



T:buc at Ten

March 2023



Northern Ireland
Executive

Foreword



I am delighted to present this issue of the T:buc Engagement Forum newsletter. As usual, this issue includes brief updates on the seven T:buc Headline Actions as well as examples of projects being delivered through various funding streams. It is really great to see that the commitment to the delivery of innovative, interesting and impactful cross-community activities is just as strong as ever.

This edition of the Newsletter also features the Good Relations Awards 2023 which recognise and shine a light on the people who are transforming our communities. This year we have expanded the awards to five categories to better recognise the breadth of involvement that local people have in their community. Co-ordinated by the Community Relations Council and The Executive Office, over 50 nominations were received in total, showcasing the increasing level of outstanding community relations, intercultural and peacebuilding work taking place across all our communities. Details of all the award winners may be found on pages 28 to 33.

I want to acknowledge the real impact the work of all our nominee's is having within our society, improving people's lives and their outlook for the future, while also strengthening the community spirit in the places and spaces where we live, work, and play.

I would also wish to thank our Awards Partners, who worked with us increase the profile of the event and to encourage local groups, individuals and organisations from across the region to get involved and submit nominations for the 2023 Good Relations Awards programme.

Turning to the Engagement Forum, today's theme is 'T:buc at 10' and will provide an opportunity to reflect on the delivery and impact of the T:buc Strategy as it nears its 10th anniversary. Dr Paul Nolan, an Independent Researcher who taught at Queen's University Belfast for many years and then produced the NI Peace Monitoring Reports for the CRC, will provide a key note address, using the recent census data to reflect on how society has changed over the last ten years and what this means for good relations. After this we are fortunate to have a number of speakers who will reflect on their journey through T:buc over this time. I'd like to thank the Community Relations Council for their work in developing today's programme.

On behalf of both The Executive Office and Community Relations Council, I hope you enjoy the event today.

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

Looking Back...

T:buc Engagement Forum: September 2022 - T:buc Engagement Forum “Delivering T:buc and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

On the 22nd September the Executive Office (TEO) and Community Relations Council (CRC) hosted an Engagement Forum. The theme was “**Delivering T:buc and the UN Sustainable Development Goals**” and the event focused on exploring the links between good relations and sustainability. This was the first Engagement Forum held in person since February 2020 and was particularly welcomed as the Engagement Forum is all about connections: physical and social connections. The presentation was shaped by the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and discussions focused on how these goals could be used to assist in the creation of self-sustainable communities.

The Forum was opened by Chris Gardner, Head of T:buc and Good Relations Division, The Executive Office, who took the opportunity to pay tribute to the life of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II who passed away on 8th September 2022.

Before introducing the guest speakers, Chris provided a brief overview on the work of T:buc, he highlighted that an extensive engagement programme and review of T:buc goals is being undertaken and hopes for its completion by the time of Ministerial return.

The first guest speaker to address attendees was **Craig McGuicken, CEO of NI Environment Link (NIEL)** who gave a brief overview of his organisation, which acted as an umbrella organisation for 70 diverse organisations: local, UK and International, co-ordinating action on environment and health topics.

During his presentation, Mr McGuicken explained that two options had been identified to meet the key challenges faced by Northern Ireland’s Sustainable Development Goals and the local environment on its way to Net Zero by 2050: Mitigation and adaptation.

Mr McGuicken stated that there had been an increase in public interest towards environmental issues over recent years, particularly amongst young people. He said there had also been improved Government policies and an increase in much needed international co-operation along with more Government funding in support of green initiatives.

Next up to address the forum was **Dermot McGann, a member of Belfast City Council (BCC)** working on the **Shared Space Project**. He outlined how the development of the **Forth Meadow Greenway**; the only greenway located in an urban area, which spans segregated pockets within West and North Belfast, has challenged traditional psychological, territorial ownership thinking and encouraged mutual use and enjoyment of this shared space. Mr McGann also mentioned that a £5.1M Project, part funded by BCC and DfC, developed the Springfield Dam and other areas for multipurpose use such as, shared walking and cycle lanes and allowing people to reconnect with nature.

Mr McGann told how the project had eventually been well received by both communities and that several events had been scheduled to promote the use of the shared space.

Becca Bor from **St. Columb’s Park House** opened her presentation next by saying, “we are very much part of the environment and the environment is part of us.” Ms Bor informed attendees that St. Columb’s Park House which was part-funded by Peace IV and Derry and Strabane District Council, is a reconciliation centre in the middle of a park in Derry/Londonderry. A walled garden had been created too but it was essentially a wild space with hawks in the trees, rich in wildlife and natural flora and fauna.

Ms Bor went on to explain that St. Columb’s Park House aims to give people a space where they can first build good relationships with themselves, help them find their generosity of spirit and then move forward towards harder issues collectively, challenging the two-tribe mentality. St Columb’s Park House has several initiatives which help to connect people with nature, emphasising that the Sustainable Development Goals around sustainability and environment were engrained in everything St Columb’s strives to achieve.

Following on, **Gavin King**, Head of District Councils, Camps and Interventions Branch, The Executive Office, explained that his department facilitated environmental-based shared activities across both communities. He detailed how a tree planting initiative, working alongside DoE and EA personnel was a key part of the current T:buc Camps Programme. Mr King told how hundreds of trees have been planted by young people at several locations across Belfast over the past 2 years.

Mr King stated that the T:buc trees initiative was being replicated across 11 councils in 2022 with 1,000 people signing up to plant 7 different species of trees. He went on to say that the awareness of the importance of environmental issues is growing, especially amongst young people and that the planting of these trees is a gift for the next generation.

After a short break, the Engagement Forum continued with a presentation from **David Donoghue, Former Irish Ambassador to the UN and Co-Facilitator of the UN Sustainable Development Goals**. Mr Donoghue began by expressing his admiration at the spirit of activism inherent within the Community Groups who had already given their presentations, he then summarised his work with the United Nations and in particular, his role as co-facilitator on discussions on the UN Sustainable Development Goals alongside the Kenyan ambassador to the UN. He explained the importance of gaining the involvement of all 193 countries in discussions and negotiations in order to agree Sustainable Development Goals that would be relevant, achievable, and acceptable to all nations. Amazingly and uniquely, all 193 countries agreed and signed up to 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr Donoghue mentioned that the first statement of commitment was, “As we set out of the road to 2030, we will leave no-one behind.” He noted that it sounded idealistic but that every country was asked to prioritise the needs of the poor, marginalised, the most vulnerable and to focus on the needs of the people before the needs of the country. He emphasised the importance of activism at local levels in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and told how this was not a Governmental exercise but a global challenge involving all aspects of society.

Mr Donoghue concluded his presentation by saying that Businesses are engaging under the heading of, ‘Corporate Social Responsibility’ but that it will be the voluntary sector and community groups who will do much of the work to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals are met. He described how the voluntary sector and community groups had always been seen as vital players, partly because of their dynamism, vision, and energy but also because the UN wanted to ensure that poor performing global Governments were held to account.

Presentations were followed by a panel session with a thought-provoking question and answer session which was facilitated by Chris Gardner from TEO. This included discussion around the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the “Creation of peaceful and inclusive societies” and how this could lead to more accountable societies, not just in Northern Ireland but world-wide.

Closing remarks came from Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary for The Executive Office, who thanked all participants for their contributions and highlighted several issues which had struck him as being particularly relevant, such as the importance of Partnerships between Government, Industry and Community Workers/Groups. He also took the opportunity to thank everyone who was engaged in “Good Relations Week” and with this Engagement Forum for their hard work.



CRC News Stories

CIPR

PRide
Awards 2022

Arts, Culture, Sport or Entertainment Campaign

Northern Ireland #PRideNI

Peacebuilding CEO collects OBE after spearheading Good Relations work in schools: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/peacebuilding-ceo-collects-obe-after-spearheading-good-relations-work-schools>

Launching Local Film Makers – CRC's Media Grant Scheme: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/launching-local-film-makers-crcs-media-grant-scheme>

Celebrating 20 Years of Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland | PeacePlayers: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/celebrating-20-years-peacebuilding-northern-ireland-peaceplayers>

Pride Awards Winner | Good Relations Week: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/pride-awards-winner-good-relations-week>

Irish FA Foundation's cross-European project: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/irish-fa-foundations-cross-european-project-sport-together-project>

Our lives, Our Legacy – youth showcase with Springboard Opportunities: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/our-lives-our-legacy-youth-showcase-springboard-opportunities>

Fighting Words first ever NI Summer Camp Showcase for young people: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/fighting-words-first-ever-ni-summer-camp-showcase-young-people>

Footprints Women's Centre – Case Study: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/news-centre/footprints-womens-centre-case-study>

T:buc Headline Action Updates

T:buc Camps Programme



Programme Summary

The T:buc Camps Programme provides opportunities for young people aged 11 to 19 to come together to build positive relationships across divided parts of our community. The camps challenge historic positions, encourage debate and discussion and provide a way for young people to get to know each other, try new experiences, have fun and help to build longer term relationships. Camps are delivered on a cross- community basis.



Programme News

- **118 groups** are delivering a T:buc Camp in 2022/23.
- **There are 37 T:buc Camps Ambassadors.** Of these, **25 are new** Ambassadors and 12 are from the previous cohort who are staying on as peer mentors.
- The Ambassadors are helping to design the Camps in the Community events due to take place in March 2023 and completing their OCN on Uniting Communities Through Leadership.
- The 2023/24 T:buc Camps Programme closed for applications on 31st January 2023. **200 applications were received, a 60% increase on last year.**



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: www.eani.org.uk/tbuc

T:buc Camps Programme



The T:buc Camps Programme is one of the seven headline actions of the T:buc Strategy. The Education Authority (EA) as a Programme Administrator for the T:buc Camps Programme 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 11 to 19 from all backgrounds to come together, try new experiences, have fun and build longer term relationships.

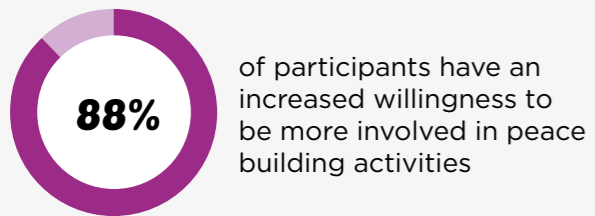
Scan to find out more

How much did we do?

