

T:BUC ENGAGEMENT FORUM NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2020



Introduction



I am very pleased to be able to present this issue of the Engagement Forum newsletter. This is the first edition produced since February, and the first to be published solely online.

The theme of this Engagement Forum is "Delivering T:BUC during the Pandemic" and it is particularly apt: the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on us all - communities, voluntary and community groups, statutory bodies and government Departments.

The lockdown was announced at what is usually the busiest time of year for many of you who are engaged in Good Relations work. The administrative processes for various funding streams were affected as has been the delivery of the projects themselves.

Nevertheless, across the board, people have adapted to the prevailing circumstances and have continued their work in delivery against the key aims of the T:BUC Strategy.

A major focus of the Strategy is about physically bringing people together and this has just not been possible since the end of March. However, new ways of working have been found: I have been impressed by the innovative methods that groups have developed to continue the delivery of Good Relations work in their communities. Some examples of these are provided in the following pages and I am sure you will be as encouraged as I have been to read them. From young people participating in socially distanced activities to older people and children exchanging letters, to the delivery of online training and support packs in local communities - all clearly demonstrate how the T:BUC Strategy is being taken forward during the current pandemic and the consequent restrictions and how the lives of many individuals are being impacted in positive ways.

Chris Gardner

Head of Good Relations Outcomes Branch The Executive Office

Looking back...

T:BUC Engagement Forum: February 2020 - Uniting Communities through Sport and Creativity

Sport and creativity are important ways to bridge community divides and bring young people together to form lasting relationships. This key ideal was intrinsic to the latest T:BUC Engagement Forum. Despite the bad weather, over 150 people – Including Lord Mayor of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Cllr Mealla Campbell, and Junior Ministers Gordon Lyons and Declan Kearney – were in attendance at Armagh City Hotel on 11 February 2020.



The T:BUC Engagement Forum, which runs three times per year, is organised by the Community Relations Council on behalf of The Executive Office.

Presentations were delivered by practitioners from the Irish Football Association, Gaelic Athletic Association and PeacePlayers NI, as well as participants from the Department of Communities Young Ambassadors Programme. The discussion groups and workshops focused on the use of sport and creativity as a medium for improving good relations. Gareth Harper, Managing Director of PeacePlayers NI, explained:

"At PeacePlayers we use the power of sport to unite, educate and inspire young people to create a more peaceful world. The funding we receive from the Community Relations Council means we can offer sport programming, peace education, and leadership development to those living in communities in conflict.

We challenge the hate that is driven by the fear of our differences. We bridge divides between people through the game of basketball and we develop young leaders who help to change perceptions."

The event was completed with a panel discussion based on the points raised during the group discussions. The event also hosted a marketplace of local and regional organisations who all in some way use sport and creativity to promote good relations.



Together: Building a United Community Strategy: Overview

The vision

The T:BUC Strategy provides a vision based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation. It also provides the framework for government action in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance while seeking to address division, hate and separation.

Key priorities

The T:BUC Strategy outlines how we in Government, in the community, and as individuals, work together to build a united community and facilitate change in the key priorities of:

- Our children and young people;
- Our shared community;
- Our safe community; and
- Our cultural expression.





Further information on the T:BUC Strategy can be found at: https://www.executiveoffice-ni. gov.uk/articles/about-togetherbuilding-united-community-tbuc

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Headline actions

The T:BUC Strategy sets out seven strategic headline actions and a range of other actions and commitments that provide innovative approaches to bringing about the conditions that will contribute to a united, shared and reconciled community. The seven headline actions are:



Develop A Significant Programme Of Cross Community Sporting Events.

Remove Interface Barriers By 2023.

Peace4Youth Programme

Programme summary

Peace4Youth is aligned with the vision and objectives of United Youth as set out in the T:BUC Strategy. The programme focuses on supporting participants to develop capabilities in the areas of personal development, good relations and citizenship, ultimately enhancing their employability and improving their life chances.

Peace4Youth

Peace4Youth is built on 12 essential design features and the programme has a strong focus on engaging, non-formal learning approaches delivered via a professionallyfounded youth work approach.

Programme News



The programme is on track to successfully achieve its objectives with over 4,500 young people having participated to date.

The projects are supporting participants to develop capabilities in the areas of personal development, good relations and citizenship, designed to lead to increased life chances for the young people involved including enhanced employability.

A Snapshot in Time - Peace4Youth projects provide essential support for young people in lockdown

Almost 1,500 young people benefited from essential supports provided by EU PEACE IV funded youth projects during lockdown.

