Good Practice in Conflict

Transformation

Report

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Deirdre Mac Bride
Mac Bride International
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Glossary of Terms

ASF  A Shared Future
BCC  Belfast City Council
BELB  Belfast Education and Library Board
BEPB  Belfast European Partnership Board
BERI  Brownfield European Regeneration Initiative
BIP  Belfast Interface Project
BLSP  Belfast Local Strategy Partnership
BRO  Belfast Regeneration Office
BURA  British Urban Regeneration Association
CCMS  Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CEP  Community Empowerment Partnership
CRC  Community Relations Council
DE  Department of Education
DEL  Department for Employment and Learning
DMB  Deirdre Mac Bride
DSD  Department for Social Development
EDI  Equity, Diversity and Interdependence
EMU  Education for Mutual Understanding
FCG  Finaghy Crossroads Group
ICR  Institute for Conflict Research
IDF  Integrated Development Fund (Education)
IFI  International Fund for Ireland
MBW  Making Belfast Work
NBCAU  North Belfast Community Action Unit
NEDP  Neighbourhood Economic Development Programme
NI  Northern Ireland
NIOCN  Northern Ireland Open College Network
NIHE  Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NWBHSST  North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust
OFMDFM  Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PACT  Parents and Children Together
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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The report in Good Practice in Conflict Transformation was developed as part of the Conflict Transformation Project of Belfast City Council and its partners - Community Relations Council, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Department for Social Development, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Police Service Northern Ireland, Belfast Education and Library Board, Belfast Metropolitan College and Belfast Local Strategy Partnership. It is chaired by Belfast City Council.

The records of good practice focus on work that has originated from or been instigated, supported or championed by statutory agencies. It includes projects and consortium approaches in which statutory agencies have made a major commitment in terms of time, belief or resources. They comprise a mix of ongoing and completed work. The records include the work of two non-statutory agencies, the Community Relations Council and the International Fund for Ireland. Additionally two projects – Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project and Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility - developed at community level with statutory support have been included. The qualitative records of good practice are designed to promote sharing of experience, learning and understanding of critical success factors.

1.2 Policy Context

In view of the increased cultural diversity of Northern Ireland, the increase in racism and the continuing issues of territoriality and contested identities, the key strategies in relation to community cohesion, good relations and conflict transformation have been identified. These include:

- Section 75(1) Equality Duty and Section 75(2) Promoting Good Relations in the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- A Shared Future (2005);
- A Racial Equality Strategy (2005-2010);
- Good Relations Plan 2007(Belfast City Council);
- Peace III Operational Programme (2007-2013);
- Belfast City Council Peace and Reconciliation Plan (draft) 2007-2010.

Overall the policy context supports the importance of partnership and implementation at a local level through an agreed Good Relations Plan. The commitment of statutory and non-statutory agencies to allocate resources and to embed community cohesion and the promotion of good relations in their organisations is a critical task. This is particularly relevant as the resources available through Peace III are insufficient to transform conflict in the city.

1.3 Methodology

The research was conducted between August to December 2007. The case studies are explanatory based on the practice developed by statutory agencies and their partners in conflict transformation. Through a series of initial interviews with key stakeholders over forty potential projects were identified. From these five themes, covering 13 projects and a number of related projects, were identified as indicated in Table 1. The first four themes selected - Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods, Building Shared City Space, Children and Young People and Community Cohesion - are relevant to the strategic priority area of the Promotion of Tolerance, Inclusion and Health and Well-Being in the draft Programme for Government. Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods were directly relevant to the implementation of A Shared Future, the Belfast Good Relations Plan and the Peace III Programme. Building Shared City Space incorporated the broad goals identified in the Belfast Good Relations Plan - shared city space, transforming contested space, developing shared cultural space and shared organisational space. The Children and Young People theme was directly related to the priority given to promoting good relations in the legislation, and the contribution that education and interface work can make to improvements in community relations. The forth theme Community Cohesion was related to the aims of the Peace III
Operational Programme to address the new challenges of integration and cohesion as ethnic diversity increases. The fifth theme Advisory and Building Partnership was selected as it also contributed to the Good Relations Plan’s goal of building shared organisational space.

1.4 Good Practice Examples

The design of the case studies utilised previous approaches developed by the United Nations Development Programme’s Case Study\(^1\) and the European Union funded Brownfield European Regeneration Initiative (BERI)\(^2\). The format selected has been utilised throughout Section 4 Good Practice Examples.

1.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

The case studies represent a body of good practice in conflict transformation in which the contribution of statutory and non-statutory agencies has been identified. As the examples suggest good practice in conflict transformation is based on the willingness and capacity of statutory and non-statutory agencies and their community partners. None the less the good practice projects included are unique and in the main they have not been replicated. It is likely that good practice in conflict transformation will remain reactive and disjointed, based on one off individual projects, unless there is a sustained and co-ordinated approach that mainstreams and resources community relations, community cohesion and a shared future across the strategies of departments and agencies. A series of recommendations are made in relation to a common policy and framework, relationship building and collaboration and leadership. These are detailed in tabular form in tables seven to nine.

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\(^2\) Brownfield European Regeneration Programme Final Report and Master Plans: 2006 [www.berinetwork.org](http://www.berinetwork.org)
2 Introduction

Belfast City Council seeks to make Belfast a better place for everyone. This research producing a qualitative record of good practice in conflict transformation is one of a number of research projects being undertaken by Belfast City Council as part of the Conflict Transformation Project. The Conflict Transformation Project, which is funded through the EU Peace II Programme (Belfast Local Strategy Partnership), seeks to build cross-agency dialogue as part of the Council’s ongoing Good relations work. The overarching aim of the research framework is to better understand the dynamics of managing a divided city and designing interventions which proactively address segregation. A Project Reference Group oversees the project and comprises of the Chief Executives and senior officers from ten public agencies in the city including the Belfast City Council, Community Relations Council, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, DSD, OFMDFM, Police Service Northern Ireland, Belfast Education and Library Board, Belfast Metropolitan College and Belfast Local Strategy Partnership. It is chaired by Belfast City Council.

The records of good practice focus on work that has originated from or been instigated, supported or championed by statutory agencies. It includes projects and consortium approaches in which statutory agencies have made a major commitment in terms of time, belief or resources. The models comprise a mix of ongoing and completed work. The records include the work of two non-statutory agencies, the Community Relations Council and the International Fund for Ireland. Additionally two projects – Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project and Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility - developed at community level with statutory support have been included. The qualitative records of good practice are designed to promote sharing of experience, learning and understanding of critical success factors.
2.1 Policy Context

The Conflict Transformation Project aims to build cross agency dialogue on the principles of conflict transformation and develop a common agenda for the implementation of a Good Relations Plan for the city. In this context relevant legislation, policies, strategies and proposed interventions have been identified. These include:

- Section 75(1) Equality Duty and Section 75(2) Promoting Good Relations in the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- A Shared Future (2005);
- A Racial Equality Strategy (2005-2010);
- Good Relations Plan 2007 (Belfast City Council);
- Peace III Operational Programme (2007-2013);
- Belfast City Council Peace and Reconciliation Plan (draft) 2007-2010.

2.1.1 Northern Ireland Act 1998\(^3\)

Under Section 75(1) public bodies are required in carrying out their function, powers and duties, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally and between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without. The act was cited in the context within which the best practice in the Royals Hospital and Belfast Metropolitan College - were developed.

\(^3\) Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 75 (1) and (2)
2.1.2 Equality Legislation

It was important to identify whether good practice has developed in the delivery of public services as a result of the duty on statutory agencies and public bodies to ensure equality of opportunity in carrying out their functions. The Royal Hospitals Traveller Health Outreach Project, was developed by the Health and Inequalities Unit. The unit was established to implement the equality legislation and to respond to the increased diversity in Northern Ireland. The outcomes of the Traveller Health Outreach Project influenced the Royal Hospital's annual Equality Scheme.

2.1.3 Diversity

In view of the increased diversity of Northern Ireland, the equality legislation and the Racial Equality Strategy, and the amalgamation of the Colleges of Further and Higher Education the Belfast Metropolitan College identified the need to review its policies and procedures in the light of the increasing diversity of its students. The Cultural Diversity project was selected as a case study in order to profile good practice in this area. Similarly The Royal Hospitals Staff Diversity Group addressed the integration of the workforce.

Section 75(2) also requires public bodies, in carrying out their functions, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of a different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. The Good Relations Strategy and Action Plan were developed in the context of Section 75(2). One of the three sub-groups in the North Belfast Interface Working Group focused on good relations. The Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project developed shared space from a process that began to develop good relations between the Suffolk and Lenadoon communities.

The over-arching aim of the Draft Programme for Government is “to build a peaceful, fair, prosperous society in Northern Ireland with respect for the rule of law and where everyone can enjoy a better quality of life” within the context of growing a dynamic innovative economy. The Promotion of Tolerance, Inclusion, Health and Well-being is one of four key strategic priority areas. This identifies the need to continue efforts to address divisions. While progress has been made, sectarianism, racism and intolerance are still too evident. They “mar our reputation, blight our economic prospects and have a corrosive effect on our society. For these reasons it is imperative that we all embrace the opportunity to create a better future, based on tolerance and respect for cultural diversity”.

It is within this context that the Programme for Government is relevant to establishing a common strategy and common framework to address the increased diversity of Northern Ireland and the continuing issues of territoriality, community cohesion and contested identities.

2.1.5 A Shared Future

A Shared Future sets out a Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework as a mechanism for mainstreaming Good relations. “The overall aim of the policy is to establish, over time, a shared society defined by a culture of tolerance: a normal society, in which all individuals are considered as equals, where difference are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere, and where all individuals are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and recognition of our interdependence”. It envisages co-ordination “across government departments and throughout civil society to ensure an effective and coherent response to sectarian and racial intimidation with the aim of building relationships rooted in mutual recognition and trust”. It is anticipated that actions

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6 Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (2005) A Shared Future, Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland, March 2005
which support “towards a shared society” are developed in successive Triennial Action Plans. A Shared Future is complemented by A Racial Equality Strategy and both are identified as having strategic linkages to the Peace II Programme. The Schools Community Relations Programme and the Youth Service Community Relations Support Programmes case study identified relevant actions that were included in the first Triennial Action Plan. Similarly A Shared Future focused on the continuing difficulties in interface areas.

A Shared Future Strategic Framework for Good Relations had identified the importance of interventions in interface areas. The case studies - St Galls Concept Plan, Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project and the North Belfast Interface Working Group—examine good practice in relation to co-ordination, improvement in community relations and the regeneration of interface areas. The case studies of these interventions allowed an exploration of inter–community and inter-agency planning processes, the physical regeneration of the interface and the creation of shared space and the re-configuration of the interface respectively.

The development of shared spaces was identified in A Shared Future. The Finaghy Crossroads Community Relations Project led to the development of a strategy to encourage the sharing of Finaghy Crossroads. The Finaghy Crossroads work initiated using community development approaches, and Springfarm Shared Neighbourhood work contributed to the development of a regional shared neighbourhood policy. The Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility is an example of the development of shared space for children and young people.

The importance of A Shared Future or any emerging policy lies in its potential as a co-ordinated strategy to engage the public sector in comprehensive and integrated action to promote good relations. Through the case studies chosen the potential to develop further linkages and interventions between statutory and non-statutory agencies may be identified.
2.1.6 A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland

The strategy flows from the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997. It aims to establish “A society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection”\(^7\). The strategy is a sister strategy to A Shared Future. Both the Traveller Health and Outreach Project (the Royal Hospitals) and the Cultural Diversity Project (Belfast Metropolitan College) case studies drew on this legislation and strategy.

The strategy establishes a framework:

- to tackle racial inequalities in Northern Ireland and to open up opportunities for all;
- to eradicate racism and hate crime; and
- together with a Shared Future, to initiate actions to promote good race relations.

Among the key areas identified for action are health, education, criminal justice system, training and employment, housing, immigration, asylum seekers and migrant workers. The implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy at local level will enhance and challenge the civic leadership of local councils to address racism and the increased cultural diversity of Northern Ireland through the Good Relations Plan. The Plan is expected to identify actions focused on outcomes to meet the six shared aims. These are the elimination of racial equality, equal protection, and equality of service provision, participation, dialogue and capacity building\(^8\). The need for councils to co-ordinate community safety and community relations actions was included in the strategy.

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\(^7\) Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (2005) A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2010: 8
\(^8\) OFMDFM (2005) Ibid: 33
2.1.7 Good Relations Plan 2007 (Belfast City Council)

The Good Relations Plan is based on the aim of the Good Relations Strategy which stated “we will encourage and support good relations between all citizens, promoting fair treatment, understanding and respect for people of all cultures”9. The Good Relations Plan was developed in the context of A Shared Future and was underpinned by a commitment to equality of opportunity, equity, diversity and interdependence. In the Council’s Public Consultation Survey (2001) 14% of respondents made the unsolicited comment that the Council’s main priority should be community relations. This advances the Council’s mandate to explicitly seek improvements in community relations in the city.

The Good Relations Plan is based on information returned in two audits – one internal and one external – and research documenting the impact of interfaces. The problems facing Belfast include addressing:

- the legacy of one fifth of all security related fatalities between 1969-1999;
- 50% of security related injuries in the past decade;
- increased residential segregation;
- the negative impact of interface walls and boundaries on communities and the social and economic life of the city;
- the effect of interfaces as flashpoints for inter-community violence and the effect of wider social tensions in terms of disadvantage and community cohesion;
- that some community attitudes are insular and defensive;
- the growth in ethnic or racially motivated incidents; and
- the effect of the ‘diseconomies of division’ on efficient and effective public service and the labour market.

Two core ideas – a common citizenship based on civic not ethnic identity and sustaining and expanding public spaces accessible to all – underpin the plan. The

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9 Belfast City Council Good Relations Plan 2007
plan developed a vision based on a set of public values - consent, rule of law, inclusion, diversity and pluralism. It has four broad goals. These are:

- securing shared city space;
- transforming contested space;
- developing shared cultural space; and
- building shared organisational space.