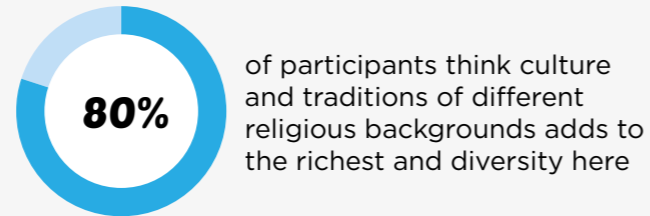
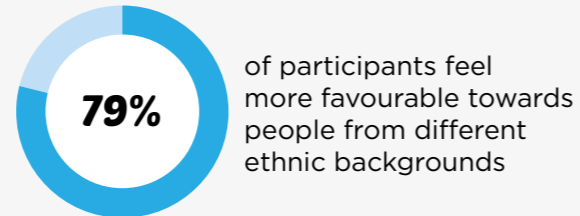
- Over 26,000 young people participated in T:buc Camps between 2015-2022
- Over 750 Camps successfully completed
- Over 9 Million pounds of funding awarded to groups



How well did we do? (six year average)



What difference did we make?



T:buc Headline Action Updates Magherafelt Youth Club

As two of TEO's newest recruits, Karen Hall and Paul Douglas, had the privilege to visit one of the T:buc Camps being run in Mid-Ulster by the Education Authority's Magherafelt Youth Club.



The T:buc Camps Programme is a headline action of the T:buc Strategy. The programme is funded by The Executive Office and focuses on helping young people aged 11 to 19 years to build positive relationships based on mutual understanding and respect. The camps bring together local groups with different backgrounds to experience a diverse range of activities, have fun and build long term friendships.

The group was made up of over 40 young people aged 14 - 18 from Magherafelt and neighbouring towns such as Castledawson, Draperstown, Maghera and Bellaghy. This was only the groups second meeting, so the evening was still very much focused on letting the young people get to know each other and encouraging them to step out of their comfort zone.

The youth leaders started the evening by discussing the group contract which the young people collaborated on in their first meeting, 'no judgement, to be kind to each other, inclusion, have fun and learn something along the way ...' which really symbolises what a T:buc Camp is all about!

The young people were split into three smaller groups for their good relations activity. The activity was based around identity and what makes you, you.

Each group was encouraged to pick out key words or phrases to describe identity, as if you were describing identity to someone who was new on planet earth. The young people then

wrote their words on 'bricks' to help build the wall describing what identity was. It was refreshing to hear the discussions between the young people and what their thoughts and views were around identity, and I think it surprised some of them that they had the same thoughts and ideas as other young people from different backgrounds - showing there can be similarities between people.

The young people then came together to 'build the wall' and the youth leaders encouraged them to step outside their comfort zone and develop their leadership skills by presenting the groups discussions back to their peers.

The youth leaders were fantastic, facilitating great open discussions ensuring every young person had the opportunity to participate but also creating a great sense of fun along the way.

As our first opportunity to see the programme in action, what we took away was just what a big impact we can have on these young people through the good relations work we do!

If you would like to find out any more information about the T:buc Camps Programme or any of our programmes, please click on the link below;

About Together: Building a United Community (T:buc) | The Executive Office (executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)

Article by Karen Hall and Paul Douglas, TEO

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

- £ **77 interventions** were awarded funding for delivery this year (22/23).
- 📁 The 2023 planned interventions programme in mid-March.
- 👥 The programme is now available to groups not registered with the Education Authority.

The infographic on the next page details the positive impacts of the Programme since 2015.

Planned Interventions

Funding Community youth work and supporting young people to engage in positive alternatives to risk taking behaviours.



We aim to ...

- Enhance Resilience in Young People
- Provide Opportunities for Young People to Engage in Positive Outlets
- Improve Relations within and across Communities

What we fund ...

Transport costs, residential costs, venue hire, day trips, food costs, equipment/materials, facilitators, staff costs and more.

Who we fund ...

Any constituted group for example community groups, voluntary organisations etc.

Divert young people away from becoming involved in civil disorder or other types of anti-social behaviour.

Up to £6,000 to engage up to 25 young people aged 10 - 25 yrs.

In 2021, 95% of young people indicated increased confidence and skills after programme participation.

Did you know...

NOT JUST PEACE WALLS:

Interfaces can be any boundary where inter or intra community tension can arise. These could be a road, the boundary between housing developments and may only be known to locals.

PARTNER UP OR FLY SOLO:

Applicants can partner with other organisations to increase your capacity to deliver or to run a cross community project. Or apply on your own and focus on the young people in your own groups.

STAY LOCAL:

Diversionary alternatives can be delivered locally and funding for residential trips is also available. Funding is available for both rural and urban areas.

YOUR OUTCOMES:

You can deliver activity to meet the needs of the young people in your area as well as the programme outcomes e.g. Mental Health, Training, Leadership, Skills etc.

Support is available:

There will be workshops available to talk through the applications process. Resources are available on delivering youth activities, workshops and resources for good relations work. We can connect you with other groups if you want to partner with another local organisation. Recruitment support and networking opportunities with other groups are available.

Email Queries: plannedintervention@eani.org.uk or tbuccamps@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
<https://eani.funding.org.uk/plannedintervention> or search "TBUC SOCIAL" on You Tube





T:buc **Looking Back**
 Changing for the better, together

Looking Back at the Planned Interventions Programme and the progress from 2015 to now...

Moving forward

PLANNED INTERVENTIONS PROGRAMME

The Planned Interventions Programme (PIP) seeks to provide young people from all backgrounds with alternative activities in areas of heightened tension and reduce levels of anti-social behaviour. It is delivered in partnership with EA and DE as part of the wider T:BUC Strategy.

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?



Over 35,000 young people participated in PIP between 2015-2022
 A total of over 800 community projects have been funded
 Over 3 million pounds was invested in our young people since 2015



HOW WELL DID WE DO IT IN 2022-23?

97% of participants that completed the project

IS ANYONE BETTER OFF IN 2022-23?

84% of participants who feel more favourably towards people from a different religious/community background

95% of participants who feel they are less likely to engage in negative behaviour

HOW HAS PIP EVOLVED?

WIDER DELIVERY WINDOW:
 programmes now being delivered JUNE TO HALLOWEEN

NEW ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM:
 More user friendly with clearer guidance provided to applicants

NOT JUST PEACE WALLS:
 Interfaces can be any boundary where inter or intra community tension can arise



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFORMATION



Planned Interventions Project Schomberg House

TEO's David Hawkins talks about his visit to a Planned Interventions Project to see first-hand the excellent work being delivered in Kilkeel by Schomberg House.

"I travelled to Schomberg House in Kilkeel, a local hub for learning and education around many aspects of Ulster-Scots heritage - history, language, music and dancing, to observe the delivery of their TEO funded Planned Interventions Project.

The aim of the Planned Interventions Programme is to provide alternative activities for young people at risk of engaging in negative behaviours during periods of heightened tension, as part of the Executive's wider 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:buc) Strategy.

The Programme is funded by TEO and delivered in partnership with the Department of Education and the Education Authority. It is managed within TEO by District Councils, Camps and Planned Interventions (DCI) Branch.

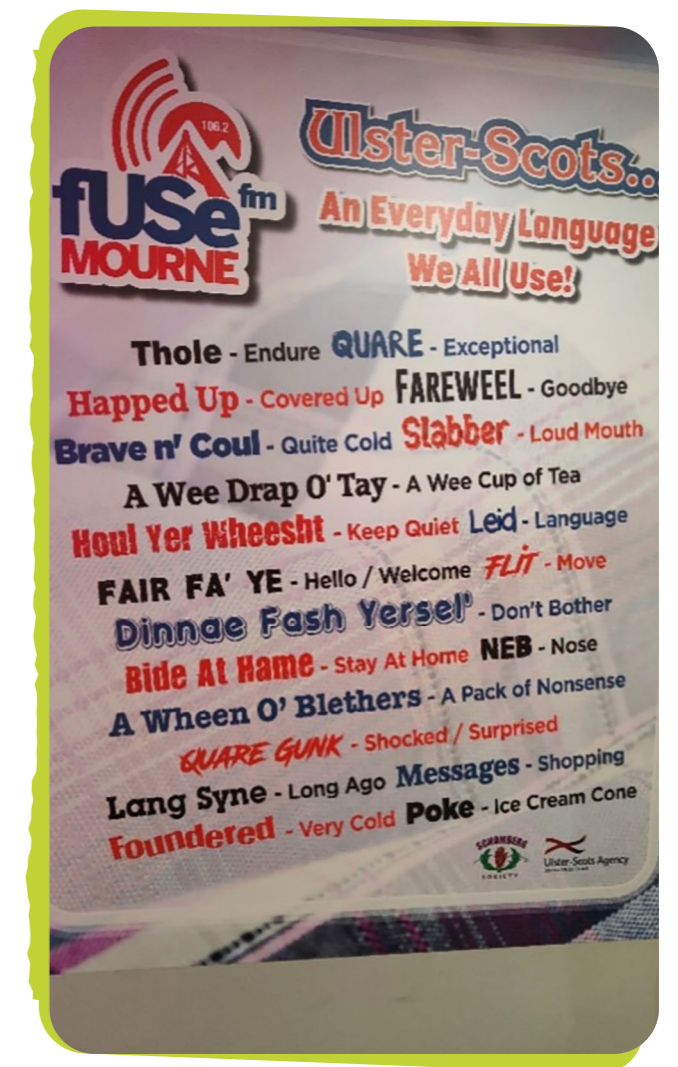
On my arrival I received a tour of the centre. It is a fascinating combination of the old and the new. Depictions of historical events, all created by local artists cover the walls, while dancing uniforms and musical instruments are prominent throughout. There is also a radio studio that broadcasts Ulster-Scots music and stories from the local community at certain times of the year.

The Project brought young people together to discuss issues relating to their local community, such as anti-social behaviour and crime, and educated them on the negative outcomes these activities have on the community and the young people themselves. The young people were very positive about the role the Society plays in providing a safe space for them, as a place to learn and also engage in recreational activities, using their time constructively.

The evening drew to a close with pizza and refreshments being enjoyed by all. It was a privilege to visit the Schomberg Society and to get a glimpse into some of the work they do in their local community.

If you would like to know more about the Planned Interventions Programme, further information can be found on the TEO website."

Article by David Hawkins, District Councils, T:buc Camps and Planned Interventions Programmes (DCI) Branch, The Executive Office.