That is the headline figure emerging from a survey of 11 Peace4Youth projects which moved their services online and continued to hold a connection with young people during the unprecedented public health restrictions that ensued from the COVID-19 pandemic.



The independent evaluation of Phase¹ of the programme (October 2018) was highly positive with most of the indicators under the main outcome areas showing clear progression for participants. Almost 80% of the young people surveyed indicated they were going to progress to education, training, employment or voluntary/community engagement, and almost 90% had gained a gualification in at least one area.





If you have any questions please contact: info@seupb.eu

Uniting Communities Programme eniting **Programme summary** The Uniting Communities Programme uses sport, physical, and creative activity to break through sport & creativity down divisions in society and deliver and

embed key good relations messages with an emphasis on tackling sectarianism, racism and promoting equality of opportunity.

Programme News



Learning Young Leaders from the Uniting **Communities programme** impressed during Covid-19. Working alongside Cooperation Ireland; they codesigned a new approach to ensure their training continued via on line platforms. They developed further skills in child protection awareness and behaviour management. Skills to assist engagement with their younger peers going forward were covered in a session on a strength based approach to working with young people.



Helping

Programme Ambassadors volunteered to support local communities during lockdown. Working within guidelines, they assisted in the Covid-19 emergency response by distributing emergency food parcels.

Ambassadors also attended planning sessions with TEO and Community Relations Council officials; successfully contributing to the organisation of Good Relations Week in September.

Contact:

If you have any questions please contact: tbuc@communities-ni.gov.uk





Inspiring

A new challenge has emerged thanks to inspirational Young Leader Lucy Smyth (21) from Castlederg. At the age of 12 Lucy was diagnosed with a rare and unknown condition which affected her ability to walk. Lucy shared how Sir Tom Moore inspired her with his fundraising for the NHS. Leaving her wheelchair behind, using only her walking device, Lucy walked 5,000 steps a day.



Further information: if you want to know more about the Uniting Communities Programme, check out the website: https://www.communities-ni.gov.

uk/articles/uniting-communitiestbuc

Shared Housing Programme

Programme summary

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



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

Programme News



The Department for Communities was responsible for delivering the T:BUC Headline Action: 'To create 10 new shared housing developments'.



The 10 T:BUC shared neighbourhoods have been completed, and they have been the catalyst for further shared housing delivery in the (draft) Programme for Government (PfG). An additional 26 shared schemes are being delivered through the PfG.



The 2020/21 Shared Housing Programme is being delivered through Shared Future Funding and funding provided through the Fresh Start Agreement.

The COVID-19 social distancing measures have greatly impacted the delivery of the projects within the plans, but the Housing Associations delivering the shared housing schemes have developed innovative project approaches that support continued good relations delivery.



Further information: if you want to know more about these projects, or the Shared Housing Programme, check out the following websites: https://www.communities-ni. gov.uk/articles/shared-housingprogramme

The 'Adopt A Grandparent' Project

Radius Housing Association is delivering its 'Adopt A Grandparent' project which uses a good relations approach: focusing on the importance of intergenerational relationships while tackling issues such as loneliness. The project (remotely) pairs young people from local schools with residents in sheltered accommodation.

The young participants write to their adopted 'grandparents' asking questions that can be answered in return correspondence, and the pupils also create artworks which are sent to the sheltered accommodation locations for display. It is anticipated that the young people will visit their newly adopted pen pals when the social distancing measures are relaxed.



Contact:

If you have any questions please contact: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/forms/ feedback

Shared Education Campuses

Programme summary

The Shared Education Campuses (SEC) Programme provides capital assistance to applicant schools to facilitate shared education.

There have been three calls to the SEC Programme, with five projects having been approved to proceed to planning. The projects include a mixture of designs, but all include shared education facilities as the core element of delivery.

Programme News



Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, all schools in Northern Ireland closed on 20 March 2020, although some schools remained open for vulnerable children and for the children of key workers.

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The restrictions have had a significant impact on schools and only limited activity has been possible between the schools involved in the Shared Education Campuses.

In relation to the progression of capital builds, virtual platforms have been used to enable Project Board meetings to take place and work is continuing to progress the development of business cases for those projects at this stage of development and to progress the more advanced post-primary projects.



Further information: if you want to know more about the Interface Programme, check out the website:

https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/ articles/department-justiceinterface-programme

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T:BUC Camps Programme

Programme summary

The T:BUC Camps Programme provides opportunities for young people aged 11 to 19 across Northern Ireland 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.



Interface Programme

Programme summary

The Department of Justice, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and other statutory partners continue to engage with communities at interfaces to explore opportunities for physical change.