The Good Relations Plan calls for interventions by major agencies to concentrate on good relations impacts as a central concern. It was widely agreed by statutory and non-statutory agencies in the city. Where there is good practice in conflict transformation, it may be possible to identify a shared understanding of and a commitment to equity, diversity and interdependence.

A number of case studies were chosen to reflect the broad themes of shared and contested space in order to identify and build on good practice in developing interventions under the Good Relations Plan and in Peace III. These case studies were Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility (securing shared city space), Finaghy Crossroads Community Relations Project and North Belfast Interface Working Group (contested space). In addition the Carnival Arts Development Programme is relevant to shared cultural space as is the work of the Community Relations Council in relation to contested parades and St Patrick’s Day in Belfast. The Schools Community Relations Programme and indirectly North Belfast Interface Working Group may contribute to learning in relation to building shared organisational space.

2.1.8 Peace III Operational Programme (2007-2013)

Building on the progress made through the first two Peace Programmes, Peace III aims “to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation”\(^{10}\). It will address the ‘specific’ problems in Northern Ireland which

\(^{10}\) Peace III Operational Programme 2007-2013
include the direct effects of the conflict, the underlying issues and the new challenges of integration and cohesion as ethnic diversity increases. The two strategic objectives adopted as the Programme Priorities\(^{11}\) are:

- reconciling communities; and
- contributing to a shared society.

The Peace III Programme will be implemented using a partnership approach building on the experiences of the Peace I and II Programmes. The Peace III Programme has been designed to take forward key lessons from the earlier programmes. In encouraging a bottom-up approach, local partnership approaches will be a key feature in the delivery of Priorities I and 2. In Priority 1 ‘Reconciling Communities’ a range of areas, communities and groups will be targeted. This will include areas affected by the conflict and/or community polarisation and communities and groups affected by the conflict. Local authorities have a specific role in implementing Priority 1:1 Building Positive Relations at the Local Level “to challenge attitudes towards sectarianism and racism and to support conflict resolution and mediation at the local community level”\(^{12}\).

The Community Relations Council is tasked with assisting local authorities in the development of programmes to maximise the contribution towards the Programme objectives. In addition, the Community Relations Council has been designated as an implementing body for Priority 1:2 Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past.

Priority 2 ‘Contributing to a Shared Society’ will be implemented by the Joint Technical Secretariat. In the delivery of Priority 2:1 Creating Shared Public Spaces it is envisaged that public bodies, including local authorities, will act as project promoters. This will entail working in partnership with other private and

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\(^{11}\) Peace III. Ibid
\(^{12}\) Peace III. Ibid
community stakeholders. Priority 2: ‘Key Institutional Capacities are Developed for a Shared Society’ aims to pilot innovative service delivery models. It is anticipated that these will directly tackle sectarian, racism and issues of segregation. They will also promote service delivery as a mechanism to enhance the concept of a shared society with consultation and partnership processes to ensure linkages with the local community.

2.1.9 Belfast City Council Peace and Reconciliation Plan (draft) 2007-2010

The Plan complements the policies highlighted in this section and the current proposals under the Review of Public Administration and Neighbourhood Renewal. It also complements the Council’s involvement in a number of EU networks and programmes. The developing Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme (SNAP) will assist in determining priority areas and strategic gaps in service delivery. The Peace Plan is also informed by a number of pieces of research, the 2007 Public Consultation Survey and a quantitative audit of good relations activities.

The Council agreed with the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) and the Community Relations Council that the Good Relations Plan and its themes should form the framework for the draft Peace Plan. Thus the aim, vision and four objectives identified in the Good Relations Plan have been carried forward into the draft Peace and Reconciliation Plan. Under each of the four broad objectives indicative actions have been provided as illustrative examples.

The Peace III Programme outlines how Belfast City Council and its partners, with assistance from the Community Relations Council, will deliver the programme in Belfast. It is important to identify good practice in the case studies that the Peace III can take into account. Thus case studies have been chosen that illustrate improvements in service delivery such as the St Galls Concept Plan, Springfarm Shared Neighbourhood Scheme and the Travellers Health and Outreach Project.
2.1.10 Conclusion

The policy context considered the strategic objectives at Northern Ireland and local levels within which statutory and non-statutory agencies and community and private stakeholders can engage in addressing the challenges identified in the legislation and principal strategies and plans. These were the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Building A Better Future, A Shared Future, the Racial Equality Strategy, the Belfast City Council Good Relations Plan, the Peace III Operational Programme, and the Belfast City Council Peace and Reconciliation Plan. Specifically these relate to the new challenges of increased cultural diversity and racism and to the specific problems of Northern Ireland in terms of community divisions and sectarianism.

Overall the policy context supports the importance of partnership and implementation at a local level driven through an agreed Good Relations Plan. However, the resources available through Peace III are insufficient to transform conflict in the city. Therefore the commitment of statutory and non-statutory agencies to allocate resources and to embed community cohesion and the promotion of good relations in their organisations is a critical task.
3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the Qualitative Records of Good Practice in Conflict Transformation is to produce between 10 -15 case studies that focus on practice that has originated from, been instigated, supported or championed by statutory agencies or projects to which a statutory agency has made a major commitment in terms of time, belief or resources.

As part of its ongoing community relations work Belfast City Council and its partners developed the Conflict Transformation Project. The overall aim is to develop cross agency dialogue on the principles of conflict transformation and to develop a common agenda for the implementation of the Good Relations Plan in Belfast. This work complements research on services in a divided city; the role of good relations in local area planning; and attitudes to sharing and interaction in public spaces.

3.2 Research Context

The qualitative record of good practice in conflict transformation has been developed in the context A Shared Future\textsuperscript{13} and Belfast City Council’s Good Relations Plan\textsuperscript{14}. The Good Relations Plan is informed by the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence. The values underpinning the Plan – consent, rule of law, inclusion, diversity and pluralism are complemented by the core ideas of common citizenship and accessible public spaces\textsuperscript{15}. The qualitative record also utilised the principles and hybrid model developed by Kelly in Community

\textsuperscript{13} A Shared Future: Strategic Framework for the Promotion of Good Relations (2005)
\textsuperscript{14} Belfast City Council Good Relations Plan (2007)
\textsuperscript{15} Belfast City Council Good Relations Plan (2007):7-9
Engagement, Good Relations and Good Practice\textsuperscript{16} for Belfast City Council in identifying and constructing the qualitative records.

3.3 Research Methodology

The research utilised qualitative interviews to develop multiple case studies. The list of the interviewees is included as Appendix I. The methodology was informed by the work of Yin in the development of case studies to record “the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events”\textsuperscript{17}. The case studies are explanatory based on the practice developed by statutory agencies and their partners in conflict transformation. The evidence has been derived from the interviewees and the documents they provided which have been recorded in the case studies. The data was collected using a common case study format which facilitated analysis. The external validity of the good practice examples has been tested as the accuracy of each case study has been reviewed and commented upon by those agencies interviewed and amendments made as appropriate. The conclusions and recommendations have been developed in the light of the multiple sources and the chain of evidence.

3.4 Research Approach

The research was undertaken from August to December 2007 in two phases. In the first phase twenty interviews took place with a range of statutory and non statutory agencies in August and September 2007. Agencies were invited to identify potential case studies across the range of public services with a focus on interventions in interface areas, health, education, housing, economic development and regeneration, policing, children and young people, culture and arts and community relations. The key stakeholders interviewed included Belfast City Council and a number of its departments, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Belfast Metropolitan College, Belfast

\textsuperscript{16} Kelly, G. Belfast City Council. Community Engagement, Good Relations and Good Practice (2007):31-44
\textsuperscript{17} Yin.R. (1994) Case Study: Research Design and Methods. Sage London 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition: 43
Education and Library Board, the Royals Hospitals, North Belfast Community Action Unit and the Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility and Community Relations Council. In addition the PSNI, OFMDFM, Department of Trade and Enterprise and the Department for Social Development were invited to identify potential case studies and a number of them did so. The meetings led to the identification of forty substantial projects as examples of good practice in conflict transformation. The projects were then analysed in terms of the:

- Lead Body and Partners
- Description of Project/Intervention
- Contribution to Good Practice
- Contribution to Conflict Transformation

The selection of the projects or interventions as case studies was guided by the purpose of the Conflict Transformation Project and the relevant legislation, policies and strategies identified in the Policy Context. These included:

- Section 75(1) Equality Duty and Section 75(2) Promoting Good Relations in the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- A Shared Future (2005);
- A Racial Equality Strategy (2005-2010);
- Good Relations Plan 2007(Belfast City Council);
- Peace III Operational Programme (2007-2013); and
- Belfast City Council Peace and Reconciliation Plan (draft) 2007-2010.

3.5 Case Study Themes

Case studies were selected to identify good practice as indicated in Table 1. The first four themes selected were Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods, Building a Shared City, Children and Young People and Community Cohesion are relevant to the strategic priority area – The Promotion of Tolerance, Inclusion and Health and Well-Being – in the draft Programme for Government.
Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods were directly relevant to the implementation of A Shared Future, the Belfast Good Relations Plan and the Peace III Programme. Building a Shared City incorporated the broad goals identified in the Belfast Good Relations Plan - shared city space, transforming contested space, developing shared cultural space and shared organisational space. The Children and Young People theme was directly related to the priority given to promoting good relations in the legislation, and the contribution that education and interface work can make to improvements in community relations. The forth theme Community Cohesion was related to the aims of the Peace III Operational Programme to address the new challenges of integration and cohesion as ethnic diversity increases.

Furthermore, the analysis of the forty projects drew attention to the importance of underlying practice and interventions by non-statutory agencies in conflict transformation. In particular the synergies between the work of statutory agencies and non-statutory agencies appeared to have supported greater partnership and innovative practice. In order to explore this further the International Fund for Ireland and the Community Relations Council were selected as potential case studies to examine what contribution advisory and partnership building roles can make to conflict transformation. The fifth theme Advisory and Building Partnership was selected as it also contributed to the Good Relations Plan’s goal of building shared organisational space.

3.6 Data Collection

Material for the case studies was collected in meetings with the relevant agencies and in related reports, plans and publications from September to December 2007. The design of the case studies utilised previous approaches developed by the United Nations Development Programme’s Case Study\textsuperscript{18} and the European Union

\textsuperscript{18} http://www.sdnp.undp.org/gender/programmes/
funded Brownfield European Regeneration Initiative (BERI)\textsuperscript{19}. The format selected has been utilised throughout Section 4: Good Practice Examples.

3.7 Conclusion

The multiple case studies have been developed using qualitative interviews with statutory agencies and their partners to record, draw conclusions and make recommendations in relation to conflict transformation. The themes and the case studies are detailed in tabular form at the beginning of Section 4: Good Practice Examples. The case studies have been related to the policy context and profile work undertaken by housing, arts, culture, regeneration, children and young people, education, health and further education in relation to community cohesion, community relations and conflict transformation.

\textsuperscript{19} Brownfield European Regeneration Programme Final Report and Master Plans: 2006
www.berinetwork.org
## 4  Good Practice Examples

Table One: Good Practice Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Primary Project</th>
<th>Key Statutory Agency, Public Body or Community Group Involved</th>
<th>Similar Projects</th>
<th>Key Body</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhood</td>
<td>St Gall’s Concept Plan: Mid Springfield Regeneration Plan</td>
<td>Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)</td>
<td>Madrid Street/Thistle Court Interface</td>
<td>NIHE</td>
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<td>Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project Limited</td>
<td>Suffolk and Lenadoon Community Forums, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and International Fund for Ireland</td>
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<td>North Belfast Interface Working Group</td>
<td>North Belfast Community Action Unit, DSD, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister</td>
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<td>Finaghy Crossroads Community Relations Project</td>
<td>Belfast City Council</td>
<td>Shared Neighbourhood Scheme Springfarm Estate</td>
<td>Community Relations Council and NIHE</td>
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<td>Building Shared City Space</td>
<td>Carnival Arts Development Programme</td>
<td>Belfast City Council and the Beat Initiative</td>
<td>Development and Outreach Initiative Memorabilia Project Art for Arterial Routes</td>
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<td>Re-imaging Communities</td>
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<td>Children and Young People</td>
<td>Schools Community Relations Programme and Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme</td>
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Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhood

Case Studies

St Galls Concept Plan: Mid Springfield Regeneration Plan

Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project Limited

North Belfast Interface Working Group

Finaghy Cross Road Community Relations Project
Project Title: St Galls Concept Plan: Mid Springfield

Regeneration Plan

Lead Body: Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

Contact Details
Jim Carlin - Greater West Belfast Strategy Manager, NIHE
Tel: 028 9031 7792  Mob: 07767647034
Email jim.carlin@nihe.gov.uk

Richard Williamson - East Belfast District Manager, NIHE
Tel: 028 9047 0058
Email Richard.williamson@nihe.gov.uk

Organisations Involved

The Mid-Springfield Regeneration Plan has been led by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the main partners have been the Belfast Regeneration Office, the former North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Clonard and Beechmount Residents Associations. The Clonard area was vested by the NIHE in 1994 to facilitate redevelopment. As the housing issues were addressed the potential to remodel the land use along the interface with Lanark Way was considered. This led to the development of the St Gall’s Concept Plan (as part of the Greater West Belfast Housing Strategy) which was approved by the NIHE Board in June 200220.

Different elements of the plan have required various partners to be involved with the individual programmes  For example, the primary school issue involved the local church, the schools, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, the Department of Education, the Housing Executive and Clonard Residents Association in agreeing the site adjacent to the Lanark Way interface.

20 Northern Ireland Housing Executive St Galls Concept Plan
Background to Project

The Mid-Springfield Regeneration Plan is a multi-agency approach to regenerate an area suffering physical decline and social deprivation in inner/middle West Belfast. The Mid-Springfield area forms part of the interface between the Shankill and Falls areas and as a result has experienced some of the worst violence during the 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland.