Uniting Communities Programme



Programme Summary

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



Programme News

DfC's T:buc Uniting Communities programme continues to be delivered in South Belfast and in Lurgan/Portadown with a very strong sports, creative and good relations focus.

In Lurgan/Portadown young people attended a two-day residential at Greenhill, YMCA, with a focus on Team Building. In December 2022 the group worked on a Social Action project delivering Christmas Hampers and a Fun Run to raise much needed funds for the Craigavon Foodbank.

In South Belfast young people participated in Jumping Clay sessions that focused on self-identity and self-awareness activity. They also attended a residential that took place over two days at Todds Leap activity centre.

DfC T:buc Young Leaders from South Belfast were involved in a Good Relations residential to Poland - this included visit to Auschwitz, attendance at Schindlers Factory Museum, Hall of Mirrors and Cultural tour of Krakow.

The Lurgan/Portadown cohort are due to make a similar visit in March 2023.

A group of Young Leaders from South Belfast, including those that hold refugee status and are restricted in terms of international travel, will attend a good relations and cultural awareness visit to Manchester in February.

Collaborative work continues with the TEO Camp Ambassadors with further engagement planned in March 2023.



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>



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

Uniting Communities Headline Data 2021/22

Total number of young people participating in the Uniting Communities Programme during the 21/22 period: **995**

Number of organisations participating: **23**



T:buc Young Leaders and Ambassadors take opportunity to meet Belfast Lord Mayor



The South Belfast Young Leaders and Ambassadors from the T:buc Uniting Communities through Sport and Creativity Programme were delighted to be welcomed into City Hall by the Lord Mayor of Belfast for a question and answer session. The young people aged 16-24 received a warm reception from Lord Mayor, Counsellor Tina Black and she talked them through the history of the building and the stories behind the array of artwork that she chose from various people in the Belfast Community that adorns the walls of the Mayors Parlour.

The young people posed a number of questions to the Mayor that prompted her to discuss her political past which has its route in community work at the Grosvenor Road Community Centre as well as aspirations for further change in Belfast in relation to Peace Building.

The Lord Mayor reminded the group that the Grosvenor Road Community Centre was involved in the very first Falls and Village T:buc Uniting Communities pilot programme. The Mayor was delighted to witness first-hand how the programme had grown with key outcomes still being achieved.

She reminded the young people that the skills that they're learning on the T:buc Programme in terms of session planning and leading young people are transferrable skills that will hold them in good stead for their future careers. The Mayor went on to discuss women's role in politics which was particularly inspirational for a number of Young Leaders that aspire to become politicians and agents for change in their community.

The group then moved into the City Hall Chamber where the young people were excited to try on the solid gold Lord Mayor ceremonial chain and robes. The PA system was activated to give the young people a real sense of grandeur and ceremony. Through this, they were able to talk about their own paths through the T:buc Programme and the enormous impact it has had on their lives not only in terms of gaining leadership skills but also enabling them to make lasting friendships with those from different community backgrounds.



United Youth



Programme Summary

United Youth 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.

- Overall, the Peace4Youth programme exceeded its target and had a clear, positive impact on the young people who have taken part.
- The programme was evaluated by Queens University Belfast who found that the majority (around 75%) of young people indicated that they had clear plans for their future, with employment being the most popular destination for completers. Returning to education and involvement in another programme also ranked highly amongst the onward destinations.
- A successor Programme (to be funded via the new PEACE PLUS programme), has been developed to complete and exceed the fulfilment of the United Youth commitment. This programme is expected to run from late 2023 until 2028.

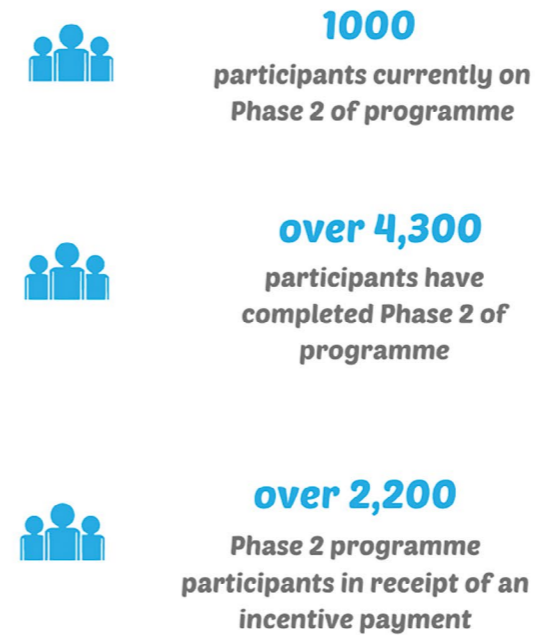
Programme News

- Between 2017-2022, 11 major projects delivered this commitment via the PEACE IV funded Peace4Youth Programme.
- Over 7,900 young people completed the programme and over 3,200 of those availed of the participant incentive payments.

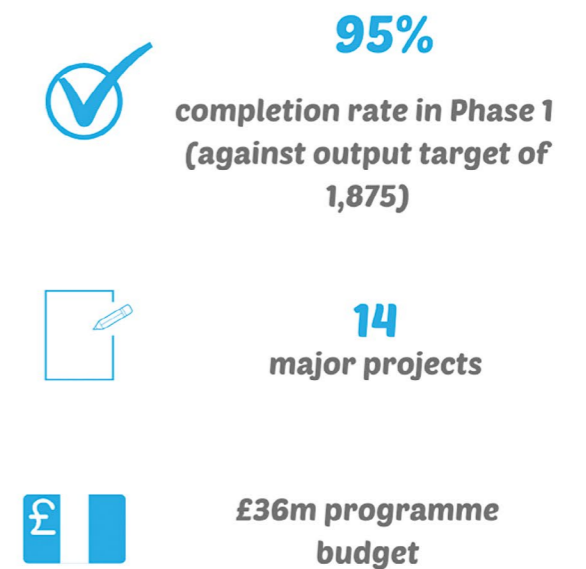
United Youth T:BUC Report Card

Peace4Youth is aligned with the vision and objectives of United Youth as set out in the T:BUC Strategy. The programme focuses on supporting young people aged 14-24 years old who are disadvantaged, excluded or marginalised to develop areas of personal development, good relations and citizenship, ultimately enhancing their employability and improving their life chances.

How much did we do ?

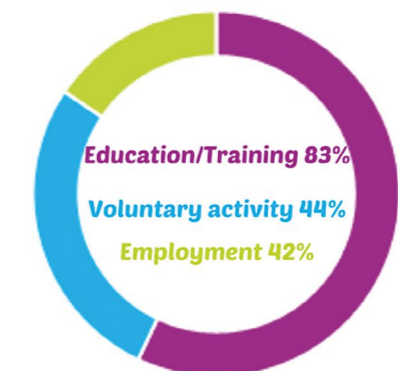
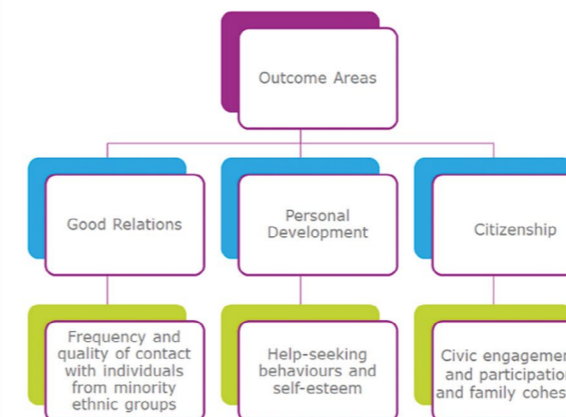


How well did we do ?



Is anyone better off?

3 outcome areas and their most improved indicators



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



Building our safe and connected community

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.

Programme News

- Urban Villages is continuing to deliver a range of community led, cross cutting and capital projects to improve good relations outcomes in the five Urban Village areas.
- Current Letters of Offer for Urban Villages funding for Community Led and Cross Cutting projects will expire on 31st March 2023. Those organisations currently delivering Revenue projects have been notified that a one-year extension to funding from April 2023 to 31 March 2024 has been agreed in principle and is subject to confirmation of an appropriate budget and positive review data for 2022/23.
- In response to the current economic pressures, in December 2022, Urban Villages developed a new programme called Keeping Warm- Staying Safe (KWSS). An additional £125k (£25k per area) was allocated to the five Urban Village areas to support Good Relations work that also helped with the increased Cost of Living. The programme will run from December 2022 to March 2023
- A Business Consultancy Services and Gateway review have been completed on Urban Villages and consideration is being given on how to implement recommendations which will help to inform next steps for the programme and its possible extension.
- It has been an exciting year for the capital programme with construction on Urban Villages' first Transformational capital project Páirc Nua Chollann completing at

the end of 2022. Three capital projects are due to complete in the coming months – the new community club house at Colin Valley Football Club, the nearby Healthy Living Centre, and the New Gate Arts & Culture Centre in Derry-Londonderry.

- Urban Villages has worked with communities since 2015 to identify and design the projects that will create lasting change. Up to £108m is being invested in a diverse range of capital build proposals including parks, community hubs and transformation of vacant and derelict sites. Of a total of 72 capital projects, 52 are now complete. These projects, ranging from large transformational projects to small community spaces, are led by the community and designed with purpose. They will not only improve the area but strengthen communities and create spaces where people can live better together.
- The purchase of the former Donegall Pass PSNI station, which took place in April 2022, was the first step towards creating a transformational multi-use development, including a good relations community hub in the South Belfast Urban Village area. Work has also commenced in redeveloping Ballysillan Playing Fields and Marrowbone Millennium Park in North Belfast as well as Pitt Park in East Belfast. Construction is also underway in Derry/Londonderry to reconfigure the New Gate Arts and Culture building. This £1.7m investment will create a state-of-the-art performance space that will support a variety of arts and cultural activities.

Urban Villages Initiative

T:BUC Report Card

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.

How much did we do ?



How well did we do ?



Is anyone better off?



Further information can be found via the following webpage: www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/urban-villages-initiative



Páirc Nua Chollann

Colin Urban Village

Project Summary

The Colin Heritage Project has been created by Colin Neighbourhood Partnership with the support of Ulster University, and is funded by the Urban Villages Initiative and the Department for Communities.



