stay Connected

Sign up for our monthly newsletter. Scan the QR code below to receive updates on CRC's work, upcoming events, and all the latest funding opportunities.



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Chair's Foreword



“The time has come for everyone to accept their individual role of ensuring we build peace into our everyday lives.”

CRC has continued to deliver in line with its operational plan and strategy, ensuring that peacebuilding efforts reach those in most need. I am confident that as the new T:BUC policy and strategy emerges, CRC will continue to support government and our communities in sustainable, long-term peacebuilding.

The real key to this is building a society that embraces and values a fully socially cohesive community infrastructure.

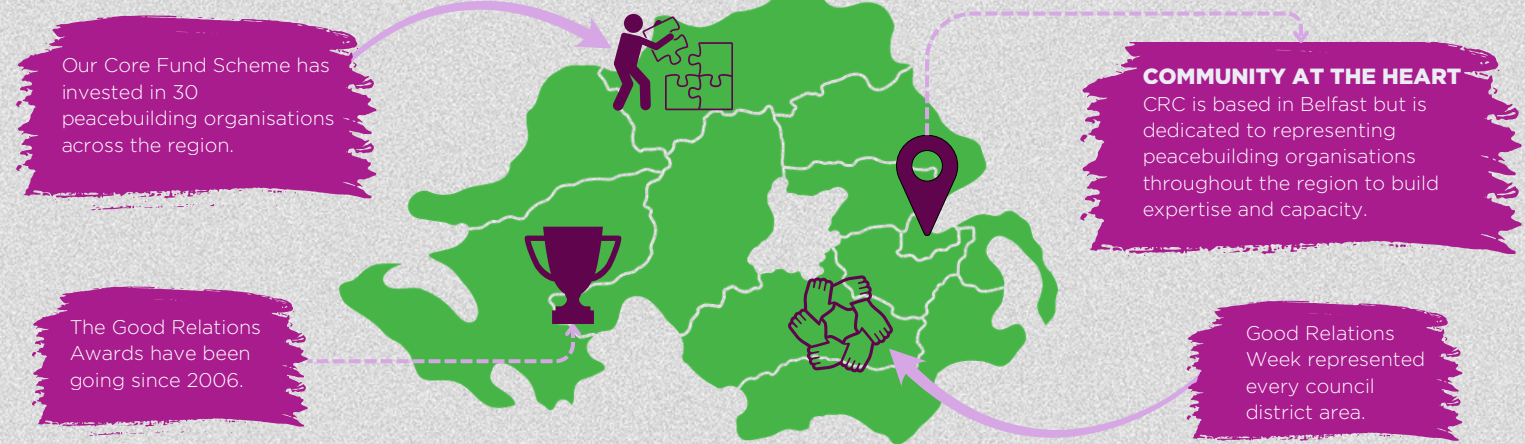
Martin Milford

Our Results: Making A Difference Across the Region

TOTAL FUNDING OFFERS:
OVER £2 MILLION
in support to local organisations and projects.

Our Funding in Action

- £1,220,000 in grants** to 30 Core Fund organisations.
- £602,640 in grants** to 10 North Belfast Programme organisations.
- £196,739 in funding** to 71 CR/CD Small Grants projects.



Good Relations Week 2024: Opportunity

224 events registered across every council area.

Media Reach: 122 print & online, 13 broadcast, 489 social media.

Encouraging wider engagement to help build united communities across the region.

Good Relations Awards 2025: Celebrating Peacebuilders

RECORD 65 nominations received across 6 categories.

19 exceptional individuals and projects recognised.

CRC Exceptional Achievement: Kathy Wolff, Community Relations Forum, became the 29th winner of the CRC Exceptional Achievement Award in Peacebuilding. Since the Award's inception in 2006, it has shone a spotlight on unsung community heroes.

Highlighting achievements in promoting community relations, intercultural work, and peacebuilding.

Our Grant Funding Programmes

CRC's funding schemes have empowered a diverse range of peacebuilding initiatives throughout the region:

- Core Funding Scheme: Provides strategic funding for regional-level groups combatting sectarianism on a long-term basis.
- Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Small Grant: Supports local community and voluntary groups in developing their capacity for community relations work.
- North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme (NBSGRP): Administered on behalf of The Executive Office, this fund specifically aims to improve community relations within North Belfast.

Building Connections & Capacity

T:BUC Engagement Forums: 450 people attended 3 vital forums, 92% rated excellent, 33% new attendees.

Shared Learning Events: 4 events delivered, 81% rated excellent.

Reaching Wider Audiences

X: 7,803 followers

f: 4,435 followers

Website: 10,861 website users, 46,126 website page views

Chief Executive's Comment - Jacqueline Irwin

Given the financial pressures affecting the majority of the organisations we fund, it was again inspiring to see how they found creative ways to overcome these challenges and continue to build good cross-community relationships, often at the same time as delivering other services at a local level.

“Good intercommunity relationships are the bedrock on which everything else thrives.”