The Plan included:

- The replacement of over 800 unfit and unsuitable houses in the Clonard Urban Renewal Area and the Beechmount Estate with a mix of new social and private housing. The ten-year programme involved partnerships with housing associations and the private sector, provided over 600 social houses and 120 private homes, and attracted approximately £24 million of public sector investment.
- A project to address redundant land and environmental decline along the Shankill/Springfield interface 'peace wall' which involved new housing developments and a £350,000 environmental improvement scheme for the existing Bombay Street housing areas with funding from the Department of Social Development.
- An energy efficiency initiative for dwellings in both the public and private sectors involving the Beechmount Residents Association and the former North and West Belfast Health & Social Services Trust.
- The creation of new road access unlocking derelict land for social housing.
- The rationalisation of primary school provision in the area involving the amalgamation of three primary schools into one new site in the Clonard renewal area and the use of the former sites for housing development.
- The provision of a nursery unit.
- The replacement of the Cupar Street homeless hostel.
Development and Implementation of the Project

The Plan is now in its tenth year and numerous components are still actively happening or in the planning stage. By 2007, the environmental scheme was completed and the new Homeless Hostel at Cupar Street opened. New social homes are being constructed on two of the former primary school sites. The two main Residents Associations in Clonard and Beechmount are still working closely with all the partners and both now operate from new ‘fit for purpose’ community facilities. The NIHE is also in discussion with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (formerly North and West Belfast Health & Social Services Trust) regarding the possible relocation of their clinic facility at Cupar Street to a new improved health centre on the Shankill Road. Freeing this land up will allow for future social housing and road realignment.

Planning Stage

Close attention was paid to the issue of territoriality and a range of stakeholders were consulted by the NIHE both in the development of the concept and during the planning phase. The creation of a new primary school was critical to meeting the needs of CCMS and to freeing up land for housing development. Initially there were concerns in Clonard that more housing would be lost. Consultation was undertaken with representatives of the Greater Shankill Community Association to brief and ascertain their views on the proposed changes in land use along the interface, particularly in relation to the proposed location of a new primary school adjacent to the Lanark Way gates. Having provided guarantees that the plan would not create a “no man’s land” and ascertained that the proposed location of the school was not in perceived Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist “territory” it was possible to proceed on the basis that both additional housing and a new school would be provided. The NIHE briefed the local Sinn Fein MP and this helped to allay initial concerns in Clonard about making a site available for the new school.
Consultation with the Police Service of Northern Ireland resulted in a positive security assessment of the new school site, recommending only high walls at the junction of the Lanark Way security barriers/the school site.

The Journey

The NIHE has negotiated the purchase of the Cupar Street Clinic site from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. In return the NIHE have facilitated the Trust to acquire sites on the Shankill for a new ‘One Stop Shop’ health centre. The homeless hostel adjacent to the St Gall’s site was relocated to another adjacent derelict site freeing up land for housing.

Successes

The release and swapping of land for education, housing and health uses demonstrated value for money principles and supports the process of developing 60 additional housing units over three phases. A new primary school and nursery units, and a new homeless families hostel have also been completed.

In addition, developments along Lanark Way, on the Shankill side of the interface with Bombay Street, including two large enterprise units and private housing improved the environment and reduced opportunities for sectarian incidents along this stretch of the interface.

Failures, Limits and Challenges

The future of the older houses in Bombay Street posed a particular challenge as they replaced houses burnt down in 1969 on the peace line between the Falls and the Shankill. They had been built with voluntary effort. Moreover, security fences had been incorporated into the rear yard walls of the houses which formed part of the peace line with the Shankill. Detailed consultation was undertaken and as a result it was agreed not to demolish the older houses which had been rebuilt with
voluntary labour in the 1970s. This led to the Bombay Street environmental improvement scheme which included a new road, new paving, street lighting, the replacement of the old and rusting security screen at the rear of the properties, and some work to improve the appearance of the interface wall itself. This scheme, costing approximately £350,000, was designed and managed by the Housing Executive and fully financed by the Department of Social Development with the support of the Residents Association.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The overall concept set clear targets against which the project could be monitored. In 2007 it was highly commended in the British Urban Regeneration Awards (BURA) - a process which supports the NIHE in providing quality assurance.

**Reflection and Learning**

In the context of the large scale of the changes affecting the area, taking an overview proved effective in terms of the partnership that subsequently developed between the NIHE, CCMS and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. This partnership made it possible to utilise derelict and underused land to improve local services. In developing and implementing the concept plan it was critical to obtain local support and address rumours and misapprehensions.

NIHE consultation was transparent and information was readily available:
- large scale detailed drawings and photographs were used in meetings; and
- the scheme was explained in terms of a win:win – that it would not infringe or negatively affect the communities.
Sustainability

The rationalisation of schools and the energy efficiency project are examples of how outcome-driven regeneration can tackle issues such as education, health and fuel poverty in what was traditionally a housing-concentrated renewal project. The determination of the local communities involved to play a full role in the regeneration of their own area and to be actively involved was evident throughout, and their involvement is still vital years after the process began.

Next Steps

The final part of the concept plan depends on the relocation of the Cupar Street Clinic into the new health centre on the Shankill Road.

Similar projects

Project Title: Madrid Street/Thistle Court Interface
Lead Body: Northern Ireland Housing Executive

In East Belfast the Madrid Street/Thistle Court interface is situated between Short Strand and Lower Newtownards Road. It was seriously affected by the conflict and violence in the late 1990s. This led to a growing number of empty houses and environmental decay in both Thistle Court and Madrid Street. Consultation by the NIHE with local community groups and residents has resulted in improvements to Madrid Street and Thistle Court. In Madrid Street privately owned vacant properties have been vested, others demolished and some brought back into use by their owners. In Thistle Court the estate entrance abuts the interface and this has been improved and softened in conjunction with residents. In addition, environmental works and improvements to vacant and derelict properties in Thistle Court have been carried out.
Project Title: Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project Limited (SRRP)
Lead Bodies: Suffolk and Lenadoon Community Forums, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and International Fund for Ireland

Contact Details
John Hoey - Manager SRRP
Tel: 028 905 07240
Email john.hoey@stewartstownroad.org
Website: www.StewartstownRoad.org
Dr. John McPeake - Director Design and Property Services, NIHE,
Tel: 028 9031 8738
Email john.mcpeake@nihe.gov.uk

Organisations Involved

In 1996 the NIHE approached the emerging Suffolk Community Forum - the umbrella group for community activity in the estate - to determine future action in this area. They were given five years to come up with community based solutions before statutory action would become inevitable. When approached to refurbish a semi derelict block of shops and maisonettes to provide shops and community facilities, the International Fund for Ireland suggested that a new build cross community project was the most sustainable option. This led to the development of the Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project as a cross-community regeneration initiative located on the interface between the (Protestant) Suffolk and (Catholic) Lenadoon housing estates in outer west Belfast. The project is owned jointly by Suffolk Community Forum and Lenadoon Community Forum.

Background to Project

An Estate Strategy begun by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in 1986 was relatively successful in stabilising the estate as a whole. However, the interface continued to decline along the Suffolk side of the road frontage. This included a
block of declining commercial units with empty maisonettes above, a vacant cleared site of surplus properties and semi derelict houses occupied by a range of community projects providing services in Suffolk.

The capital and revenue funding for the complex was provided by the IFI (£475k), BRO (£167.5k) and BEPB (£260.8k from the EU Peace I Programme). The Housing Executive’s ‘in kind’ contribution included the gift of the land, the demolition of the old complex, erection of a new wall and fencing and improving a yard/car park at the rear. The project was in development from 1997 and completed in 2002.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

The aim of the project was to produce a solution to the decay and environmental degradation at the road frontage interface, and at the same time introduce - by way of a sustainable community business - new ‘neutral’ commercial and community facilities to an area experiencing considerable social and economic disadvantage.

**Planning Stage**

In 1997 the NIHE began an Economic Appraisal in partnership with the Suffolk Community Forum to determine future action on this area. However, given the inter-community contacts established in the area since 1995 in an initiative by Belfast Interface Project, it was quickly recognised that there was an opportunity to create a genuine cross-community project in which the revitalisation of the interface location could benefit the wider area.

**The Journey**

The NIHE engaged in a proactive community engagement strategy that took into account the internal dynamics in each area and was focused on encouraging the
local groups to be strategic. The strategy was taken forward at a District level with active support from the newly formed Housing and Regeneration division of the NIHE. In order to develop the project, community consent was required in both Suffolk and Lenadoon and local leadership had to surmount considerable opposition and ultimately provide guarantees that the partnership would be equal and that their respective communities would benefit from and could access the project. Suffolk in particular required guarantees that there would be no political use in the building and had to overcome very real fears about the survival and integrity of the community.

The regeneration committee was actively supported by IFI and NIHE personnel in the technical aspects of the project including the design, fundraising, planning process, tendering and construction. This empowered them to make key decisions in relation to the project. In 1998 a Regeneration Committee including equal numbers of members from both of the community fora was formed to oversee the project. This body was incorporated into a limited company in 2000 - the Board of which comprised four directors from each of the community fora and four independent directors.

**Successes**

The project introduced an element of stability that was previously absent in Suffolk, and has undoubtedly raised the level of community confidence in the interface and adjoining areas; for example, all of the dwellings in Suffolk – with the exception of a small number of flats and houses - are now occupied, and the exodus from the estate has been halted.

It would be unrealistic to wholly attribute this to the project or to expect that the project could resolve all of the tensions between Suffolk and Lenadoon, but it has provided these two historically antagonistic communities with a way of working together for mutual benefit and in doing so has led to a significant degree of mutual understanding. It has also contributed to capacity-building by drawing in
members of both communities who might otherwise not have been involved in such an enterprise.

As a regeneration project on a volatile interface which is jointly led by, and for the benefit of, both communities, the project has had also to overcome the considerable obstacle of territoriality.

The project ensured the provision of local commercial and community services within the affordable range of low income households, and all of the facilities are used by both communities.

Approximately twenty new jobs have been created to date as a result of the project, eight in the Lidl store and twelve in the retail/community facility. It is understood that nearly all of these jobs have gone to local people, thereby assisting attempts to address the level of unemployment in the area. Some of the commercial tenants in the company’s building have similar businesses elsewhere, and it is a sign of their confidence in the scheme that they have chosen to locate in this facility.

**Failures, Limits and Challenges**

The project was high risk for the communities and the funders. However, it has transformed what was a forbidding environment into a vibrant commercial and social centre, and has done so in the face of considerable antipathy, scepticism and doubt regarding its ambitions. A challenge to the project was the maintenance of community consent, particularly Suffolk’s support to the cross community project, at a time when opposition to working with the other community was vocal. Mediation was necessary to facilitate the communities in the process of negotiating equitable access. A remaining challenge is that land at the rear of the project was transferred to the project by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive but has been difficult to develop for shared use as it is perceived as Suffolk territory.
Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2003 the quality of the project was assured when it won the British Urban Regeneration Award (BURA) for Community Regeneration.

Reflection and Learning

There are several reasons why the project should be considered to represent best practice. One of these is that the relationships developed through the dialogue process facilitated by Belfast Interface Project underpinned the development of SRRP. Through BIP the project had continued access to facilitation skilled in conflict resolution and to mediation. This demonstrates what can be achieved at grassroots community level by local people with patience and determination where there are sufficient community institutions to develop co-ordination and leadership.

Much of the success is due to the fact that both the company and the project have been established on the basis of consensus across the representatives of both communities in terms of membership and decisions. The company has also set strict rules regarding issues such as symbols to ensure that its facility remains truly a ‘neutral’ shared space.

The International Fund for Ireland committed to the project at an early stage and played a key role in mobilising the other funders.

Several early wins including the establishment of the supermarket and the crèche/playgroup services increased the NIHE’s credibility with both community forums and encouraged them in their efforts to develop the project. NIHE consultations with the Industrial Development Board had indicated that part of the site was ideal for a medium-to-large retail outlet and small industrial/warehousing units. Negotiations with a local development company Mivan and its client Lidl UK - a company specialising in discounted goods for low income households -
have resulted in a 10,000 sq ft store which was completed and opened in 2000. Suffolk Community Services Group provided a crèche/playgroup service in portacabins donated to the project by the supermarket developer and the land was gifted by the Housing Executive over the period 2000 to 2006.

Regeneration activity represents an opportunity in contested areas to ease tension and provide a focus for cross-community dialogue and co-operation. Regeneration can act as a vehicle for the process of conflict resolution, in which increased contact and co-operation between such communities highlights the fundamental similarities in their circumstances and helps to sever the link between segregation and antipathy.

**Sustainability**

The new complex comprises a mix of retail, commercial and community facilities which generate a significant rental income. A third of trading profits is retained by the company while the remaining profits are shared equally for community benefit with the two community fora. The complex includes:

- four shop units on the ground floor and community/office space on the first floor.
- The shops range in size from 750 sq ft to 2088 sq ft and are therefore larger than that which was provided previously. They are leased on a 10-15 year basis to a grocery store/post office, a pharmacy, a children’s clothes shop and a restaurant/tea shop; the latter two are new businesses introduced to the area as a result of this project. The other two businesses were in the original block, and have had their leases transferred from the Housing Executive to the company.

On the first floor the community/office space includes:

- the project manager’s office;
- space leased to North & West Belfast Health & Social Services Trust (now Belfast Health and Social Care Trust) as a base for its Early Years Team (childcare, youth intervention work etc.);
- an office leased to Suffolk Community Forum;
- an office leased to Lenadoon Community Forum from which it operates a counselling service;
- an office leased to Suffolk Community Services Group from which it administers local employment, training and childcare schemes; and
- two meeting rooms for hire.

The project is financially viable, and its success has resulted in it securing funding for Phase 2, the development of a permanent building which can be leased out for a mixture of community use and a childcare/playgroup service. The funding for Phase II has been received from the International Fund for Ireland, the Integrated Development Board (IDB) through the Department for Social Development and Peace II monies from the Belfast Local Strategy Partnership.