A new Urban Villages funded community events space opened in October in the Colin Urban Village area, the striking 13-metre 'Leap of Faith' sculpture, and a play park with a range of accessible and sensory equipment are just some of the key features in a multi-million-pound park.

Páirc Nua Chollann is a £5.6 million development at Stewartstown Road in west Belfast, opposite the Colin Connect Transport Hub and Colin Town Square.

Other features within the park include a nature-focused education zone, a cycle 'pump track', an outdoor 'parkour' gym, marked routes for walking, running and cycling, a range of outdoor gym equipment throughout the park and public toilets.

The project was funded by The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative with support from the Department for Communities. It was delivered and will be operated by Belfast City Council.

Director of Urban Villages, Joan O'Hara said:

"This is a fabulous new destination park for people from all communities to enjoy. Come and enjoy this new shared space and maybe have a go on the first outdoor Parkour gym."

ProKick Gym

East Urban Village



In October, Urban Villages officially launched the new state of the art ProKick Gym in East Belfast. ProKick community gym has operated in Wilgar Street, East Belfast for the last 30 years, having a positive impact on the well-being of thousands of people through the sport of kickboxing.

For the past 5 years, there has been effective collaboration between Urban Villages, Belfast City Council and Prokick to ensure that the new ProKick community gym in Laburnum Street, East Belfast delivers on the three core aims of the Urban Villages initiative.

Owner and Project Lead of ProKick Gym, Billy Murray said:

'I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Urban Villages capital team the Northern Ireland Executive, Belfast City Council and everyone who had a hand in helping us achieve this life-long dream. I believe our building will become an Iconic Landmark for east Belfast.

My team and I will endeavour to deliver everything and more for what we have been entrusted with.'

The project has been successful in building community capacity, through offering a safe space for people from across the city and beyond to attend classes. Prokick actively promotes fostering positive community identities, without bias to anyone who enters the facility. It is envisaged that the new facility will continue to make a positive impact on the physical and mental well-being of people in East Belfast and beyond.

Joan O'Hara, Director of Urban Villages commented:

'I was delighted to be able to spend time in the iconic new building of ProKick, a safe welcoming and vibrant shared space, where I witnessed first-hand the amazing work the team do in encouraging and supporting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing'.

Shared Education Campuses



Programme Summary

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

Programme News

- Work continues on the four projects approved from the first and second calls to the programme. The two post-primary projects are leading the way with construction already started on the new shared facilities for the Limavady Shared Education Campus (SEC) and the procurement of the Integrated Supply Team re-launched in January 2022 for the Ballycastle SEC with the appointment anticipated in early 2023.
- The primary school projects are also progressing with the Integrated Consultation Team for Moy SEC appointed in November 2020 and the business case for Brookeborough SEC currently being progressed between the Education Authority (EA) and the Department (DE).

Shared Education Campuses

T:BUC Report Card

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.

How much did we do ?

£2.56
allocated through the Shared Education Signature Project

5
projects from 1st and 2nd Calls selected

Around 185
shared teachers

3,025
pupils on SECs

How well did we do ?

Construction work commenced on Limavady (HS) and St Mary's Limavady campuses

Design work for Ballycastle SEC completed up to Stage 3 and procurement of the IST is ongoing. Demolition work to clear a section of the site already completed.

Moy SEC currently at Concept Design Phase - ICT design team appointed

Work continuing on Business Case for Brookeborough campus

Is anyone better off?



7.25% average increase in pupils achieving A*-C in GCSEs between 4 post-primary schools since start of their involvement with SEC programme. 16% average increase in pupils achieving A*-C in A Levels between 4 post-primary schools since the start of their involvement with SEC programme.

Further information can be found via the following webpage: www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-education-campuses-programme



Limavady Shared Education Campus



Continuing to work together

December 2023 saw the 3rd Annual Shared Education Carol Service being held in Christ Church, Limavady. Students from St. Mary's and Limavady High School provided an evening of Carols and Readings for the local community. The evening comprised individual school pieces, shared performances, shared orchestra and culminated with an outstanding performance of 'Oh Holy Night' by the Shared Choir. All funds raised were donated to St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army.

Students and Staff from Limavady Shared Education Campus also provided music for the Parish of Tamlaghtfinlagan's Remembrance Service.

Pupils provided some sombre music befitting of the occasion, and it was enjoyed by all the community.

The schools were also delighted to host visitors from the Department of Education to receive an update on the impact of Shared Education in the community and the progress of the shared build. The schools welcomed the Permanent Secretary Mark Browne and Janis Scallon. During the visit there was an opportunity to meet with our Shared Ambassadors who engage with both schools' leadership teams on all aspects of Shared Education and the Shared Campus.

Ballycastle Shared Education Campus



Our Government Lesson

As part of the Shared Education Signature Project both schools focused on the need for Year 10 pupils to have the opportunity to the experience collaborative classes before choosing their GCSE subjects. Teachers from both schools collaborated and planned a series of twelve Learning for Life and Work lessons, led by Mrs McCormick and Miss Thompson. In September, the second year of our Year 10 Project began, this involved over 50 pupils from each school being given the opportunity to take part in shared lessons.

The theme for this year's lessons was 'Our Government'. Pupils took part in team building, explored democracy, political parties, the electoral system and the role of Stormont.

On the 4th and 7th of October, pupils were taken to Stormont Buildings to learn first-hand about how our government is formed and how their vote counts in an assembly election.

One pupil stated, about the shared lessons, "I enjoyed the chance to see around Cross and Passion and now feel a lot happier about taking classes there. We saw that teachers were friendly and how they taught. It was great because it helps us to be more open-minded when meeting others. I would love to do it again." - Lois, Year 10.

Good Relations Awards 2023



For 2023 the Community Relations Council and The Executive Office were delighted to be able to bring you an expanded Awards programme.

Collaborating with partners in NICVA, NI Youth Forum, Volunteer Now and The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, the Awards showcased Good Relations and Peace Building excellence across five categories.

This year the Awards attracted 53 entries, focusing on good relations in peace building and community cohesion. The Awards recognise the individuals who unite and champion our local communities, and the projects that connect us and drive our communities forward in peace, understanding and cultural respect.

On behalf of all the award partners, we would like to thank everyone who took the time to submit an entry. Thank you for being committed to improving community relations and the lives of citizens across our communities.

Community Relations Council Exceptional Achievement Award (Peace Building)

Angila Chada - Winner of the Community Relations Council Exceptional Achievement Award (Peace Building)

Angila has made an exceptional contribution to peacebuilding and Good Relations in Northern Ireland. She has dedicated her life's work to promoting inclusion and diversity and creating opportunities for those that need it most. A visionary and change maker, Angila has been at the forefront of peacebuilding at a grassroots level for over 30 years, leading with passion and determination. She is humble yet formidable in her pursuit of a more inclusive, diverse, accepting and peaceful society for all.

Mary Hogg - Certificate of Recognition Community Relations Council Exceptional Achievement Award (Peace Building)

Mary has been at the fore front of women's issues & empowerment in Mid Ulster for 23 years. Very much an advocate for Peace, Reconciliation & the peace Agreements. She has taken many personal risks in promoting good relations in Mid Ulster. She has encouraged those in isolated, single identity and faith communities to come together. She has encouraged those that lost loved ones during the conflict to reach out to the 'other side' and to understand the roots and origins of the conflict.

Maureen O'Gorman - Certificate of Recognition Community Relations Council Exceptional Achievement Award (Peace Building)

From the inception of Maureen's career in youth work, young people have been supported to participate in good relations programmes. Latterly with a greater emphasis on T:buc, Maureen has developed the capacity of a huge number of youth workers, teachers, young people and organisations to develop good relations programmes and enhance the learning experience for young people. This has a massive impact on the youth work sector, schools and the wider society of Northern Ireland. Hundreds of individuals have a greater understanding of the conflict, their background and how they can contribute to a more peaceful society.

Good Relations Volunteer of the Year Award, award partner Volunteer Now

Adekanmi Abayomi - Winner of the Good Relations Volunteer of the Year Award

Adekanmi Abayomi, LLB (Hons) is the Founder and Chair of EMSONI - Ethnic Minority Sports Organisation Northern Ireland. He is a Social Justice Advocate and a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. As a long-term racial equality activist, his campaign work, promoting good relations and equity through sports remains precedence for policy makers to leverage upon in formulating equitable strategies for all, providing a voice for the marginalized to achieve justice and fairness within and beyond legal and policy frameworks. Adekanmi is an astute volunteer with multiple awards for his voluntary contributions to the promotion of social action, social justice and community cohesion, diversity in sport and sport development in Northern Ireland. His work with EMSONI and other community led initiatives is focused on the principles of empowerment, human rights, social inclusion, social justice, self-determination, and collective action.

Hazel McGuigan - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Volunteer of the Year Award

Hazel McGuigan has dedicated her life to helping others, promoting understanding and breaking down barriers. She is an exceptional community ambassador with a passion for affecting change. As Chairperson of Campsie Community Association, she voluntarily manages the Campsie Hub which offers a full weekly timetable of activities including mental health programmes, arts and crafts, multi-cultural projects, youth initiatives, community drop in facilities and a community gardening project. Hazel is an outstanding leader who represents the community sector on several regional groups, fearlessly lobbying for the betterment of the general Omagh area. She is an active member of Fermanagh and Omagh Interfaith group and chairs the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership in Omagh.

Dr Mukesh Chugh - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Volunteer of the Year Award

Dr Mukesh has gone above and beyond to make a lasting impression on many individuals. Mukesh's inspirational and persuasive efforts have been recognised by others and he has earned the following recognitions and awards.

- Appointed as the SALG (Safe Anaesthesia Liaison Group) Regional Patient Safety Lead for NI
- Mayors Volunteer Recognition Award' - Guild Hall in Derry/Londonderry
- Derry Journal People of the year Award for contributions to arts and culture
- Nominated for Staff Recognition Award for the Western Trust

His efforts were also recognised by local organisations and businesses, and he was Finalist in Supervalu Superstar Award for going the extra mile in community work. For his contributions during COVID; he was awarded again by Derry Journal - as the Key Worker of the year 2021.