Programme News



185 applications have been made to the 2020/21 programme.



Successful and unsuccessful letters were issued by EA to groups during the week commencing 1 June 2020 - 111 groups were offered funding.



A support process is in place for groups to help them develop their capacity and deliver their projects during the pandemic, however 18 groups/24 Programmes have withdrawn from the programme.



There will be delivery of a scaled back Good Relations Ambassadors Programme with the international element postponed in 2020/21.



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Planned Interventions



The Planned Interventions Programme was launched by EA on 9 June 2020 and closed on 23 June 2020.



99 projects have been offered funding (50 different groups as some submitted multiple applications). 8 projects subsequently withdrew leaving 91 projects progressing.



Projects are being delivered between July and September 2020.





The Education Authority (EA) act as Programme Administrator for the T:BUC Camps Programme on behalf of TEO, and more background on the Programme can be found at the following website: https://www.eani.org.uk/tbuc

Programme News



Work on 2 interface reduction / removal schemes that were 'on-site' with contractors in March were impacted directly by the Covid-19 lockdown; each location had to be secured for 3 months before construction work could re-commence in June.



The recent completion of an interface removal project in the Ligoniel / Squire's Hill area of North Belfast reduces the number of DoJ-owned interface structures across NI from 46 to 45.

Since June 2020 there has been a 13% increase in the amount of time vehicular and pedestrian access gates are opened between the Falls and Shankill areas; improving access and reducing inconvenience for local residents, business owners, their customers and visitors.



Due to Covid-19 restrictions, socially-distanced brick-laying was the order of the day at an interface reduction site on Duncairn Gardens in North Belfast over the summer – one trade that thankfully lends itself rather well to the 'new normal'!



Hillman Court

Residents of Hillman Court in North Belfast have lived in the shadow of a large interface fence for as long as many local people can remember.

The security fence was erected in the 1970s to protect homes along Duncairn Gardens and to help thwart missile exchanges at times of interface community tension. The fence has served a useful purpose but in recent years local residents were keen to explore the potential for reducing the overbearing scale of the structure.

If a picture is worth a 1,000 words, then the image below probably sums up the difference the T:BUC Interfaces Programme can have when there is an appetite for change within interface communities.





If you would like further information on any of these projects, check out the website: https://www.education-ni.gov. uk/articles/shared-educationcampuses-programme

What is it?

The T:BUC Engagement Forum has been established to enable government and its associated bodies to update the voluntary & community sector on progress with regard to the implementation of T:BUC.

What is the vision?

Enable the voluntary & community sector to address T:BUC implementation issues, identify good practice and make practical and innovative recommendations for improved delivery.

When is it?

The inaugural meeting took place on 10 March 2016. Three meetings are held each year.

Interested?

If you would like to register your interest in the T:BUC Engagement Forum please contact the Community Relations Council at **028 9022 7500** or **info@nicrc.org.uk**. You can view the T:BUC Engagement Forum newsletters via the link below: https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/tbuc-engagement-forumnewsletters









Engagement Forum



Urban Villages Initiative

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.



Thriving Places

Programme News



42 capital projects have been completed with an investment of almost £11m to date.



Over the last 2 years community-led projects have been supported with an investment of nearly £3.5m to promote good relations and create thriving places across Urban Village areas.



Partnership with the Education Authority has resulted in 42 schools serving Urban Village areas becoming welcoming and inclusive Schools of Sanctuary.



The Creative Schools programme supports the educational and personal development needs of pupils in 13 schools.



The CRIS NI Buddy Up builds stronger relationships with currently 20 schools working together on good relations programmes.

Contact:

If you have any questions please contact: info@urbanvillagesni.org



Training and Employment – provision of online training courses during lockdown restrictions have continued in most ESF projects serving Urban Village areas.



The Urban Villages Initiative continues to work collaboratively with partners to improve the physical environment and create thriving places.



Ulster University continues to support the development of **Community Tourism in Urban** Village areas. They provide capacity building activities including CPD training and a new focus on developing the good relations/heritage impact and sustainability of capital projects.



Urban Village areas will benefit from two significant crossborder and cross community projects that will build positive community relations and support community cohesion.



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

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

Minority Ethnic Development Fund

Programme summary

The aim of the MEDF is to assist minority ethnic and local community organisations to promote good relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds. It provides support for voluntary and community organisations working with minority ethnic people and groups.

Programme News



Due to the emergence of **COVID-19**, funding to those organisations supported under Tiers 2 and 3 of the MEDF in 2019-20 was extended into the new financial uear.



This gave those groups the confidence and the capacity to continue the support to their clients during a very uncertain period.