**Next Steps**

The IFI have funded the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group to undertake development and community relations work with young people from both communities. This three year programme commenced with IFI funding in 2006 and is being further developed with support from Atlantic Philanthropies with funding continuing to 2009. The US foundation Atlantic Philanthropies supported the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group to develop a peace building plan on the basis of the creation of shared space in the Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project. Atlantic Philanthropies have funded the implementation of the plan from 2007-2009.
Project Title: North Belfast Interface Working Group

Lead Body: North Belfast Community Action Unit, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister

Contact Details
Sandra Buchan North Belfast Community Action Unit (NBCAU)
Tel: 028 9072 6058
Email: sandra.buchan@ofmdfmni.gov.uk

Organisations Involved


In addition community and interface/peace building/regeneration groups and the following Community Empowerment Partnerships (CEPs) participated - Ballysillan, Greater Greencastle, Greater New Lodge, Rathcoole, Upper Ardoyne, Cliftonville, Ligoniel, Ardoyne and Marrowbone, Lower North, Upper North Belfast, North Belfast Developing Leadership Initiative and Partnership in Community Transformation.

Background to Project

In 2001 following prolonged violence in North Belfast, the First and Deputy First Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive Committee and the Minister of Social Development (with the support of the six Local Assembly members) launched the North Belfast Community Action Project “to put in place a plan with short, medium
and long term actions to address social and community issues in North Belfast [with] a focus on building community capacity"21. The Dunlop report’s vision was “the eventual creation of a vibrant and sustainable community in North Belfast that is influential in supporting peace building…through putting in place a plan of short, medium and long term actions to address social and community issues in North Belfast”.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

A key recommendation of the North Belfast Community Action Project was, to build partnerships within and between communities, and between communities and statutory agencies, and to address interface issues22. The process of engaging statutory agencies and community organisations developed separately but alongside the establishment of Community Empowerment Partnerships in 2003 -2005. The rationale underpinning this approach was that the issues that affect interface communities are multi-faceted and could not be addressed in isolation. This required collectively addressing the underlying causes and not just the symptoms of the problems.

**Planning Stage**

From April 2003 the NBCAU had met regularly with statutory agencies for the purpose of sharing information. In these meetings it was recognised that the only way to make an impact on the interfaces was to engage the communities. Therefore a parallel process was developed in engaging communities and statutory agencies. In addition to meeting regularly the statutory process involved a bus tour of the interfaces and meeting local groups to discuss the issues and needs. The community process involved working through the CEPs, asking them to broaden out local participation. A process of becoming conversant with the

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policy and service delivery issues as a prelude to engaging with statutory agencies ensued. In addition a higher level steering group at Chief Executive and Permanent Secretary levels from Belfast City Council and the Departments of Social Development and Education received regular updates from NBCAU and some met participants in the process.

The Journey

In December 2002 it was agreed that CRC and NBCAU would facilitate a series of discussions with community groups and statutory bodies. In April 2004 it was agreed that a series of discussions would be facilitated to develop a framework to bring together a collaborative approach to address interface issues in North Belfast23. Discussions were concluded in April 2005. In the summer of 2005 the planning process began with work on cross-cutting issues. There was simultaneous work on developing the summer interface youth intervention programme. On 21st November 2005 the summer programme was evaluated, and a planning sub group was tasked to develop a position paper on how to take forward a strategy for interface areas. As the work evolved regular updates were provided to statutory agencies and community groups whose details were held on the North Belfast Community Action Unit’s database.

In April 2006 the position paper was presented at a meeting attended by over 50 people in the Farset Hostel/Conference Centre. At the meeting clarity was sought about statutory sector and community critical assumptions and expectations. Statutory critical assumptions included:

- the peace process would continue;
- this was the beginning of a process;
- the process would involve equal partnership and be community-led and statutory supported;
- resources are limited;
- statutory agencies would work in a “joined–up way”; and

- the way forward must be underpinned by support from political representatives.

Community critical assumptions included:
- this process will be different “we’ve heard it all before”;
- statutory agencies are in for the long haul;
- there would be support for sustaining work on the ground;
- groups would work collaboratively and collectively;
- the “parallel process” - of separate statutory agencies and community groups discussion - becomes an “integrated process”;
- the underlying assumptions of “benign neglect” and a strategy of systematically abandoning the interface areas is addressed; and
- the need for early wins, a long term strategy and joined up working.

At the Farset conference realistic assumptions about funding, that money will not always resolve problems, about community support and statutory commitment were aired. Three workshops took place within the conference on Good Relations, Youth and Regeneration with youth emerging as the top priority. The meeting led to the formation, in April 2006, of the North Belfast Interface Working Group with a membership of 41 community and statutory groups.

At the conference the formation of three sub groups – Youth, Regeneration and Good Relations was agreed. A second summer interface youth programme was developed and delivered in conjunction with participants to the process. The three sub groups met for the first time on 8th August 2006. Regular updates continued to be provided on the work of the sub groups. In November 2006 over 50 people attended a meeting at a conference held in NICVA. Feedback was provided by the three sub groups and their direction was endorsed by the attendees. At the conference Dr. Peter Shirlow began to work with the process providing an academic perspective and to write up A Draft Action Plan for Interface Communities in North Belfast. By the end of February 2007 a draft action plan was circulated and had been commented upon. At another mini

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24 NBCAU Presentation to community and statutory agencies in April 2005
conference on the 8\textsuperscript{th} June the draft report was endorsed. For the third summer, the summer youth intervention programme was developed. In keeping with the agreements made \textit{The Action Plan for Interface Communities in North Belfast} was submitted to the Minister for Social Development Margaret Ritchie by the community representatives.

In September 2007 the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) indicated that they were interested in supporting some of the recommendations in the draft plan. 32 people attended a meeting of the Interface Working Group in the Vine Centre on the Crumlin Road to work up the recommendations that would form the proposal to the IFI. These proposals included two strategic and policy officers with administrative support, and pilot and demonstration projects across each of the three strategic areas of youth, interface and good relations with a view to meeting the IFI in January 2008. Following this, representatives of the Interface Working Group will meet the Minister from the Department for Social Development to advance recommendations needing cross-departmental action to re-shape services on a pilot basis.

\textbf{Successes}

In May 2006 the North Belfast Interface Steering Group Action Plan was presented to the Minister of Social Development by the community group representatives. The final report was drafted through an agreed planning process leading to the formation of the North Belfast Interface Working Group and the work of three sub groups and approved at a conference attended by 250 community and agency representatives from North Belfast. A level of co-ordination was achieved between groups which indicated relationships were improving.
Failures, Limits and Challenges

The legacy of the conflict and relationships defined by divergent political interests and processes of territorial segregation presented real difficulties and challenges to the process. The policy landscape was characterised as “muddled” and it was difficult to locate the real sites of decision-making on regeneration and development.

Reflection and Learning

The key lessons that emerged from the process were:

- NBCAU facilitated the process as an honest broker.
- The two parallel processes of engaging statutory organisation on the one hand and community organisations on the other commenced in December 2002 and was completed in April 2006 when statutory and community representative agreed how the planning process would be taken forward. This lead to the establishment of the North Belfast Interface Working Group and three sub groups tasked to develop plans for Good Relations, Youth and Regeneration.
- Early wins were factored into the process – through the Interface Diversionary programme for young people.
- A commitment to an equal partnership between statutory agencies and the communities emerged in the process.
- It was agreed within the process that the final Action Plan would be developed collaboratively between communities and with statutory agencies but owned by the community interests.
- The process and the Youth, Good Relations and Regeneration Sub Groups were jointly chaired by community and statutory agency representatives.
- The process was organic, meetings were open and information disseminated through newsletters.
Project Title: Finaghy Crossroads Community Relations Project

Lead Body: Belfast City Council

Contact Details
Stiofan Long -Co-Chair
Mob:07894527633
Email Stiofan68@hotmail.com

Harry Smith –Co-Chair
Mob: 07855471904
Email: harry.smith@ntlworld.com

Raymond Stewart Community Development Worker Finaghy Community Centre
Tel: 028 9062 0474
Email: finanghycc@belfastcity.gov.uk

Organisations Involved

The Community Development Worker, with the support of the community, through the Chairperson of the Finaghy Community Centre Management Committee initiated a single identity training and development project. From 1997 to 1999 residents from the Benmore Estate took part in a training and development project. As part of the project two residential discussion sessions were held for residents. The first focused on community development and community relations. The second took place 18 months later and this focused on history and culture, including examining the development of political parties and institutions including Sinn Fein and the Orange Order. The project supported the residents to identify issues and one which emerged was the high level of violence at Finaghy Crossroads. The project also built sufficient confidence with the residents to consider meeting with the Finaghy Community Development Association from the predominantly catholic neighbouring area to explore the issue of community safety.

This led to a process, facilitated by Belfast Interface Project, through which six people from each group met regularly. From this process the Finaghy Crossroads
Group was established in November 2004 and they produced a two year strategic plan for the period 2006-2008. Initial contacts were developed through the BCC Finaghy Community Centre Community Development Worker who drew a wide range of interests into the Finaghy Crossroads Group. The groups involved were:

- Finaghy Community Centre Management Committee;
- Protestant Interface Network;
- Benmore Community Association;
- Finaghy Community Development Association;
- Falls Community Council;
- Safer Neighbourhoods Project; and
- Sandy Row Prisoners Enterprise Project.

**Background to Project**

Within the Finaghy Crossroads area a series of interfaces were identified:

- Dunmurry Village;
- Areema/Twinbrook;
- Blacks Road;
- Upper Lisburn Road;
- Finaghy;
- Upper Finaghy;
- St James/Donegall Road;
- Roden Street; and Lower Falls;
- Lower Lisburn Road; and
- Annadale/Lower Ormeau.

The high level of interface violence had been identified as an immediate priority. In 2004/05 the Musgrave ward (in which Finaghy Crossroads is located) had one of the highest levels of recorded crimes/incidents in Belfast. Of 764 offences recorded, 29.2% were related to offences against the person and criminal damage\(^{25}\).

BCC provided resources through the community development centre budget to support the single identity work and the discussions between Finaghy Community Centre and Finaghy Community Development Association. The process commenced in 1997. Finaghy Crossroads Group was formed in November 2004.

Development and Implementation of the Project

Following the initial training and development project with the Finaghy Community Centre Management Committee and the inter-community dialogue with Finaghy Community Development Association, it was agreed to establish Finaghy Crossroads Group (FCG). The FCG evolved from a series of dialogues and working relationships which led to the development of the Finaghy Crossroads Strategic Plan in which the vision articulated by FCG “A Finaghy, where all people from all the communities feel safe, happy and proud to live, work and socialise together. An area of unlimited potential for all, with the crossroads as a thriving focal point.” The mission agreed to support this is to “be a catalyst for the promotion, support of good relations through advancing equality, respect for diversity and opportunity for all”26.

While the immediate focus was on reducing the level of interface violence, FCG developed an integrated strategy to address regeneration issues involving the community and statutory sectors, promoting intercommunity contact and dialogue, connect generations within and between communities, develop good relations to enhance the quality of life of interface residents and ensure the interface group is responsive and developmental and aims to “de-territorialise conflictual issues”27.

Planning Stage

In the initial phase relationships with members of the ‘other’ group developed, members gained insights into each others perspectives on local concerns and

agreed upon the need to generate a shared vision for the area and a strategy and plan of work to support the vision.

**The Journey**

Finaghy Crossroads Group developed a four year work plan to cover the period 2007-2010- based on its initial strategy in 2004. The plan included the following elements to be undertaken in years one and two:

- To formalise the Mobile Phone Network and establish ground rules.
- To establish FCG as a charity.
- To establish the project in a social economy coffee shop/IT centre thus creating a practical shared space as a symbol of sharing.
- To address alcohol consumption in the context of its effect on high levels of interface incidents by working with local off licences to identify sales from their shops and eliminate sales to young people under 21 years based on a model developed in West Belfast.

- To engage young people from both communities who are likely to be attracted to Finaghy Crossroads on weekend nights by involving them in single identity community relations work, and in sports and social activities in partnership with the Belfast Education and Library Board South and West Belfast area projects, and also Finaghy and St Michael's youth clubs. In order to achieve this FCG had to engage young people who have little experience of working with youth facilitators. In the medium term FCG aims to progress to working with young people on a cross community basis and to develop the skills to support this work on an on-going basis.

In addition FCG planned the following projects for years three and four:

- To re-claim the history of intercommunity lifestyles “Presenting Our Lives” using story telling and visual history/life stories to positively address the legacy of the past, facilitate better understanding of one another and to enhance relationships and partnership-building processes. It is anticipated these will
cover everyday life, conflict and loss, what the cross roads means to me and safety in my community.²⁸

- To undertake a training project promoting the principles of conflict transformation, community planning and policies affecting interfaces.
- To promote the development of linkages with statutory agencies
- To introduce conflict transformation training in a course entitled “Citizens as Peace Builders” that will encourage community participation and the participants will work towards designing and producing a local Community and Citizenship Charter.

Successes

- Local negotiation of a community charter to promote shared space at Finaghy Cross Roads. One of the outcomes of the initiative has been a reduction in the level of violence at Finaghy Cross roads.
- The group have also brokered the establishment of a new South West Belfast Mobile Phone Network with Community Relations Council funding in 2006.
- The re-location of the new purpose built library into the grounds of Finaghy Primary School and its continued use on a shared basis following a consultation process involving Belfast Education and Library Board and groups representing both communities.
- The development of a sports complex in the primary school used by both communities.
- The two communities organised one event for vulnerable adults on a cross community basis.

Failures, Limits and Challenges

This is sensitive work that is difficult to profile internally or externally at the early stages when risks are taken by the staff who build local support, challenge the territoriality and access resources to achieve this.

²⁸Shirlow, P. Finaghy Cross Roads project Strategic Plan 2007-2010:15
Faced with political instability with the fall of the devolved institutions in 2003/2004 and city wide increases in violence in 2005, there was sufficient determination to maintain the developing cross community linkages.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

At each FCG meeting a update of progress made is provided. FCG keeps a record of its activities using photographs and newspaper articles. External funding has also been provided and FCG will provide monitoring and evaluation reports to funders based on the four year strategic plan. CRC provided “Pathfinder” funding and two staff were appointed in September 2007 for six months. Private funding through the Irish Presidency of £66,000 enabled an office to be established. The IFI awarded £240,000 to FCG in October 2007.