Good Relations Community Champion Award, award partner NICVA

Nicole Sloan - Winner of the Good Relations Community Champion Award

Nicole is a Radius tenant living in a Shared Housing development built as part of the T:buc and 'Housing for All' Strategy. She is passionate and promotes culture, diversity, acceptance, respect and understanding through themes including health & wellbeing, arts and culture, advice, advocacy and training, education and employment. Encouraging engagement from all sectors of the community to live together in one space respectfully Nicole has tirelessly given her time freely to the community and championed the cause of good relations over the past 3 years. She builds the capacity of others as well as being on her own personal development journey, making a positive impact, changing attitudes and providing invaluable support to many. She is a driver of change and steadfast in her aim to create a more inclusive, diverse and respectful society for the future.

Mary Lafferty - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Community Champion Award

Mary Lafferty, based in Omagh, Co. Tyrone, has made an outstanding contribution to building good relations in the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. She is an exemplary good relations community champion who leads by example. She has been at the forefront of cultural diversity work primarily with the Syrian community, and now with the Ukrainian refugees. She provides practical support, education, signposting, mentoring, and leadership. She worked with the new communities, and the local community to foster respect and understanding. She has knowledge, compassion and empathy for each person she meets, going above and beyond to make life better for all.

Orla Hawkins - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Community Champion Award

Orla has formed an amazing group of young people from the Ardoyne/New Lodge and Shankill areas. They meet each week to build relations and trust. Initially, Orla didn't know any of the kids from the other community, but they all now come together, and have developed a really great bond and friendship. She has organised the kids to visit and work out of each other's centres, taking the time to relate with them all and encourages and supports the kids. She is currently looking into how she could continue to extend this programme further with this young group.

Good Relations Youth Award (Under 25) (Individual or Organisation), award partner NI Youth Forum

Aaron Smith - Winner of the Good Relations Youth Award (Under 25)

Aaron has been involved in Youth work for over 6 years, having been initially a Young Leader then an Ambassador on the Uniting Communities through Sport and Creative activities T:buc Programme. He has now gone full circle in his leadership and good relations journey having secured employment as a Youth Mentor on the T:buc Uniting Communities South Belfast Programme. Aaron has worked as a youth worker in both voluntary and community sectors across all communities in Northern Ireland and is currently developing an international programme for Cyprus, which aims to promote human rights and inclusion through sport.

In 2019, Aaron took part in Camp America in New York as a youth instructor and counsellor working with inner city young people in Harlem, encouraging better relationships and challenging their views on violence. Aaron took part in One Young World in 2022, where he spent one week in Washington DC completing homelessness awareness and working directly with homeless shelters to provide a service.

St Johns and Killowen Primary Schools Pupils - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Youth Award (Under 25)

St Johns and Killowen primary schools in Coleraine are shared education partners and work together regularly on good relations and community cohesion projects. School principals, Helen McDonnell and Arlene Moon work tirelessly to promote their shared ethos and have developed a very successful and fruitful relationship between the schools in their work to create and celebrate mutual understanding and community cohesion. It is clear to see the commitment of the pupils and the teachers to advance Good Relations in the area and they recognise their part in this, participating fully and enthusiastically in bringing their learning out into the wider community. The schools' relationship is an excellent example of active and ongoing Good Relations work. Their pledge to each other; "to understand and respect differences, to offer smiles, support and respect others, build bridges between our schools and to listen and talk through our difficulties."

VOYPIC Women's Group (Under 25s) - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Youth Award (Under 25)

VOYPIC was created in 1993 by a group of children and young people in care and supporting practitioners. An independent children's charity it promotes the rights and voice of children in care and young people leaving care. It believes that every child in care should feel safe, valued and loved and every young person leaving care should do so with dignity and respect, and thrive into adulthood. The Young Women's group includes women from all areas of Belfast, who live with foster carers, in children's homes, and in independent living projects. Some of these young women live in areas that do not traditionally align with their community background. There are also several unaccompanied asylum-seeking young women who find navigating the unique social and political landscape of this place challenging.



Good Relations Connecting Communities Project of the Year Award, award partner The Community Foundation.

Dennett Valley Healthy Network - Winner of the Good Relations Connecting Communities Project of the Year Award

Donemana in the past has been perceived as a fractious village, but Dennett Valley Healthy Network (Damien Devine) has been working tirelessly to develop a shared space for all the community. Before there was no shared space in Donemana so there were no opportunities for people to mix. The Network adopted an old parochial hall that was deemed as a contested space. It has now been turned into a shared space with a work-shop, allotments and animals in which the men's shed and hen's shed come together to make woodwork, tend to their allotments and develop friendships, organically developing new friendships and respecting everyone's views and opinions.

Principals (Darren Mornin and Rita Moore) Limavady High School and St. Mary's High School, Limavady - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Connecting Communities Project of the Year Award

The Limavady Shared Education Campus is the first project of its kind in Northern Ireland and was born out of The NI Executive's T:buc Strategy published in May 2013. By creating a new campus for schools to share, the pupils and staff of both schools continue to work and collaborate to create an improved sense of community within the Limavady area. The Campus continues to be a trailblazer within shared education and thanks to the hard work of everyone involved, it is clear to see the benefits that come from working together as a community. The schools are committed to ensuring that any investment would benefit as many pupils in the area as possible, in addition to providing enhanced opportunities for further engagement between the schools and the wider community that they serve.



Further information: if you want to know more about Good Relations Awards, check out the website:

TADA Rural Support Network - Certificate of Recognition, Good Relations Connecting Communities Project of the Year Award

TADA Rural Support Network is a voluntary community group made up of 10 voluntary board members, the Chairperson of the organisation is Geraldine Lawless. TADA have over 20 years' experience of providing tailored support to identify and meet the needs of local rural community groups. TADA has developed very positive relationships within the statutory and voluntary sector and has gained extensive management experience of a range of Good Relations programmes targeting the wider community. TADA is one of seven Rural Support Network providers in Northern Ireland awarded the DAERA Rural Community Development Support Service.



Good Relations Awards - Community Arts Partnership

This year's additional awards were created in partnership with the Community Arts Partnership (CAP).

Community Art is the process of harnessing the transformative power of original artistic expression and producing a range of outcomes: artistic, social, cultural and environmental.

CAP is the lead agency for the promotion, development and delivery of community arts in Northern Ireland. Working with CAP, we created the awards for the four new 2023 Good Relations Awards categories, the sustainable awards are made from recycled glass and wood.

CAP also invited local writers to reflect on the values of Good Relations for the Good Relations Awards 2023.

The central values we invited writers to reflect upon through haiku included the overall theme of Good Relations & Together: Building a United Community' (T:buc) "Changing for the better, together":

Respect Rights Sharing Tolerance Responsibilities Cohesion Diversity Fairness Inclusion Integration Interdependence



View the Good Relations Awards 23 Video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THqXYoCqSEI>



GOOD RELATIONS AWARDS 2023



COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (PEACE BUILDING)



GOOD RELATIONS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD



GOOD RELATIONS COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD



GOOD RELATIONS YOUTH AWARD (UNDER 25)



GOOD RELATIONS CONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD

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.



For more information about the Shared Housing Programme please visit: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-housing-programme

Programme News

- The Shared Housing Programme is currently delivering 69 shared housing developments, totalling 1973 homes up to 31 March 2023 (this includes homes delivered/in development & those programmed in 2022/23). Each development is supported through the establishment of an Advisory Group and the development/delivery of a five-year Good Relations Plan.
- 22 schemes (729 homes) have completed, and 47 schemes (1244 homes) are under construction or programmed up to 31 March 2023.
- 27 Advisory Groups have been established; some Advisory Groups support several schemes.
- 39 Good Relations Plans in development.
- £25.4m has been invested in the Shared Housing Programme.

Shared Housing T:BUC Report Card

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 which is key to informing the development of the shared schemes' five year Good Relations Plans.

How much did we do ?

- 69** Schemes under development badged Housing for All
- 33** Shared Housing schemes completed and celebrated as Shared
- 44** Good Relations Plans in Development or being delivered
- 56** Advisory groups established to support the "shared" ethos and Schemes' Good Relations Plans

How well did we do ?

- shared schemes are being assimilated with surrounding communities
- positive response to good relations activities being delivered
- evidence of increased awareness of Shared Housing Programme
- delivery of additional shared housing is now a commitment in Draft PFG 2016-2021

Is anyone better off?

- 1038** households now living in a shared environment
- residents engaged in bridging projects between new shared community and surrounding communities
- exploration of perceptions/opinions on sharing and integration
- bonding projects between the (new) shared community residents

Further information can be found at the following web page: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-housing-programme



Honour Roll sports programme brings P7s together

More than 200 children from four primary schools in north Belfast have been taking part in a series of sports-themed workshops to help prepare them for the transition to 'big school' next year thanks to a project managed by Clanmil Housing.

Clanmil worked with Sport Changes Life to deliver workshops over a 10-week period from September to P7 students from St Marys on the Hill, Ashgrove Primary, Whitehouse Primary and Glengormley Integrated Primary. The workshops were part of Clanmil's good relations work in the Newtownabbey area where it currently provides homes in two shared neighbourhoods at Felden and Glenwhirry/Glendon.

The highlight of the project was a prizegiving event at the Valley Leisure Centre when the children received their Certificates of Achievement.

During the programme, coaches from Sport Changes Life delivered 90-minute sessions, which included team-based sports followed by an interactive workshop. The sessions allowed the young people to learn about team building, resilience, dealing with bullying, online safety and how to stay healthy. They also discussed community relations and developing an understanding of different religious and cultural backgrounds.

Colin Mcilwaine, Community Engagement Coordinator for Sport Changes Life, said;

"The values that our coaches teach are about much more than sports skills - we teach the young people based on the Olympic games model, so it's about inclusivity and respecting differences. For many P7s, this has been a stressful time, as many of them have been preparing for AQE exams. But these sessions give them a chance to relax and have fun, while also building up confidence. The feedback from the young people and their teachers has been very positive. It's very rewarding to see the transformation of some of the young people, as they become more confident and less anxious and ready to make the transition to secondary school in the next few months."



Gerard Rosato, Community Cohesion officer with Clanmil said:

"We're delighted to see more than 200 children collecting their awards today after completing the 10-week Honour Roll course. It's been great working with Sport Changes Life once again. This is one of many cross-community initiatives we've delivered as part of our good relations work in the Newtownabbey area. The Honour Roll project was funded through the Department of Communities T:buc/Housing for All initiative."



The Honour Roll initiative is a 'bridging' programme that was developed from the Felden Good Relations Plan. Bridging events and programmes are delivered to the wider community to encourage a range of good relations outcomes which relate to health and wellbeing, education and training.