Projects were amended and assurance sought that they were being delivered in accordance to the guidance around COVID-19 to ensure safety of clients and staff. but to also address the emotional and immediate needs of the community.



MEDF is supporting over 20 organisations that cover the practical, cultural and aspirational needs of our BAME communities.



As an example, the Inter Ethnic Forum headed by Ivy Goddard, who is also the current Chair of the Racial Equality Subgroup, has continued to deliver on the entire spectrum of support for its clients.





Language barriers can be an ongoing issue for minority ethnic people. The Inter Ethnic Forum ensured that **BAME** communities in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council were able to access the messages from the government around COVID-19.



The Inter Ethnic Forum also organised delivery of essential aoods to the homes of the BAME community as needed, as well as maintaining telephone contact with clients and responding to any issues being brought forward by the BAME **Community and liaise with PSNI** and Council as required.





If you want to know more about Race Equality & Good Relations, check out The Executive Office website at: uk/articles/racial-equality

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.

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 across Northern Ireland. In the last three funding years alone over 100,000 direct participants have been positively impacted by programmes using activities like sport, music and crafts to engage local communities.

Programme News



All Letters of Offer were issued to Council CEOs on 15 June 2020.



Revised Action Plans were submitted by 15 July 2020 and have been accepted.

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Summer Programmes

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council ran 2 Good Relations programmes during July and August: the "From Around the World" dance programme and the "Celebrating Our Cultures" summer arts programme. Both showcased and celebrated the diverse nature of the Council area online.

"From Around the World" provided participants the opportunity to try a wide variety of dances such as Bulgarian, Chinese, Indian, Irish, Japanese, Latvian, Malaysian, Polish and Scottish through video dance lessons recorded by experienced dance tutors. These were presented in a childfriendly manner and perfect for any beginner.



If you want to know more about the DCGRP, including videos and reports showcasing the activity and outcomes from the Programme, check out the website:

https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov. uk/articles/district-councils-goodrelations-programme "Celebrating Our Cultures" offered young participants a variety of unique workshops. These were mostly live online interactive workshops led by experienced facilitators and delivered over Webex. The young people were able to join any of the workshops - Indian Kolam-making, Samba Percussion Music, African Drumming - and learn something new.



Both programmes complemented the "From Around the World; Celebrating Our Cultures" multi-cultural exhibition, which is currently on display at Enniskillen Castle Museum. Jointly, they aim to engage young participants in new, educational, fun activities and widen their horizons.

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If you have any questions please contact: District.CouncilGR@executiveofficeni.gov.uk

Contact:

Programme News



The 2020/21 CGRF received 243 applications to the value of approximately £8.3m. This represents an increase in demand for CGRF, with 74 applications more than in 2019/20, and the amount of funding requested up by approximately £1.7m.



We have awarded £3m of CGRF funding to 85 projects in 2020/21.



We are currently working with successful groups to establish what they can deliver during 2020/21 within the current circumstances, including potential innovative delivery solutions and the COVID-19 response.



We have opened the 2020/21 CGRF Small Grants programme and are currently working with 8 groups to establish what they can deliver during 2020/21. Small Grants remain open throughout the funding period and are available for projects up to £1,500 that can be delivered by 31 March 2021.

Atlas Women's Centre

Atlas Women's Centre continued to deliver services during lockdown. Truthfully, we were busier than ever, connecting with the community by phone, email, Facebook, WhatsApp, home deliveries and Zoom.





If you want to know more about the CGRF check out The Executive Office website at: https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov, uk/CGRF

Contact:

If you have any questions please contact: GoodRelationsFund@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

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PEACE IV Programme

Programme summary

The PEACE IV Programme is a unique cross-border initiative, financed through the European Union and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). It has been designed to support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland.

Programme News



TEO is the accountable department for actions delivered by local authorities under three of the four thematic objectives of the PEACE IV Programme (Children and Young People, Shared Spaces and Services and Building Positive Relations), including the local authority action plans, the regional element of Building Positive Relations at local level and the provision of services for victims and survivors.



The overall budget for the Good Relations element of PEACE IV is €110m. TEO provides approximately £13m in match funding.



The PEACE Plus Programme is expected to be in the region of €650m

Ards and North Down Borough Council – Celebration of Musical Traditions

As part of Peace IV, Ards and North Down Borough Council have been celebrating Musical Traditions. The project brings together an eclectic mix of bands, musicians, singers, and dancers from a rich heritage.