**Reflection and Learning**

Community safety was chosen as the primary issue initially because the high level of violence had become a community issue. In the light of experience it was considered that the link between Community Safety and Good Relations work in policy and implementation terms is underdeveloped. Intervention by the Community Development Worker and the Chair of the Community Centre Management Committee created the foundations on which the interface and community safety issues could be addressed. This led to a training and development project with the committee made up of local people and the Community Centre user groups.

The work on Finaghy Crossroads is an example of how Community Development initiatives contribute to meeting the Corporate Objective of Promoting Good Relations. Specifically this will be achieved by addressing the quality of life in interface communities, developing the type of strategic leadership required, by engaging with stakeholders drawn from both communities and by implementing plans to engage local traders.
Critical success factors include:

- The development of early dialogue, time spent in building trust and confidence, the importance of sensitivity, and the development of local structures in each community with sufficient trust and mandate to create a new group called the Finaghy Crossroads Group.
- The utilisation of external facilitation skilled in interface issues and conflict transformation.
- The evident leadership role of the Finaghy Crossroads Group in negotiating boundaries and building relationships.
- The availability of finance at an early stage through Belfast City Council Community Development budget to support trust and relationship building, facilitation through BIP.
- The availability of funding from the Irish Presidency to support the FCG to establish a physical presence and from CRC and the IFI to employ staff to develop the four year work plan.

Sustainability

The development of support structures to maintain and develop the crossroads as a focal point. This will be achieved by developing a range of support mechanisms such as a Community and Citizenship Charter, a Traders Association, Finaghy Library Users Group and by encouraging interschool activity and shared use of the railway station.

Next Steps

Funding from the International Fund for Ireland will support the implementation of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan.
Similar Projects
Project Title: Springfarm Shared Neighbourhood
Lead Body: Springfarm District Community Association, Springfarm Estate, Antrim
Contact Details
Springfarm and District Community Association
Dymphna McGlade - Policy Officer, Community Relations Council
Tel: 02890 227500
Email dmcglade@nicrc.org.uk
Jennifer Hawthorne Head of Community Cohesion Unit, NIHE Community Cohesion Unit
Tel: 02890 318829
Email: jennifer.hawthorne@nihe.gov.uk

Background
Springfarm estate in Antrim is mixed 40% Catholic, 40% Protestant and 20% from other backgrounds. The estate was in the worst 10% Census Output Areas in terms of employment and economic deprivation and within the worst 10% Super Output Areas in terms of health, disability and living environment (2001 Census). Springfarm and District Community Association (SDCA) supported the development of the NIHE Shared Neighbourhood concept through its work in tackling racism in the area. The mixed estate had previously acted vigorously to counter drug dealing in the area and responded proactively to counter sectarianism and racism. When ex Ministry of Defence houses became available they were offered to Antrim Hospital to house staff from new immigrant communities and these residents were subjected to extensive racial harassment.

Springfarm and District Community Association approached CRC Policy Officer about their concerns in dealing with racist attacks in the estate. They have been supported as the lead partner, by CRC to begin a process of declaration and promotion of Springfarm as a Shared Neighbourhood. The Northern Ireland
Housing Executive, Community Cohesion Unit (CCU) and the Racial Equality Unit were invited to provide their assistance and support.

The key achievements to date have been:

- A mapping exercise of the area and its needs.
- The development of a welcome pack for all newcomers to the area.
- A consultation process with adults on their views and needs re: Shared Neighbourhood.
- A consultation process with young people (as above).
- The promotion and public awareness of the project.
- A report of the experience to date in draft form.
- NIHE, CCU have taken the learning to produce a national project.
- Funding has been acquired for administrative support for the group.
- The development of an anti racist strategy which included the extension of the NIHE community warden scheme into the area.
- As a result of the work of the Association and its partners, Springfarm has become the most popular estate in Antrim having previously been the least desirable.

The local community has supported SCDA to advocate for:

- An interagency approach to meeting local needs; and
- The development and delivery of a Shared Neighbourhood Scheme through embedding good relations in local initiatives and at the centre of policy, practice and delivery of public services.

CRC has provided ideas, support and practical assistance as well as funding for all key events.

The critical issues to date have been:

- The strain on the capacity of the group.
- Lack of acknowledgement from some public bodies.
The innovative nature of the project has been both enabling and constraining in many respects.

**Key Lessons**

CRC and other statutory and voluntary bodies have played a key support role through many mediums but the key driver for the project must be the community. The development of the Springfarm Shared Neighbourhood is an example of CRC and NIHE engagement in developing policy areas on the ground.
Building Shared City Space

Case Studies

Carnival Arts Development Programme

Renewing the Routes

Re-imaging Communities
Project Title: Carnival Arts Development Programme
Lead Body: Belfast City Council Culture and Arts Unit Development Department

Contact Details
Siobhan Stevenson - Belfast City Council Arts Officer
Tel: 028 9027 0569
Email: steveons@belfastcity.gov.uk
David Boyd - Director Beat Initiative
Tel: 028 9046 0863
Email: david@belfastcarnival.org

Organisations Involved

The Carnival Arts Development Programme Steering Group included:

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<tr>
<th>An Drohead</th>
<th>New Belfast Community Arts Initiative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ardoyne Fleadh</td>
<td>New Lodge Community Arts Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beat Initiative (lead partner)</td>
<td>Open Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belfast City Council</td>
<td>South Belfast Partnership</td>
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<td>Community Arts Forum</td>
<td>Spectrum Centre (Shankill)</td>
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<td>Lower North Belfast Community Council</td>
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Background to Project

Capital City I (2003-2006) and Capital City II (2006-2010) identified the place of arts, culture and heritage in making a significant contribution to successful and sustainable urban revitalisation. It sought to shift Culture and Arts to a more central position on the urban regeneration agenda\(^\text{29}\). In doing so it implicitly recognised the contested nature of public performance on the streets of Belfast.

\(^{29}\) Belfast Capital City (Belfast City Council's Development Agenda) Culture and Arts Plan 2003-2006 Foreword Councillor Eoin O’Broin Chair, Development (Arts) Sub-Committee
and sought to build on the unsuccessful City of Culture bid. The *BCC Culture and Arts Plan (2003-2006)* sought to build effective internal and external partnerships, undertook consultations with arts, culture and heritage sectors and community groups in order to build on the strength of existing Belfast festivals. This led to the establishment of a Belfast Festival Forum which created networking opportunities and stimulated collaboration across the city through the Carnival Arts Consortium which implemented the programme. The secretariat for the Forum was provided by BCC Culture and Arts Unit.

Financial support for carnival development came from the BCC Culture and Arts Unit and this was made up of a mix of special funding, multi annual funding and small grants:

- the Carnival Arts Development Programme (£105,300);
- the Culture and Arts Plan budget for Training the Trainers in carnival skills;
- BCC Development and Outreach Initiative - locally based carnival related activities; and
- the European City of Culture process led to the Urban Culture funding.

The Beat Initiative was also able to lever additional funding from The Paul Hamlyn Foundation to fund training workshops in local communities.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

The Carnival Arts Consortium has contributed to building relationships and carnival infrastructure. Through the project the carnival expertise and skills of the Beat Initiative are being increasingly utilised throughout the city. In order to promote learning in the cultural and community sectors and among young people, the Culture and Arts Plan undertook a skills audit and design a skills programme for implementation along with increased opportunities for participation for young people.
Planning Stage

Belfast Carnival Arts Development Programme developed as a result of consultation with community based festival organisations across the city. In order to realise the Council’s aspirations and unlock the latent potential, the need for a structured programme to deliver skills training, and “to animate, inspire and enable local communities to become involved in festival production and carnival performance” was identified in the consultation undertaken \(^{30}\). The programme was predicated on ensuring carnival based arts skills survived and developed in the city. The importance of the City of Culture bid should not be underestimated as it identified weaknesses and provided Urban Culture funding to address them. The judges identified two key weaknesses – in the culture and arts infrastructure, and in achieving excellence.

The Journey

The Carnival Arts Skills Programmes included drumming, music, textiles, costumes, dance, choreography, floats, street dressing, direction and logistics in the skills programme. In addition to creating product for local festivals, Belfast carnival artists and performers participated in and are preparing for:

- Cork 2005 Opening Ceremony;
- Belfast City Centre Carnival Showcase Events in 2005;
- Celebrate Belfast in 2006 - a year long programme of events for marking the centenary of Belfast City Hall;
- Lord Mayor’s Show in 2007 (now happening as a Carnival);
- Liverpool City of Culture 2008; and
- UK Olympics Programme 2008-2010.

Key elements of the Carnival Arts Development Programme included the development of community festival infrastructure. This included creating a pool of 20 artists training in carnival arts, 20 outreach workshops with community groups

\(^{30}\) Proposal for a Carnival Arts Development Programme June 2004:3
willing to participate in the Carnival Arts Programme which crossed the traditional divisions in the city. Setting the goal of achieving international standards was a key elements in the skills training (which also increased opportunities for young people to participate in carnival) and utilised international companies from Brazil, from Notting Hill Carnival “Bigga Fish”, visiting band “Moleque de Rua”, silk work with “Kinetika” carnival company from London on costumes, specialist drumming workshops and puppet making with Murphy Winters from Trinidad. Brazilian carnival artists visited Belfast and in 2007 a return visit was made to participate in and learn from Brazilian carnival.

Successes

One of the successes of the project is the role of carnival to transform public performance and contribute to creating a shared public space, based on a civic identity, in a city emerging from three decades of sustained conflict and conflicting identities. A further success of the project was promoting engagement with and between groups. Examples of the varied engagements achieved included:

- The New Lodge Festival increased its repertoire and included its first ever carnival parade.
- Stronger linkages were developed with Beechmount/St James in their participation in Feile an Phobail (West Belfast Festival).
- New linkages developed between communities in Inner East Belfast and in Sandy Row in South Belfast.
- The winter carnival - the Lantern Parade - hitherto occurred only in East Belfast and in 2006 the Beat began to stimulate similar activity in the North, South and West of the city.

The promotion of Good Relations was an explicit aim of the BCC Culture and Arts Plan 2003-2006 strategy: “to encourage cultural activity which is relevant and inclusive of all of Belfast’s identities, in line with the Good Relations
Strategy and this included encouraging participation by building sustainable cultural infrastructure in areas of low cultural activity. Belfast City Council took a proactive role to develop a carnival – a role fulfilled by the Arts Council in England. In the Belfast context, a carnival has played a role in addressing public performance which may be viewed as contested.

Other impacts included:

- The Beat Initiative - the lead partner – had a track record in carnival production increasingly recognised and utilised in other parts of Belfast.
- building on local indigenous art forms - such as drumming - was particularly successful;
- the development of local drumming groups, and skills workshops that attracted drummers from the predominantly Nationalist/Republican/Catholic and Unionist/Loyalist/Protestant communities;
- commitment to excellence and quality through learning from international carnival including exchange visits; and
- inviting international carnival arts to work with local groups and participation in European events.

Failures, Limits and Challenges

Challenges have been gaining recognition in the wider arts environment that carnival is part of the culture and arts agenda and of the importance of recognising that arts activity is legitimately shared between the city core and local neighbourhoods.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A variety of methods are used in the monitoring and evaluation of the project including: monitoring of the Belfast Carnival Arts Development Consortium, quarterly reports and formal external monitoring for BCC, evaluation reports, media coverage and post event monitoring to BCC Development Committee.

31 Belfast Capital City Culture and Arts Plan 2003-2006:15
Reflection and Learning

The Belfast Carnival Arts Development Consortium and the Belfast Festival Forum promoted the potential of shared carnival events in Belfast through the Carnival Arts Skills Development Programme. This accommodated the strong attachment to a localised approach:

- through a focus on locally organised festivals;
- utilising Carnival Showcase; and
- participation in a variety of events such as Cork 2005, Celebrate Belfast and Showcase 2006.

Supporting local carnival performances built on strong sense of locality, local pride and directly contributed to 645 participants (of whom 479 were local), in the Summer Carnival Showcase 2006 watched by an estimated 15,000 people32. Local festival community infrastructures were maintained through other funding streams.

The development of the Carnival Arts Consortium was inclusive. The lead partner was tasked to develop relationships with, engagement from and participation by all the local festival organisations in the city. The partners’ commitment to Belfast Carnival Arts Development Consortium sustained and developed carnival skills and was supported through a structured programme.

Sustainability

The planned rejuvenation of the Lord Mayor’s Show in 2008 - as an individual Belfast City Carnival - proposes to include local festival carnival performances from across the city. This is a major achievement for the groups involved in the carnival and the BCC Culture and Arts Unit because it re-invigorates the Lord Mayor’s Show and makes it more relevant to the changing city and furthermore strengthens the event by combining two events held in May and June. The Carnival Arts Skills Development Programme raised standards by bringing

32 Belfast City Council Culture and Arts Unit Celebrate Belfast 2006 “City Carnival Programme”
international expertise to a carnival in Belfast. Moreover, the 20 participants on
the ‘Training the Trainers’ have a sustainable legacy of carnival skills which is
now embedded in local communities. It can be used as a network to share
carnival development throughout the city.

Next Steps

The Belfast City Council Culture and Arts Plan 2003-2006 enabled the BCC
Culture and Arts Unit to fulfil the roles of leader, advocate, facilitator and mediator
with a range of stakeholders. This led to increased dialogue with the cultural
sector through informal mechanisms, consultation and key platforms such as the
Belfast Festivals Forum33 and the Carnival Arts Consortium. Belfast: An
Integrated Cultural Strategy (June 2007) has aligned the work of BCC with
statutory and non-statutory agencies and trusts, umbrella organisations and
flagship cultural organisations. It identified shared areas of work in Creating
Wealth by stimulating cultural product with the Belfast Festival Forum and cultural
sector thus generating increased numbers of visitors and income, in improving
quality of life by developing a programme of activity in public spaces which is
shared34. The development of a programme under the Belfast Capital City III
Strategy (2008 -2011) “Invigorate Public Spaces” aims “to develop culture and art
to make public spaces more people friendly and used and to develop the role of
festivals in making areas attractive35.