Felden in Newtownabbey is one of several Clanmil shared housing developments across Northern Ireland and was established in 2016 as part of the NI Executive Together: Building A United Community Strategy.

The development is also supported by the Department for Communities and the NI Housing Executive, with £6.03m funding invested in the scheme and associated five-year Good Relations Plan.

Clanmil continues to work in partnership with the Felden Advisory Group stakeholders and residents to develop the scheme's Good Relations Plan, which seeks to build good relationships and a sustainable community.

Halloween Cultural Festival and Big Lunch

A cultural extravaganza with an international flavour took place at CS Lewis Square, with the Halloween Cultural Festival and Big Lunch. People of all ages came together to share the aromatic smells and tastes along with the sounds and sights, with the beat of the African drums echoing in the background, to promote good relations by celebrating the diversity of cultures in Belfast.

The event was organised by Radius Housing in partnership with Apex Housing, Alternatives RJ & Eastside Arts with food, music and dance from across the globe. Alongside this was cultural storytelling and cultural arts & craft activities including The Verbal, Taurus, Mai Tai,

Arabic Tea Ceremony, Henna, Chinese Lanterns, African Clay Mask Making & Mexican Candy Skulls.

At Halloween, the event took on a spooktacular theme and participants were encouraged to dress for the occasions, with prizes for the scariest costume with more than a few ghost, ghouls and witches in attendance. The Halloween Cultural Festival and Big Lunch aimed to highlight the diversity across the local community and celebrate the wide range of cultures together in one space. There was engagement from BME communities, while also highlighting traditional and local culture in a positive and inclusive way from across NI.

Sharon Hunt from Apex Housing Association commented:

"It has been a pleasure to be involved in the organising of such a vibrant and inclusive event in the heart of East Belfast. CS Lewis Square was alive with the sights, sounds and smells of cultural diversity and it was wonderful to see local people of all ages enjoying the performances, food and activities. We look forward to continuing our work in partnership with others to build even stronger community relations in the wider Ravenhill area."



Speaking at the event, Sharon Traynor from Radius Housing said:

"Belfast is becoming more and more vibrant and diverse, with people from across the globe now putting down roots here and calling this city their home. It is important that we provide opportunities to bring people together to share their cultures and experience with each other. Belfast is a welcoming city, which is why the Cultural Festival and Big Lunch is such a great success"



Radius Housing has a Shared Housing Development at Global Crescent in the Ravenhill area of Belfast, while Apex Housing manage another in Ballynafoy Close. Members of the Social Change Group who participated included tenants from both Radius and Apex Shared Housing Developments who previously completed a 1-year Lincs programme, facilitated by Alternatives on Peace Building and Good Relations and included an OCN Level 1 in Restorative Practice. They were presented with certificates of completion as part of the event.

The project was supported by the Department for Communities and Northern Ireland Housing Executive's 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme. The Programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the

Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. Radius and Apex continue to work in partnership with local Advisory Group stakeholders, and residents to develop each scheme's Good Relations Plan. £11m has been invested in the Belfast shared housing developments and associated Good Relations Plans.

Radius Housing and Apex Housing each have 11 shared housing developments across Northern Ireland. Good Relations Plans includes 'Bridging' events which are delivered to the wider community to encourage a range of good relations outcomes which include Arts and Culture, Health and Wellbeing, Education and Training.

Christmas in Culmore

It was beginning to look a lot like Christmas on Friday night, as Culmore Community Partnership, supported by Apex Housing Association, hosted a magical evening for Culmore residents of all ages.

The event saw hundreds of young people dress up and take part in an Elf Parade through the village, followed by a Christmas concert and lights switch on by Santa Claus himself. Opened by Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Cllr Sandra Duffy, the Christmas concert outside Culmore Community Hub featured performances from local primary schools and youth clubs and was attended by over 1,000 people.

The Christmas event was supported by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme. The Programme has its origins in the NI Executive Together: Building a United Community Strategy which reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. Apex continue to work in partnership with local Advisory Group stakeholders, and with residents to develop each scheme's Good Relations Plan. £8m has been invested in the Woodlands Avenue shared housing development and associated five-year good relations plan.

Ann Herron, Apex's Good Relations Officer, commented:

"It was a pleasure to be involved in such a fantastic event. Christmas is a great time for bringing people together and we were delighted to see so many people from across the local community take part and enjoy this festive event. Our new shared housing development, Woodlands Avenue, is currently being constructed in Culmore and we look forward to continuing our support for community events like these, as part of our good relations plan for the local area."

The Woodlands Avenue Good Relations Plan includes 'Bridging' events which are delivered to the wider community to encourage a range of good relations outcomes which include Arts & Culture, Health and Wellbeing, Education and Training. Apex Housing has shared housing developments across Northern Ireland. The event was also supported by Derry City & Strabane District Council and The National Lottery Community Fund.



Una Cooper, Manager of Culmore Community Partnership, commented:

"Events like this are so important for communities like Culmore. There was such a brilliant atmosphere on the night, and we were overwhelmed by the numbers who participated and attended. Children from Culmore Youth Club, Culmore Primary School, Hollybush Primary School, Culmore Cú Chulainn's GAA Club and Culmore Kids Club have spent months preparing for the Elf Parade. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our funders and volunteers who made the event such a success."



Virtual Autism Reality Experience Bus in Newry City

An Autism Reality Experience Bus was located in 5 different venues throughout the Newry City area in November. The bus provided an innovative and immersive training session designed to give participants a virtual experience of living with autism. It was a practical, hands-on experience giving participants a greater insight into autism, which helped to experience the world from an autistic person's perspective, promoting diversity and inclusivity for all.

Aidan McCabe, Promoting Well Being Manager with the Southern Health & Social Care Trust was delighted to be able to bring this service to the local area highlighting that:

“with greater public awareness on autism, it can help individuals with autism and make lives easier for families and caregivers, it also enriches our society by helping people accept the wonderful differences that we all have”

This experience was aimed at professionals working in health and social care at all levels, as well as family members or informal carers who want to have a better understanding of autism.

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

A total of £5,431,082 has been invested in the Radius Ardmore and Rockmount shared housing developments and associated five-year Good Relations Plans in Newry. Radius continues to work in partnership with the local Advisory Group stakeholders, and with residents to develop each scheme's Good Relations Plan.

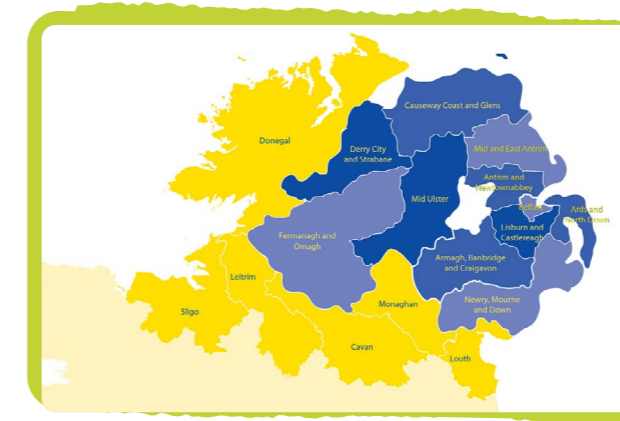
Blanaid Bruce, Communities Officer with Radius Housing, highlighted the importance of agencies working together -

“we are delighted to support the Promoting Well Being Team in Newry through our Housing for All Good Relations programme which promotes inclusion in communities, to help bring this much needed service to the area and enable over 120 people the opportunity to increase their awareness of autism.”

Radius has shared housing developments across Northern Ireland. Good Relations Plans include '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.



Peace IV and Peace Plus



Contact For more information about the Peace IV and Peace Plus Programme please contact: grbusinesssupport@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk



Programme News

- This is a key point in the delivery of the Peace IV programme which is now moving into its final year of delivery. TEO is providing around €13m in match funding against the overall budget for the Good Relations element of PEACE IV of €110m.
- By December 2022, 12 Local Authority Action Plans and 19 Regional Building Positive Relations Programmes have successfully completed programme delivery with the remaining projects expected to be completed by December 2023.
- The PEACE IV programme is making a key contribution to building peace and reconciliation here and in the six border counties of the ROI. Through the Regional BPR projects, to date, over 73,000 participants have engaged with the projects, and over 23,000 children and young people have benefited from the CYP Local authority action plans. These projects have reached a significant number of people, bringing people together from different backgrounds, providing opportunities for sustained and meaningful contact and making a lasting difference to the individuals and communities involved.
- The new £1 billion 'PEACE PLUS' programme was submitted to the EU Commission in March 2022 for approval and was adopted in July 2022. It will build upon previous PEACE and INTERREG programmes. TEO will be accountable for circa €170m for local authority action plans, building positive relations and victims and survivors' elements. It is anticipated that PEACE PLUS will be launched in Spring 2023. First calls will include the local authority action plans and victims and survivors' elements.

Making the Future - Nerve Centre

A key project that has been delivered under the Building Positive Relations strand of Peace IV, with TEO's match-funding is the £1.6m 'Making the Future' project that was led by the Nerve Centre.

The project was delivered across Northern Ireland and the border counties, allowing over 7,600 people to engage with multiple narratives of local history, the legacy of conflict and its implications for today, issues of culture and identity, and centenaries: improving relationships between Protestants and Catholics. Those who participated included those from areas of low social capital such as women, ethnic minority groups, and victims and survivors.

The project was a partnership between Nerve Centre, National Museums NI, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and the Linen Hall Library, and enabled participants to interrogate and re-imagine the consortium's collections through creative arts and digital technologies.

116 community engagement programmes and over 80 events led to the creation of films, street art, books, digital publications, photography, displays and creative writing.

These included new cross-community learning resources on topics such as 'Buried in Belfast', an interactive map that charts untold stories of women in the cemeteries and 'Colouring the Past', a colouring book inspired by participants' experiences of growing up in Northern Ireland.