Through facilitated workshops and rehearsals

a variety of music and dance groups began to

meet and engage in a series of "get to know you"

sessions. They explored the history and heritage

of their musical and dance traditions and how to

A workshop was held in February 2020 to meet

some of the participants before the COVID-19

showcase these through the creation of a new

musical composition and an exhibition to be

hosted in North Down Museum.



lockdown.

If you want to know more about PEACE IV, including videos and reports showcasing the activity and outcomes from the Programme, check out the website using the link below: https://www.seupb.eu/plv-overview

Community Relations Council

Programme summary

The Community Relations Council (CRC) was established in 1990 to lead and support change towards reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust. CRC is an Arms' Length Body of TEO and a catalyst for good inter-community and intercultural community relations work in the region.

Programme News

PeacePlayers



Young people from different religious backgrounds came together for a virtual tournament on Saturday 30 May 2020, hosted and developed by PeacePlayers NI, who are core funded by the Community Relations Council (CRC). PeacePlayers NI uses basketball as a tool to connect children and young people from divided communities.

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When social distancing guidance and self-isolation guidelines came into effect, PeacePlayers adapted their normal delivery method to include online interactions between young people. Using a virtual setting maintained an importance visual connection between friends from different areas and backgrounds.



For 10 weeks, PeacePlayers conducted its virtual Cross-Community Leagues (CCL) to great success – averaging 85 young people per week. The challenge was adapting the basketball portion of the session into something that could be done virtually.





PeacePlayers adapted their normal delivery method to include online interactions between young people using Zoom sessions and Facebook Live broadcasts. The conversations that were facilitated virtually were just as inspiring as they would have been face-to-face.

Normally, a real-world basketball tournament would average 200 people. PeacePlayers' virtual tournament hosted 115 people via Zoom sessions throughout the afternoon with many more tuning into the Facebook Live broadcasts. People watched from the United States, Cyprus, South Africa, and many more locations.

"I really enjoy the way even though we are so far apart physically, we are all together for an hour mentally, and it just feels like we are at Stranmillis having the same fun and we all bring the juice".

Contact:

If you have any questions please contact: https://www.community-relations.org.uk/ contact-us

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T:BUC Case Study

Good Relations delivery during the COVID-19 emergency

Funding Programme: Central Good Relations Fund (CGRF) **Organisation:** Belfast Interface Project (BIP)

Project name: See-U-Through / AR Augmented Reality Planning

Programme summary

This is a new ground-breaking app which will be publicly released for community members in Belfast and potentially around the world to work together to transform their communities. Called "Shared Futures", it enables people through Augmented Reality (AR) 3D mapping technology to imagine what their local area would look like with the peace walls reimagined or removed. This app was developed through a partnership between BIP, Professor Peter Bloom, the technology cooperative Animorph, The Executive Office (TEO) through the CGRF, and the University of Essex.

Changes made to continue delivery during COVID-19 emergency

BIP are constantly exploring new technology and constructive ways to engage with interface communities and residents during the COVID-19. Particularly with this initiative we have been looking at new ways to communicate, consult and cooperate. We have developed processes for remote working, and established interface communication hubs to compensate for social distancing and lockdown.

As an organisation with projects in Belfast and Derry we had been using video conferencing to keep in touch with each other. We expanded this to engage with our community partners and design team in Essex University, and our Academic lead Dr Peter Bloom (Essex University) chaired regular 'Skype' meetings.

Feedback from participants

I've not really been involved in cross community things before but I really enjoyed this group it was good craic and I looked forward to our group meeting every week. I hope they get more money so we can carry on.

it was good craic, I enjoyed meeting people from the other side of the peace wall, I think I've made some friends for life.

I really enjoyed the IT side of the project it was very interesting, I enjoyed the other things we did as well like meeting people from the other side.

the other group were very nice I made some new friends.

The ones from the otherside were really nice I really enjoyed my time with them. When we started I didn't know what to think but it turned out really good, they were just blike us, same problems and all.

T:BUC - in pictures



What's happening...

The CRC Media Grant Scheme opens 14 September 2020. The aim of the scheme is to commission media projects which focus on the engagement of civil society to underpin peace building and/or support the development of a more diverse society in line with the T:BUC strategy.

The Media Grant Scheme is available to support a range of media projects. The media products that may be supported include digital content projects, infographics, television, radio, video and podcasts. Apply here: https://www.community-relations.org.uk/media-grant-scheme

The CRC Small Grants funding stream is open: https://www.community-relations.org.uk/community-relations-cultural-diversity



Further information If you would like to know more about delivering projects online, or information on any other aspect of the Together: Building a United Community strategy, you can contact the TEO Good Relations Outcomes team at GR.outcomes@executiveofficeni.gov.uk