33 Belfast: An Integrated Cultural Strategy June 2007. Culture and Arts Unit, Development
Department Belfast City Council:33
35 Belfast Capital City III Strategy (2008 -2011) (draft)
Similar Projects

**Project Title: Development and Outreach Initiative**
Lead Body: Culture and Arts Unit, Belfast City Council

This initiative was piloted by Belfast City Council in 2002 with a budget of £140,000. The initiative was revised and allocated funding of £145,000 (2004/2005) and £150,000 (2005/2006) through the Council’s annual budget. It has encouraged partnership working between arts organisations and disadvantaged communities to breakdown barriers in accessing the arts. The initiative aimed to build skills, capacity and confidence in participating in arts activity while creatively support participants and communities to find their ‘voice’ in exploring their own and others identity.

**Project Title: Belfast City Council Memorabilia Project**
Lead Body: Good Relations Unit, Belfast City Council

In response to the work on community relations and cultural diversity initiated and developed by all the Council Sub-Committees, and the new statutory duties set out in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 a fourth corporate objective of Promoting Good Relations was added in January 2001. This complemented the existing objectives of Providing Civic Leadership, Delivering Best Services and Improving Quality of Life. The Memorabilia Project can be set within Belfast City Council’s Good Relations Strategy. Celebrating Cultural Diversity was one of the strategy’s four high level objectives.

In November 2000 the Cultural Diversity Sub-Committee agreed a number of priority actions. These included:
- The establishment of a Cultural Diversity Fund for cultural activities and events.
- A Council led programme to promote the shared history of an increasingly diverse city.
The development of initiatives on citizenship and civic pride, including events and exhibitions to reflect the different traditions in the city.

The establishment of mechanisms to facilitate engagement with minority racial and ethnic groups.

The review of criteria for use of the City Hall to ensure equality of opportunity for all groups.

The rotation of entertainment at Civic Functions to reflect the different traditions within the City and the extending of invitations to representatives of minority ethnic groups.

The Sub-Committee also discussed more difficult, contentious subjects including memorials and commemorations within the City Hall, languages, festivals and their funding, symbols, flags and emblems. While the Sub-Committee recognised that the existing memorials and other commemorative items on display were historically relevant, it was acknowledged that they were not reflective of the diversity of the City in either the past or the present. As a result, in 2002 the Good Relations Steering Panel which comprised Councillors, Officers of the Council and External Members considered an audit of the memorabilia in the City Hall and carried out a tour of the building. The Steering Panel agreed that its aim was to maximise the current display in an innovative way and to strive for more balance in the future.

An Advisory Panel of Experts from Queen’s University Belfast, Stranmills University College and the Ulster Museum was established with terms of reference to examine the artefacts and memorabilia currently on display within the public areas of the City Hall, keeping in mind the unique character of the City Hall. The Advisory Panel made recommendations to the Steering Panel on how to achieve a more balanced and inclusive display which represented the various aspects of former and contemporary life in Belfast. These recommendations were approved by the Council in early 2003 and led to the following actions. Belfast City Council renaming the two Committee Rooms - the Lavery and Conor Rooms - in honour of Sir John Lavery the noted society painter and William Conor the Belfast artist known for his depiction of working class Belfast life thus reflecting different
backgrounds and artist styles. New additions included a bust of Mary Ann McCracken, the eighteenth century radical Irish speaking Presbyterian woman, which helped address the gender balance. A window commemorating the 1907 Dockers Strike was unveiled which represented the working class people of the city. The Centenary Window celebrating 100 years of the City Hall represented among others writers, sports people and the Titanic ship built by Harland and Wolff. In addition, the functions rooms in the City Hall are now used by a wider range of groups with a policy based on Good Relations criteria, while entertainment at Civic Functions is rotated. This has helped increase cultural diversity in the use of the City Hall and specific events have included one celebrating the Chinese Community in Belfast, Islamic Awareness Week, a joint event on the Irish language and Ulster Scots, a poetry evening and the launch of Polish week. Similarly, recent exhibitions reflect this trend with exhibitions by “Pobal" the Irish language group, the Northern Ireland Museums Council exhibition on Cultural Diversity and a photographic exhibition “No Mean City” in 2007.
**Project Title:** Renewing the Routes  
**Lead Body:** Belfast City Council Development Department

**Contact Details**
Esther Broomfield - Belfast City Council Development Department  
Tel: 02890 270491  
Email: ebroomfield@belfastcity.gov.uk

**Organisations**

Renewing the Routes was initiated by Belfast City Council through its ‘Brighter Belfast Programme’ with an allocation of £1million from its Local Economic Development Plan. The partnership consists of representatives from the Belfast Area Partnerships, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and Belfast Regeneration Office. The Belfast Area Partnerships were identified as delivery agents to implement the programme in a service level agreement and BCC committed to Renewing the Routes as a city wide programme which will support regeneration of the routes as part of a wider neighbourhood renewal plan\textsuperscript{36}.

**Background to Project**

The Renewing the Routes Programme was shaped by the priorities set out in Capital City, the Local Economic Development Plan and the Belfast Masterplan (2004). Belfast City Council committed itself to support regeneration of the arterial routes as part of a wider neighbourhood renewal agenda. It employed an “interagency approach to enhancing the vitality of the main routes using integrated development plans for designated - physical locations - nodes”\textsuperscript{37}. In addition to spending by mainstream public agencies – NIHE, former North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Department of Social Development, Belfast Regeneration Office and the Department of Regional Development - it has drawn funding from European Union Funds and the Integrated Development Fund. Renewing the Routes “focused attention on the

\textsuperscript{36} Belfast City Council. The Development Brief. Issue 20. October 2004:1  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid:1
physical and economic decline of the arterial routes affected by depopulation, economic and environmental decline and social segregation”. It recognised that “the arterial roads and streets provide strong visual statements about the city’s character, its image and identity to visitors and local people” and many are located in areas of urban decay neighbourhoods characterised by high levels of unemployment, poor environment and stretched social infrastructure”38.

In Phase 1 (2003-2006), BCC allocated £3million over three years and additional funds were levered from URBAN II (£300,000) and BLSP Peace II (£320,000). In Phase II (2007-2009) the Integrated Development Fund (IDF) approved £4.1million. The programme has engaged with private sector land owners who make a 10% contribution to the overall costs. They also remain responsible for ongoing graffiti removal. Individual projects also levered additional funds.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

Renewing the Routes focused attention on inner and middle city areas. The City Council brokered a partnership approach. An initial study prioritised six routes for environmental improvement. Phase I focused on the Lower Antrim Road, the York Street/York Road, the Mid-Donegall Road, the Lower Newtownards Road, the Lower Falls, and the Lower Shankill Road. Phase II focused on the Lower Crumlin Road, the Lower Ormeau Road, the Albertbridge Road, the Upper Springfield Road and the Upper Shankill Road. The environmental improvements included the additional floodlighting of major buildings along the arterial routes such as churches and cemeteries, improvements to the signage of shop fronts, graffiti and mural removal, boundary enhancements including painting, landscaping and art along the arterial routes.

**Planning Stage**

The routes were audited and mapped using geographical information system (GIS). The objective criteria used to identify the priority areas for Phase I and

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Phase II included the physical, social, unemployment and the environmental character of the area. A fifth criterion - creativity was used as an indicator to ensure the work complemented other regeneration initiatives. Local identity was taken into account as each scheme was planned. The physical construction work involved was organised by and undertaken by the Council.

The Journey

Community consultation was carried out involving Renewing the Routes staff in each of the twelve locations in Phase I and Phase II. Access to each community was brokered through the Belfast Area Partnership Boards and local Councillors. There were strong manifestations of territoriality in the nodes identified for inclusion as these were located in areas affected by the conflict. Thus the consultation processes relied on local leadership which was capable of persuading their communities to embrace the process of changing and improving the area. Each scheme contained a mix of landowners - the Council, public sector, local traders and churches - who became involved.

Successes

Renewing the Routes attempted to address the legacy of fragmentation between neighbourhoods and city centre while simultaneously addressing local decline, depopulation and segregation. In terms of conflict transformation the majority of Phase I and Phase II nodes are interfaces/peace lines or are in close proximity to them.

Limits and Challenges

The sensitivities and local political agendas required the terms of reference of the Renewing the Routes project to be clearly articulated and for expectations to be managed. The commitment to working with local communities in addressing obstacles and difficulties is a significant feature of the programme. In order to
deliver the programme effectively. Renewing the Routes responds to different levels of community and technical capacity at partnership and community level. In addressing local circumstances in each neighbourhood the issues vary from community to community. In some instances this includes the limits on local leadership, lack of community cohesion and territoriality.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Internal evaluation and follow up discussions take place with the private land owners and traders and community groups who have been involved in developing the content at each location. A baseline has been established for Phase II which will include an attitudinal survey in 2007/2008 in the Phase II areas and a resurvey in 2009.

**Reflection and Learning**

Some of the key lessons that emerged from the project included:

- It was recognised that local communities were at the heart of efforts to renew the routes and therefore the programme had to work skilfully and knowledgeably with a range of partners and local communities by consulting on and agreeing achievable scheme content.
- In the course of developing and implementing the schemes relationships and trust were developed while working with the issues of territoriality.
- Renewing the Routes relied on local leaders with vision who could persuade their communities to “move on” while not over committing.
- There is no one standard approach and this scheme took into account the local context, the identity of each location and the variation in community capacity and leadership at each location.
- The experience of negotiating agreements with landowners, statutory and in particular private land owners, in order to deliver the programme has developed capacity within BCC.
Brokerage and delivery agents worked best when there was capacity to deliver and where prior consultation and prioritisation have been done with local stakeholders.

Renewing the Routes also created opportunities for communities to “bring something to the table” in wider discussions about major regeneration plans such as Crumlin Road and therefore supported the development of local capacity.

Sustainability

The integrated development plans for each node took the wider neighbourhood renewal agenda into account and the physical improvements sought to complete these. Moreover, BCC recognised that reinvigorating the arterial routes requires long term sustained action which cannot happen in isolation from social and economic regeneration.

Next Steps

The maintenance of Phase I schemes is problematic including the removal of graffiti. The potential to utilise social economy approaches to maintain Phase I and Phase II work could be usefully explored.

Similar Projects

Project Title: Art for Arterial Routes - Connecting the Communities of Belfast

The project was designed to complement Renewing the Routes and create temporary and permanent public art along the arterial routes by engaging communities in discussions about “new ways of looking at who we are and where we live”39. The discussions were facilitated in workshops with local community

39 Art for Arterial Routes Belfast City Council 2007
and youth groups by the BCC Artist in Residence and artists skilled in working with communities using community arts based approaches.

**Project Title: Re-imaging Communities Programme**

Lead Bodies: Shared Communities Consortium, Arts Council Northern Ireland

**Contact Details**

Joan Dempster – Re-imaging Communities, Arts Council Northern Ireland,
Tel: 02890 385200
Email: jdempster@artscouncil-ni.org

**Organisations Involved**

The Shared Communities is made up of representatives of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Department of Social Development, International Fund for Ireland, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Community Relations Council, SOLACE and Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. In addition PSNI acts in an advisory capacity. The Shared Communities Consortium is a response to ‘A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland’\(^{40}\) (March 2005) under the theme of “Tackling the Visible Manifestations of Sectarianism and Racism”. The First Triennial Action Plan 2006 – 2009 in April 2006 committed that “in collaboration with the community and other agencies” to “establish a programme of work to remove kerbstone painting, murals, flags and graffiti in public housing estates” by developing and implementing a “Re-Imaging Communities Programme through the Shared Communities Consortium”\(^{41}\).

**Background to Project**

The Re-imaging Communities Programme encourages the creation of vibrant and attractive shared public space through the use of the creative arts in the public

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realm, which will celebrate life, enhance the physical and natural environment and help people feel part of the community in which they live. Re-imaging Communities is rooted in the building of a shared future for Northern Ireland. While the programme is principally aimed at District Councils to develop and support their Good Relations Strategies and to build on work already undertaken in local communities and which enjoy broad community support, it is also open to formally constituted community and voluntary organisations. References are used to demonstrate that the proposal has the support of a public authority, ideally the local District Council or another public body such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Health & Social Services Trust or other bodies such as the Community Safety Partnership or Local Strategy Partnership. The three year programme commenced in 2006 with a total budget of £3 million.

Development and Implementation of the Project

Re-imaging involves working with artists, in a range of ways, from the creation of positive mural art to applied art (such as ceramics, decorative brickwork or mosaic) to three-dimensional sculpture, artistic light installation or the production of crafted street furniture. Re-imaging Communities is open to all communities which seek renewal and the reclamation of public space as well as arterial routes and public thoroughfares which belong to the wider community as a whole. The funding is used to encourage local communities to work creatively with artists in tackling the issues described above, connecting the arts to areas not usually associated with them and allowing art to enrich communities.

Planning Stage

Community Development Officers within the Re-imaging Communities Team provided advice on the appropriateness of proposed projects, answered queries concerning the completion of application forms and provided assistance in accessing funding under the programme. Groundwork Northern Ireland is available to provide technical assistance to help develop a proposal.
The Journey

Re-imaging communities identified five strategic themes - Shared Future, Community Relations, Community Cohesion, Regeneration through the Arts and Neighbourhood Renewal.

The support the programme provides includes:

- Support for cultural awareness and development of community based arts projects focussed on the public realm.
- Commissioning of public art for shared spaces.
- The removal of redundant symbols and emblems.
- Support for locally based charters which outline how communities plan to tackle negative perceptions of their areas in an integrated manner.
- The removal of aggressive sectarian/racist murals and graffiti.

Successes

Direct engagement with communities was a critical success factor. It is a requirement to obtain a statutory reference from the local council or a statutory or non-statutory agency. This helps to ensure interagency commitment to the programme. Moreover, the risk is the credibility to individual initiatives is increased. Consortium members bring their practical expertise to the consideration of applications. On approval of a recommendation to fund, a pre-project monitoring visit is arranged. During the project contact is maintained and discussion on future plans takes place at a post-project monitoring visit.