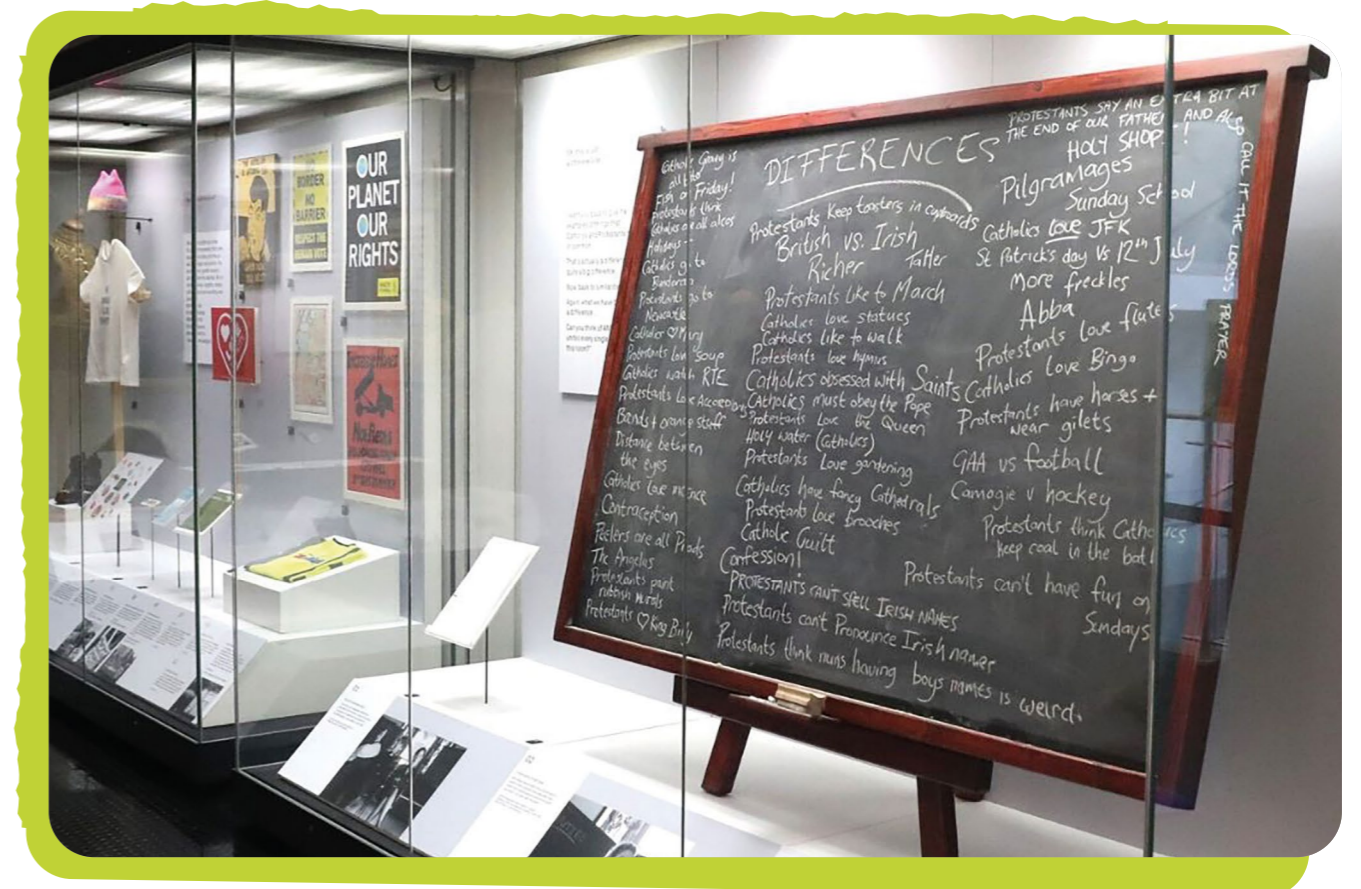
The project has supported local people to share their stories and engage in creative, productive conversation around difficult topics.

An impressive achievement was the award of some 373 OCN accreditations across a range of creative skills - supporting people to develop new skills while opening up employment of further career opportunities.

Through the project four new exhibitions were co-produced - Culture Lab, Collecting the Past/Making the Future, Women in the Archives, and Troubles Art - in consortium venues and at locations across Northern Ireland and border counties. Following Covid restrictions, some were transformed into online experiences. With over 130,000 having viewed the installations in their various forms, sharing stories and narratives of the region's history that demonstrates the interest in and reach and impact of this key project.

But the key impact of the project in building tolerance, understanding and respect for different cultures and traditions is illustrated in the outcomes-based results - as a result of the Making the Future project, an impressive:

- 70% of participants are now able to see issues from the past from a different perspective and feel less prejudiced;
- 80% have developed new creative skills and their communication and team working skills,
- and on average participants recorded a 10% increase in their understanding of Irish/Northern Irish history; and
- a 20% increase in their self-confidence and self-esteem.



Central Good Relations Fund



Programme Summary

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

Programme News

- The 2023/24 Central Good Relations Fund which opened on 6 December closed for applications on 12 January 2023. The fund continues to be heavily over-subscribed, receiving 201 applications requesting almost £7.4m for 2023/24. The applications are currently being assessed and applicants will be advised of the outcome once the assessment process is complete, and as soon as budget confirmation is received.
- In 2022/23, almost £3m was offered under the Central Good Relations Fund to 95 projects including small grant-based projects, aiming to positively impact on approximately 38,000 people here.
- Groups can use a wide range of activities such as sport, music, drama, arts and crafts, to engage with and make a difference in local communities, whilst contributing to peacebuilding and reconciliation. These projects can also provide important opportunities to develop new skills, gain qualifications, build self-confidence and develop new friendships, as well as celebrate and embrace cultural diversity.
- Small Grants of up to £1,500 are available for good relations projects to be delivered by 31 March 2023. Please note applications must be received at least 4 weeks before the event/project commences. £25.4m has been invested in the Shared Housing Programme.



Further information is available: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/central-good-relations-fund-202223-small-grant-application-form-and-guidance-notes>

TEO's Central Good Relations Fund was established in 2012/13, providing funding for properly constituted voluntary and community organisations to deliver good relations projects across Northern Ireland. Since 2012/13, the CGRF has awarded almost £30m to approximately 900 good relations projects here.

The CGRF has grown substantially since its first year when it had a budget of £400k. A total of 15 applications were received of which 10 projects were subsequently awarded funding. In comparison, in 2022/23, 209 applications were received requesting £8m of funding. The team are currently working with groups who are delivering 95 projects including small grants, with almost £3m funding awarded over the year.

A diverse range of groups within the voluntary and community sector have delivered a variety of important projects that have worked to help build good relations across and within communities here. These are making and have made a vitally important contribution to delivery of the objectives within the T:buc Strategy of a society founded on tolerance, respect and inclusion.

With so many great examples of good relations projects that have been delivered over the last 10 years by so many groups within the voluntary and community sector it's a challenging task to select any one project or group to shine a light on for this edition of the T:buc Newsletter.

However, looking back at 12/13, one of the successful organisations to deliver a project in that year was Co-operation Ireland. And like many other groups it is also delivering important good relations projects some 10 years on including, for example, Amazing the Space VII; Challenging Attitudes and Changing Horizons (CATCH); and Our Kids - Future Leaders.

These projects continue to build on the successes of previously funded CGRF projects, such as Fair Chance, Circle of Learning and Change Initiative which have improved the knowledge and understanding of good relations for thousands of people throughout council areas across Northern Ireland.



In 2022/23 the projects that are being delivered by Co-operation Ireland are contributing to the delivery of T:buc Key Priority 1: Our Children and Young People by engaging around 1,000 participants in good relations activities such as shared learning and social action projects. In addition, many participants are going on to achieve accredited leadership qualifications.

The impact of these projects is perhaps best illustrated in the comments by the participants – and they are also reflective of the comments we receive about many of the projects that other groups are delivering through the CGRF:

“We don’t mix a lot, there isn’t enough of this kind of stuff happening. I think it’s great being able to meet others and have a chance to chat about different things as well as the issues which affect us all.”

“I know that there’s a lot of history behind sectarianism and it’s important (history) but it doesn’t seem like it should be something to divide us.”

“More young people seem to be less interested in being sectarian and that’s a really positive thing – it needs more people mixing and talking and doing things together from different communities.”

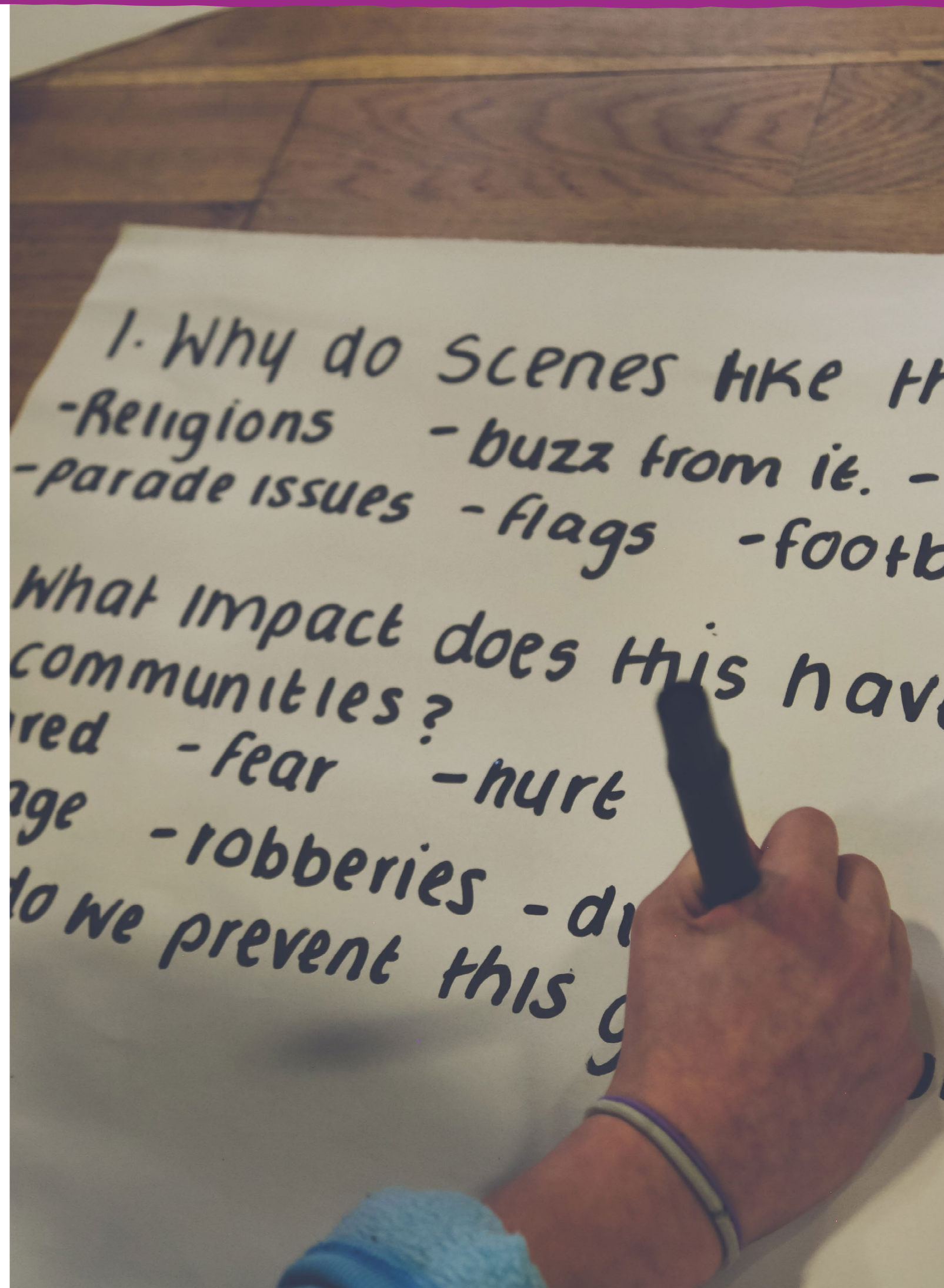
“It’s hard to know what we can do because the problem is bigger than us, but we should meet more and do things together more – it doesn’t happen enough.”