Key elements of success that were identified included:

- Careful preparation and planning before starting the work;
- The wide-ranging consultation within the community;
- Keeping the community informed and involved throughout.
- The artists had involved the community in their thinking, and had incorporated community ideas and activity into the final work.
Failures, Limits and Challenges

Communicating that the Re-imaging Communities was open to all communities and was not concerned only with re-imaging Loyalist/Unionist communities was an initial difficulty.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Re-imaging Communities is managed by the Arts Council Northern Ireland and progress is reported on a quarterly basis to the Consortium. An independent evaluation was commissioned in 2007.

Reflection and Learning

The overall improvement in the political climate has made Re-imaging Communities possible. Moreover communities have indicated their willingness to engage in the process and to search for alternative expressions of culture and identity. Nonetheless the processes involved remain sensitive to external events. The evidence from those projects that have completed, or nearly completed, is that remarkable achievements are possible within communities, through a process that taps into and validates the deep-rooted, often hidden, sense of identity of people with where they live and its past. The process has usually involved collaboration between an artist and the community in the design and production of an image or product that provides a focal point within the area, and that has meaning, resonance and a sense of ownership for those who live there, as well as for many within the wider community.

Sustainability

The project development process and consultation supports community ownership and empowerment particularly where community capacity is more limited. The role of Development Staff in supporting groups and projects to
deliver an initial project creates the relationships and trust to engage communities further in using arts as a regeneration tool and in locating alternative expressions of culture and identity.
Children and Young People

Case Studies

Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility

Schools Community Relations Programme and

Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme
Project Title: Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility
Lead Bodies: North Belfast Play Forum, Belfast City Council

Contact Details
Billy Wylie - Manager, Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility
Tel: 028 90754200
Email: waterworksport@btconnect.com

Organisations Involved
North Belfast Play Forum, Belfast City Council Parks and Leisure Department, Sports Council Northern Ireland, Probation Board Northern Ireland, Comic Relief, schools, community and youth groups throughout North Belfast.

Background to Project
Residents who were concerned with increasing issues of drug use and safety in the Waterworks Park, convened a number of community meetings at which it was agreed to develop a community based approach:
- to engaging with young people;
- to address the lack of sports facilities available in North Belfast; and
- to restore the sense of safety with which residents could use the Park.

Located in North Belfast the communities living around the Park reflected the diversity of North Belfast. Like many areas of North Belfast, the areas next to the Waterworks Park had experienced high levels of violence and social and economic decline. It is against this context that the North Belfast Play Forum was established in the unused Waterworks tennis courts located at the junction of the Cavehill, Antrim and Limestone Roads. The development of the project was an outcome of the work of the Children and Young People’s Project Worker Marion De Frinse, who was funded by BBC Children in Need and employed by the Community Development Centre, North Belfast.
The North Belfast Play Forum aims to develop the community through sport and develop sport through the community. The facility which opened in June 2000, consists of a floodlit, multipurpose sports facility with three five-a-side courts, three basketball courts, one seven-a-side court and three netball courts based on an area of 70 x 35 metres. It can also be used for various other sports. The development has been made possible by the lease of the site from Belfast City Council. The capital costs were funded by Sports Lottery and Belfast European Partnership Board (EU Peace I Funds). Belfast City Council also agreed to provide annual assistance of £15,000 per annum and to maintain the facility. Annual funding is also provided by Probation Board NI, and funding totalling £28,000 over four years have been awarded by Sports NI (formerly Sports Council NI). This has enabled the development of a coaching programme and inter-community activities.

Midnight soccer was piloted with funding from the Probation Board Northern Ireland. Following its success Sport Relief has committed £350,000 to fund Midnight Soccer for four years from December 2006 to December 2011 as a Northern Ireland wide 15 centre programme located in designated areas of disadvantage and tension.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

The Waterworks utilises the sports development model in its outreach strategy, planning and programme development. Activities are based on the Long Term Athlete Programme. The facility uses a mix of schools programmes, competitions, leagues, and casual use to ensure day, evening, weekend and summer use. New programmes are developed through community consultation and piloted before being further developed. In addition to strengthening the existing partnerships with community groups, youth groups, schools, young people, people with disabilities and women, new links are sought to ensure sustainable sporting opportunities are created. In line with Section 75(1)
underrepresented groups such as young people with learning difficulties and girls have been specifically targeted. The range of programmes offered includes:

- Midnight Soccer (14-17 years) on Saturday nights 9.00pm -12.00am;
- Community Sports Schools Programme with 14 schools funded for 4 years combining elements of introducing new sports to schools, fair play tournaments, skills, healthy eating and lifestyles;
- Girls Sports Programme with female coaches from local soccer clubs Cliftonville and Crusaders funded by participants contributing a £1 a week and the voluntary time of coaches;
- Cross Community Football Club (16-17 years);
- six week long Summer Intervention Programme (for 303 young people aged 6-14 years, catering for 125 participants per day) including soccer, Gaelic football and multi-sports as voted on by the participants and a festival week; and
- a charity adult 8-a-side Sunday afternoon league.

**Planning Stage**

A full range of policies and procedures including health, child protection, anti bullying, recruiting volunteers, confidentiality, equality, community relations and conflict resolution were developed and shared with other groups. Young people and parents participating have been encouraged to train as coaches and employed on a session or full time basis by the Waterworks and other centres. The training programme took into account the unique purpose and location of the Waterworks by incorporating into the programme community relations and conflict resolution modules for delivery with young people.

**The Journey**

The facility has a track record of working with communities throughout Northern Ireland through developing Midnight Soccer. The Waterworks facility has reacted flexibly to offer programmes for specific groups of young people beginning to
engage in rioting thus ‘nipping it in the bud’. Any inter community difficulties encountered in the facility are quickly addressed by coaches using the community relations and conflict resolution inputs. Links have been developed with the Irish Football Association, the Red Card project (boys against bigotry) and links have also been developed between youths from particularly persistent interface areas such as Ardoyne, Glenbryn and Westland in North Belfast, and between Highfield and Springfield Road in West Belfast, with groups in South Belfast, and with Ocean Youth Club in the lead up the 2009 Tall Ships visit to Belfast.

**Successes**

In 2006 there were 100,000 users which is recognition of the role of the Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility in meeting the need for accessible sports facilities by the communities and young people.

The social benefits in terms of increased self esteem, self discipline, the effectiveness of leagues, evening and midnight soccer and summer programmes in reducing crime, and improved attitudes to the ‘Other’ group are thought to be substantial but require detailed evaluation.

**Failures, Limits and Challenges**

Failures are avoided by a policy of piloting new programmes for short periods. Securing funding to recruit sufficient staff to meet both need and demand is a challenge. The project is limited in its activities by the size of the facility. Adequate warm changing rooms and showers would help to attract corporate business and support the sustainability of the Waterworks.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monthly reports, annual review and development of sports development plans, reports to funders, and the operation of a Junior Committee of users.
Reflection and Learning

The following points were identified:

- The flexibility and continued outreach to communities to develop and create new partnerships in responding to community needs.
- The Waterworks facility has maintained a high profile through actively using posters, flyers and articles in local newspapers.
- There is a commitment to ensure the facilities are accessible to both communities including willingness to bus young people to the facility if necessary.
- The commitment of the locally based North Belfast Play Forum committee ensures the young people and the community stays at the heart of the Waterworks.
- The social benefit for young people from participation in sport.
- The success of diversionary programmes in diverting young people away from anti social or interface violence in a context of recurring high levels of tension in North Belfast and at interfaces.
- The policy of piloting all new programmes to test interest and refresh existing programmes has maintained a high level of participation.

Sustainability

The Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility developed a financial model based on full cost recovery at its inception by including the cost of equipment, coaching and training, operating costs and administration in its proposals for funding. The Waterworks Multi-Sports facility is now developing into a Social Enterprise.
Next Steps

Having maintained a high level of use since 2000, the facilities now require capital injection to update and replace as necessary in order to maintain and further enhance use.

Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRP) and Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme (YSCRSS)

Contact Details
Geraldine McGreevy Senior Youth Officer Community Relations Belfast Education and Library Board
Tel: 028 9056 4059

Websites: www.belb.org.uk
The Community Relations in Schools website contains toolkits for schools and the youth service www.ceni.org

Organisations Involved

The Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards (NIELB), schools, youth and community groups and the Department of Education.

Background to Project

In the context of Northern Ireland as a deeply divided and contested society the programmes promote positive relations between children and young people. The purpose of the programmes (funded by the Department of Education) is to provide practical opportunities for young people to develop an awareness and understanding of religious, cultural and political diversity by offering progressive levels of participation. The model of effective practice developed by the boards represents an agreed and consistent approach and identifies the promotion and acceptance of others as a core principle and highlights equity or fairness, diversity
or valuing difference and interdependence or developing relationships as overarching aims\(^42\).

The Schools Community Relations Programme and Youth Service Community Relations Scheme have been developed by the Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards. Responsibility for community relations was devolved by the Department of Education to the five Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards which took responsibility for the schools programme in 1976 and the youth service programme in 1991. At a legislative level a statutory duty to deliver Education of Mutual Understanding (EMU) in every school was established through the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989. In 2005 the Department of Education revised the community relations policy taking on board the desirability of promoting good relations in Section 75(2) and the Shared Future Policy agenda.

In the BELB area the annual budget for each programme is outlined below. The Schools Community Relations Programme in 06/07 supported 125 programmes in 77 schools accessing in the region of 6,000 children and receiving funding of £235,000. The Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme in 06/07 delivered 410 programmes to 270 groups and received £315,000 and attracted 20,000 young people. The two programmes are complemented by DE funding of 26 core funded groups specialising in work with children and young people, community relations and citizenship thus providing facilitation and animation to support and augment both programmes.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

On assuming responsibility for the community relations programmes, the Boards established at officer level the Schools Inter- Board Community Relations Support Panel. It developed a common framework enabling the Boards to take a

\(^42\) Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme, Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards
consistent approach to supporting community relations work with children and young people, re-branding the programmes, publishing common guidelines, criteria and selection. In addition the Support Panel has developed a range of guidance on:

- Whole School Development;
- Promoting a Classroom Climate;
- Approaches and Methodologies;
- Participatory Learning Experiences;
- Community Relations and the Revised Curriculum;
- Developing Community Relations Programmes;
- Example Programmes;
- Evaluation; and
- in 2006 Schools Community Relations Programme: A Guide to Effective Practice.\(^\text{43}\)

All guidance is available on the website developed by the Inter Board Support Panel.

**Planning Stage**

Community Relations in Schools provides financial assistance to schools for the development of programmes which are designed to promote improvement of community relations between schools and simultaneously support EMU. Each programme includes up to six funded activities, a minimum two of which must be school based. The range of activity includes group work, team work, drama, music, art, circle time and out of school activities.

The development of the Schools Community Relations Programme to meet the Government’s Good Relations Policy as set out in a Shared Future (OFMDFM 2005) and to embed community relations in the revised curriculum, is reflected in the publication of A Guide to Effective Practice (in primary and post primary schools). This locates community relations in primary schools in Strand 1 –

\(^{43}\) Developing Community Relations Practice [www.creni.org](http://www.creni.org)
Personal Understanding and Health and Strand 2 - Mutual Understanding in the Local and Global. At post primary level this is further developed in the area of Local and Global Citizenship.

The Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme depends entirely on voluntary take-up to support community relations in youth and community settings and enables groups to access funding to develop and progress community relations in three stages: foundation work, issues work and conflict resolution.

Similarly the Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme enables participants to progress through an introduction to the concept of community relations and prepare them for interaction and at the third stage to addressing sensitive issues. The issues addressed at stage two are:

- customs and tradition;
- identity;
- stereotyping and life styles; and
- gaining greater knowledge.

The expected outcomes include:

- a greater awareness of each other’s community and environment;
- a positive appreciation of difference and understanding of interdependence; and
- increased ability to express opinions within a group.

The issues addressed at stage three are:

- cultural traditions;
- anti-sectarianism;
- politics;
- history;
- prejudice reduction;
- justice and rights; and
- mediation skills.

The expected outcomes include:

- gaining a greater understanding of cultural traditions and the influence of prejudice; and
- the confidence to contribute to positive community relations within their own community.

In 1998 during the Drumcree protests the Department of Education agreed a new focus (this was with BELB) and included summer interface programmes - to divert children and young people from becoming involved in interface violence. This was supported under the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme. This also had the effect of bringing the programme to the attention of youth and community groups some of whom subsequently applied successfully to develop community relations programmes on an ongoing basis.

**The Journey**

Training in community relations work for youth workers - full and part time - and managers has emerged in order to develop capacity to support the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme. The adoption of the inter-related principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (EDI) into the ethos, policies and programmes of the organisations which make up youth services has supported the development of accredited training. Specifically, in all five Education and Library Boards, there is now a suite of accredited training available which will help volunteers, part-time and full-time youth workers, managers and policy makers to employ the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence. This includes: Introduction to Community Relations Work – An Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Training Programme, Northern Ireland Open College Network (Level 2), Programme Development for introductory CR/EDI work with young people, Community Relations/EDI for practitioners working with young people (OCN Level 3, Advanced Programme) and EDI Strategic Planning course for senior personnel/managers. The latter is accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). In 2006/2007 twelve managers from the voluntary and statutory youth sectors completed the EDI Strategic Planning course.
The best practice guidance issued in 2006 by the Schools Community Relations Support Panel reiterates that at the post primary level community relations should feature in the School Development Plan and “be subject to the same process of planning, monitoring and implementation and self evaluation as are applied to all areas of the curriculum”\(^{44}\). The proposed strategy to support teachers involved in the Schools Community Relations Programme is based on including community relations work in schools in the context of the School Improvement Plan.

Two new areas of work with the potential to become new models of practice involving parents, nursery and primary schools have been piloted. Ninety percent of nursery schools in Belfast drawn from the controlled and maintained sectors have participated in a community relations programme. Parents whose children participate in the Schools Community Relations Programme have undertaken a parents’ programme supported by Belfast Metropolitan Colleges (BMC) in two East Belfast Primary Schools. They have completed NIOCN accredited training at level 1. As a result of working together and visiting each other’s schools they have increased their understanding and are open to community relations work. These initiatives have also received support in terms of funding from Parents and Children Together (PACT) “Promoting a Culture of Trust”.