“The project was good fun and I enjoyed discussion the social action project with the artist.”

“With the social action projects, I now feel part of my own community and feel I can contribute in a positive way.”

Review of the Good Relations Capacity Building

- A review of the GR Capacity Building Pilot 2018/19 is underway.
- Work has included looking at hate crime incidents (racist, sectarian, homophobic) over a period of time to ward level.
- Engagement has taken place with relevant stakeholders ie TEO GR Programme Managers, Council GRO’s, CiT, DoJ and CRC and further engagement is required.
- Good Relations Delivery Team is keen to hear from anyone who would wish to share thoughts/ideas around GR Capacity Building going forward.



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.

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



Project News

- In relation to progress on the 2022/23 DCGRP, all 11 Councils have agreed their Good Relations Action Plans for the year and are in the process of delivering over 120 projects across the 11 District Council areas, targeting approximately 120,000 participants.
- Throughout 2022/23 TEO have engaged with District Council Good Relations Officers (GRO) to encourage the online completion of the Outcome Events Questionnaires by the participants of their programmes. The response has been very encouraging with approximately 4,500 responses received so far.
- 2023/24 Actions Plans have been received from each of the 11 District Councils by the closing date of 25th January 2023.



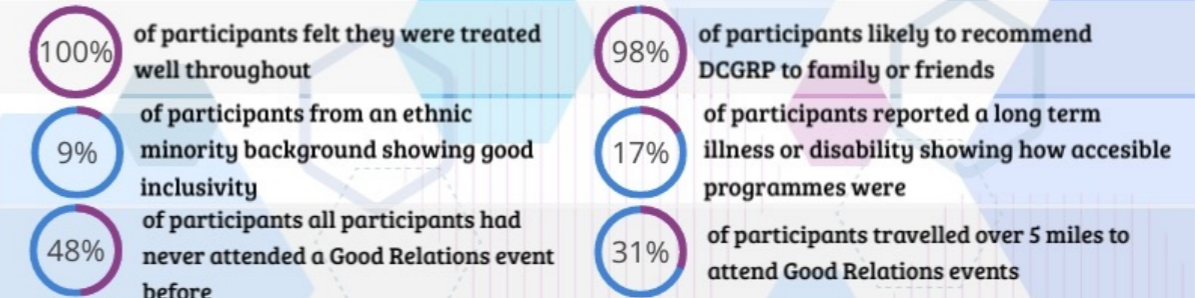
DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMME 2021/2022

The District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP), is delivered as part of the Executive's wider 'Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC)' Strategy. The key aims of the programme are to improve relations between and within District Council areas and to support local solutions to local good relations issues.

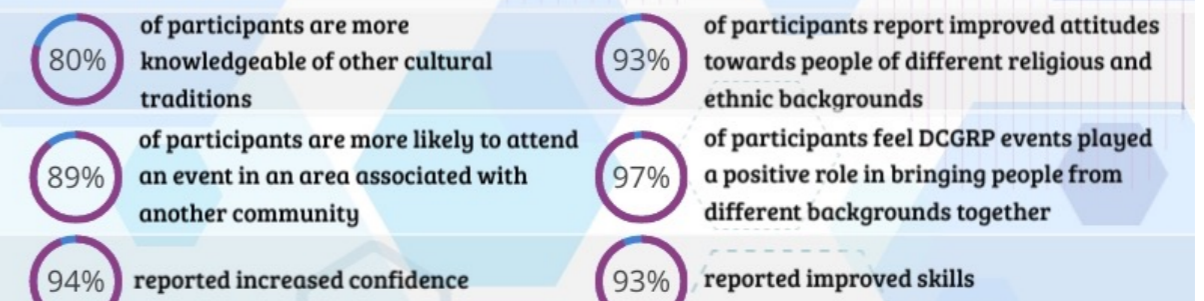
HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

Programmes delivered across all 11 District Council areas impacting over 100,000 participants
 £4m in funding provided by The Executive Office and District Councils

HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?



WHAT DIFFERENCE DID WE MAKE?



*Based on most recent available data, subject to validation

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING?

This was a great programme. I felt like I was in a safe space and was comfortable sharing my opinions and views.

Amazing and unforgettable experience - would recommend to others and I would love to take part in any future programmes.

Participating in this project has enabled me to discover my self worth and how to use leadership skills to promote diversity and inclusivity in my community.



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFORMATION



DCGRP Matched Funding

The District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) is a match funded good relations funding Programme delivered jointly by The Executive Office (TEO) and District Councils as part of the wider 'Together: Building a United Community (T:buc) Strategy. The key aims of the programme are to improve relations between and within District Council areas and to support local solutions to local good relations issues.

In this instance the DCGRP is providing support for training and information for both community representatives and those arriving here from a different country but who don't have command of the English language.

My colleague Neil Lynas and I were invited to the launch of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon's multi-lingual information hub for the area's migrant newcomer communities. This is the first of its kind across the 11 District Councils.

The project comprises 3 strands:

- Strand 1**
 OCN Level 3 - Training course delivered to 12 individuals by Law Centre NI. This was an accredited course and covered elements such as legacy and current benefits systems.
- Strand 2**
 Online non-accredited training course "Introduction to Benefits" for 30 participants - hosted on the Law Centre NI learning portal.
- Strand 3**
 Being completed in 22/23 this strand has had a longer lead in time due to the arrival of Ukrainians from their war-torn country and it was important that the video series included this nationality also.



An online resource was developed in collaboration with the Law Centre NI featuring 13 different languages across more than 30 videos. It provides tailored guidance and advice to people with different immigration statuses. The videos explain individual rights and entitlements around employment, health care, social security, housing, and education as well as signposting to key support organisations.

Gavin King, Head of District Council, Camps and Interventions (DCI) Branch said:

"An impressive amount of work has been taken forward by the Council and delivery partners and has delivered an excellent on-line resource to help newcomers integrate into our communities. I look forward to seeing the benefits of the programme, in supporting inclusion and integration here in the months and years ahead."

"The Executive Office is pleased to support this project through the funding provided by the District Council Good Relations Programme. The Programme is delivered as part of the wider 'Together: Building a United Community' or 'T:buc' Strategy which reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society."

TEO, through the District Council Good Relations Programme, is delighted to support them in their efforts.

Article by Julie McCormack, DCGRP Manager

Interface Barrier Removal T:BUC Report Card

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. Engagement activity includes leafleting, surveying, workshops and community events to meet local people living in interface areas in order to discuss potential adjustments to interface structures, where an appetite exists locally to do so.

How much did we do ?



39
meetings with stakeholders



52
extended openings at
Townsend St to facilitate
Community Foodbank



24
meetings with IFI groups and
Steering Group



Removal of security
structure at North Queen
Street

How well did we do ?



Positive feedback from
attendees at CMSI and BMSSP
Christmas markets bringing
communities together.



Positive feedback and
agreement from FSF members
to extend opening hours of
North Howard and
Northumberland Street gates.



Positive response to access
Townsend Street to facilitate
Community Foodbank and
become permanent service

Is anyone better off?



9
homeowners have benefitted
from aftercare scheme
completed on North Queen
Street



17
homeowners offered the
aftercare scheme at Strand
Walk – 16 accepted.



Improved living environment,
road and pedestrian access for
people living and working at
North Howard Street



14
homeowners offered aftercare
scheme at Serpentine/Navarra –
7 accepted

Further information can be found via the
following webpage: www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/department-justice-interface-programme



T:buc Interfaces Programme

After more than 35 years, two solid interface security barriers that once sealed off Flax Street in North Belfast have been removed.

As part of the T:buc Interfaces Programme, access along the street - out on to the Crumlin Road - is now possible following the installation of vehicular and pedestrian access gates.



In an area that once witnessed serious inter-community trouble and violence that devastated many lives, nearby housing-led and retail-led regeneration schemes have had a transformative effect on the local landscape. The refurbishment of Brookfield Linen Mill along Flax Street, built in the 1850s, has helped create 77 new homes, including a range of duplex houses and apartments. After a 13 year gap, the Hillview Retail Park on the opposite side of Flax Street has gone through its own renaissance, with new shops serving local people and a drive through coffee outlet currently under construction. Further tenants are expected to come on stream in the coming months.



Having opened the gates in late November 2022, the opening times have already been extended from 6.30pm to 9.30pm each day. The views of local people have been overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the increase in access and connectivity brought about by the changes. The street is incredibly busy and well used now, so much so that it's almost hard to remember what used to be there; hopefully a good sign for the future.



As with all interface reduction or removal projects, the views of local people most affected by the changes were factored into the scheme from the outset. Good relations is about building relationships and overcoming barriers. The Interfaces Team within DoJ is delighted to have been able to support this particular local community to realise some of its aspirations towards a shared future.

T:buc

Changing for the better, together



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

www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/tbuc



Northern Ireland
Executive



COMMUNITY
RELATIONS
COUNCIL