**Successes**

- Commitment and relationships between school principals in partner schools are critical to the success of community relations programmes in schools.
- Since 1997 The Inter-Board Youth Service Community Relations Support Panel promoted consistency, support and guidance, and training through the Joined up Equity Diversity and Interdependence Initiative (JEDI).
- EDI principles have been embedded in both the schools and youth programmes extending the community relations work to include more diverse

\(^{44}\) Schools Community Relations Programme A Guide to Effective Practice. Community Relations Review Implementation Panel 2006
groupings in Section 75(1) and take up of training in community relations practice has been encouraging.

- Teachers in schools continued to run programmes and attend conferences despite the absence of sub cover in 2004/2005.
- Appointment of field staff to support school, youth and community groups.
- Summer diversionary activities has contributed to a lessening of violence involving children and young people at interfaces during particularly difficult periods such as the Drumcree and Holy Cross School.
- Extended take up of the Youth Service Community Relations Programme by groups based in interface communities that initially accessed the programme to fund summer diversionary activities.
- Funding of community relations work in its totality has required finance from a range of different organisations and grant schemes and this has also supported schools and youth/community groups.
- Research identified in the first Shared Future Triennial Action Plan has been widened to identify the training needs of teachers and youth workers for community relations work.
- Pilot work with parents has been successful in overcoming resistance to community relations work in the schools their children attend.

**Failures, Limits and Challenges**

- School funding for Sub cover of teaching staff engaged in Schools Community Relations Programme was re-introduced at a lower level in 2005/2006 following no Sub cover in 2004/05.
- Financial year end of the Schools Community Relations Programme does not dovetail with school planning and implementation.
- Insufficient funding for either programme creates reliance on a cocktail of funding.
Monitoring and Evaluation

Guidance on self evaluation pertinent to both programmes has been distributed via the community relations in schools website. Schools and youth and community groups are required to complete self evaluation for each completed programme before a further application is made. The evaluations focus on effective strategies in meeting objectives, the contribution to community relations made within and between schools, difficulties encountered and future plans. An evaluation of the Youth Service Community Relations Support programme was undertaken in 2001 by Capita.

Reflection and Learning

The Shared Future policy provides an important platform to secure government commitment to community relations work with children and young people and to the development of a whole school approach. It has the potential to lever the visibility necessary to support teachers and young people. It could also lead to increased information sharing and co-ordination among the range of funders and stakeholders.

The work needs to become more visible and less reliant on individual teachers and youth/community staff. Young people visiting each other’s schools are still subject to negative incidents as they are identified as ‘other’ by their school uniforms. Tackling these issues requires a larger demonstrable commitment by school boards of management. This would see a greater focus on organisational practice and commitment from schools as envisaged in the proposed strategy in relation to the inclusion of community relations in the School Improvement Plan and in youth/community group management.

While introductory or foundation work was important in engaging schools, community and youth groups in community relations programmes, a new

approach is needed to deepen and extend the relations work with children and young people. The connection between community relations in schools and youth/community groups and the communities’ children and young people inhabit needs to be further explored and addressed.

Partnership funding through DE, IDF, IFI, Co-operation Ireland and others has been critical but increased information sharing could lead to the avoidance of duplication and greater co-ordination in strategy and grant making.

**Sustainability**

In the context of a deeply divided society, conflict transformation requires a willingness of people to engage with each other, to be prepared to listen and acknowledge difference. Building trust and working relationships to support community relations work with children and young people is a work in progress.

**Next Steps**

It is envisaged community relations in school and youth settings will develop through supporting organisational practice. In schools this means developing a whole school approach with the Board of Management fully involved and integrated into School Improvement Plans. Through the revised curriculum Local and Global Citizenship schools may be able to integrate community relations into the School Development Plan. In youth settings securing similar support may be supported through the practice training with managers and full time staff. Through the structures underpinning school clusters and the Extended Schools programme community relations work between communities and schools may become more visible and aligned.
Community Cohesion

Case Studies

Traveller Health and Community Outreach

Cultural Diversity Project
Project Title: Traveller Health Outreach Project

Lead Body: The Royal Hospitals

Contact Details
Veronica McEneaney - Health and Social Inequalities Manager, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Tel: 028 9063 5266
Email: veronica.mceneaney@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Organisations Involved

The four Royal Hospitals – Royal Victoria, Royal-Jubilee Maternity, Children’s and Dental Hospital employ 7,500 staff. In response to the increased cultural diversity in Northern Ireland and to meet its obligations under Section 75(1) Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, the Royal Hospitals established the Royal Health and Social Inequalities Steering Group chaired by the Chief Executive and included promoting good relations in the Annual Management Plan. This commits the Royal Hospitals to an annual Equality Action Plan, commented upon by the Equality Commission and signed off by the Chief Executive.

The Royal Health and Social Inequalities Steering Group identified four strands for action: staff, communities, ethnic minorities and regional. The ethnic minorities strand led to the establishment of the Traveller Health Information Project in partnership with An Munia Tober (the Belfast Travellers Support Group).

Background to Project

The involvement of the Royal Hospitals in the North and West Belfast Health Action Zone Traveller Action Group provided the opportunity for the Royal Hospitals to develop formal contact between the Royal Hospitals and the Traveller community in West Belfast. The aim of the Traveller Health Outreach Project was to improve the general health of the Traveller community whilst also empowering...
Travellers’ to take positive action to address their health needs. The Traveller Health Outreach Project was funded by the Department of Social Development (DSD) Outreach Fund under the Peace II Building Sustainable Communities Measure. It was a three year project and completed in March 2007.

**Development and Implementation of the Project**

The project was informed by the cross departmental Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) Working Group on Travellers (2000) which highlighted Travellers’ poor social and economic circumstances, and poor health outcomes. The partner organisation - An Munia Tober - had focused on health working with statutory and other organisations as a result of its original Community Health Project (2001) which was mainstreamed in 2004. Consultation was also undertaken with the Health Action Zone Traveller Working Group, Traveller Support Workers and Travellers.

**Planning Stage**

The project was designed in consultation with Travellers who prioritised:

- The need for the project to be designed in such a way as to ensure that information was disseminated into the Traveller community in order to improve Travellers access to health services generally.
- The need for a health needs assessment undertaken by Travellers.
- The recruitment of eight women from the Belfast Greater Traveller Community as Lay Health Mentors (LHM) for whom a LHM training programme was developed and facilitated by An Munia Tober.

This led to:

- An OCN Level 1 Accredited Family Health and Learning Course (adapted from a model developed by Pavee Point, Dublin) delivered by the Belfast Metropolitan College.

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46 Traveller Health Outreach Project Evaluation March 2007 Brian Stratford and Associates
- A City and Guilds Literacy course.
- A Health and History course delivered by UNISON.

A health needs assessment undertaken by three research assistants from the Traveller community using focus groups, and a questionnaire survey of the health needs of traveller men. A steering group for the project was established and comprised An Munia Tober, the former North and West Belfast HSS Trust and staff from the Royal Hospitals.

**The Journey**

The project included visits to The Royal Hospitals to allow a two-way exchange of information between Travellers and hospital staff about services. Speakers on the Family Health and Learning course were drawn from specialist health units in the Royal Hospitals and the North and West Belfast HSS Trust including accident and emergency, anti natal, dental and mental health, family and children’s health and a range of voluntary organisations such as CRUSE Bereavement, Women’s Aid and the Chest Heart and Stroke Association.

A staff survey identified training and information needs which included attitudes to Travellers. This led to awareness and information training delivered solely by Travellers on Traveller Culture in an atmosphere that created the space for open and honest communication where no offence was taken or given.

**Successes**

The Royal Hospital Equality Scheme has incorporated the action plan developed by the Traveller Health Outreach Project. The project is an example of the Royal Hospitals work going over and beyond compliance with the legislative requirements. Impacts included:

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47 Perceptions of Health and Health Services by the Traveller Community September 2005
MMMA Consultancy
This was the first time men from the Traveller community were successfully included in a health needs assessment.

Intercultural learning took place which resulted in staff becoming more aware of the need for sensitivity and increased communication about treatments.

The staff survey was used to identify training and information needs about Travellers health and culture and the subsequent training was delivered solely by Travellers.

The awareness raising sessions and the linkages developed with Travellers have led to increased outreach to Travellers by specialist units.

The feedback has been very positive from staff, project participants and Travellers using services.

**Failures, Limits and Challenges**

The major challenge faced by the project was developing the partnership between the Royal Hospitals as a large public agency and An Munia Tober as the voluntary organisation that employed and managed the LHM's. This necessitated taking into account the different cultures, methods of work and varying approaches of both. It required clear terms of reference for the partnership, clarity about roles and responsibilities and the willingness to negotiate and build relationships.

The challenge in developing the project was to overcome the discrimination against Travellers identified in research by Connolly and others48. In order to be successful the project had to tackle the perceptions and realities of discrimination experienced by Travellers in using Royal Hospitals services and to address negative attitudes to Travellers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Reports are made to Trust Board, Management team, Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (NI) and the Equality Commission. The Royal Hospitals won the BT and Northern Ireland Business in the Community Award for Corporate Responsibility for the Traveller Health Outreach Project in March 2007. Such competitions assist the Royal Hospitals in benchmarking and profiling good relations work.

Reflection and Learning

It was important the work was informed by research through the Health Needs Assessment. The field work was undertaken by the Traveller community and this resulted in greater depth and travellers’ identification and ownership of their health issues. This method of organising the health needs assessment meant that Traveller men were included in a health needs assessment for the first time, and issues such as domestic violence and breast feeding were owned by the community.

Sustainability and Next Steps

The influence of the project will continue through the Belfast Trust Traveller Action Plan. The action plan identifies men’s health, the effectiveness of the Lay Health Mentor, ethnic monitoring, cultural awareness training, funding for Traveller health initiatives and future delivery of health services to Travellers.
Similar Projects

Project Title: “A Royal Reception” Outreach and Information Days
Lead Body: The Royal Hospitals

In order to improve access to services and employment and to promote good relations, outreach and information days in local communities were organised. The Royal Hospitals organised two information days in May 2005 in the Sandy Row and Donegall Road areas. The days were planned in partnership with Belfast City Council Community Development Workers and South Belfast Highway to Health. The events aimed to introduce services and employment opportunities at The Royal Hospitals to communities who may not have been aware of them. Royal Jubilee Maternity Service, the Royal Children’s Hospital Play Department, Health Promotion, Human Resources and Equal Opportunities Departments held information workshops. Attended by about 80 people, the Royal Hospitals profiled Royal-Jubilee Maternity and the Children’s Hospitals, partnered with community based health services to focus on poor health, diet and nurse services. 83% of participants stated that their view of The Royal Hospitals was more positive as a result of the Outreach Days. It is anticipated that further outreach days will be organised.

Project Title: Staff Diversity Group
Lead Body: The Royal Hospitals

The Equality Steering Group comprising Management and Trade Unions was established and agreed to undertake a good relations audit of the Royal Hospitals. Advice was sought from the Futureways Unit at the University of Ulster and the Community Relations Council. A series of staff and trade union dialogue groups on good relations in the workplace were held. The Staff Diversity Group which reflected the diversity of the workforce (eight percent of staff with minority ethnic background) was identified as good practice in the good relations audit.
In the Staff Diversity Group, staff and Trade Union representatives address on an on-going basis issues of racial harassment occurring inside and outside the Royal Hospitals and promote sources of support through the Royal Hospitals magazine, intranet and other media.

An Ethnic Minority Forum has been established and an Action Plan developed. Royal Hospitals staff from ethnic minority backgrounds have contributed to initiatives promoting good relations in partnership with Trade Unions and community groups. This has included giving talks at events in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Eastern Health & Social Services Board and Belfast City Council.
**Project Title: Cultural Diversity Project**  
Lead Body: Belfast Metropolitan College

**Contact Details**  
Paul O’Connor - Head of Department, Department of Informational and Student Services  
Tel: 028 90 6 5125  
Robin Nesbitt  
Tel: 028 9026 5110  
Email: robinnesbitt@belfastmet.ac.uk  
Sheena Carville  
Email: shennacarville@belfastmet.ac.uk  
Website: http://www.belfastinstitute.ac.uk/cultural_diversity/

**Organisations Involved**

Codes of Good Practice for Students and Staff were developed in partnerships with The Indian Community Centre, The Islamic Community Centre, Belfast Travellers and Education Group, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), The Equality Commission, The Chinese Welfare Association, Counteract, Disability Action, Department of Employment and Learning, The National Union of Students – Union of Students of Ireland (NUS-USI), The Police Service of Northern Ireland and The Association of Northern Ireland Colleges.

**Background to Project**

The Cultural Diversity Project was planned by the Belfast Institute (now Belfast Metropolitan College) in order to reflect the increased cultural diversity in Northern Ireland and to meet its obligations under Section 75(1) Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, and to review policies and procedures in the light of the proposed amalgamation of Castlereagh College and Belfast Institute. The Cultural Diversity Project was developed as a pilot with £50,000 from the Department of Employment and Learning. The project developed as a
pilot between March 2004 and March 2005. Additional funding was provided to implement the pilot from October 2006 to December 2007. Further funding was made available from January to March 2008.

Development and Implementation of the Project

The Cultural Diversity Project\textsuperscript{49} was developed to ensure fairness and respect for difference was placed at the heart of policy and practice so that BMC remains an inclusive environment for learning and teaching. The number and expectations of international students and the increased numbers of students with limited or no experience of difference informed the project. BMC had already committed to reviewing its systems and procedures in the light of these changes. It was initiated in the Senior Management Team and drew together a number of like minded colleagues, including the International Office, which in turn led to the establishment of a project team which reviewed policies, procedures, staff development, and the curriculum and student activity at a strategic level.

Planning Stage

The project commenced with a research stage which included compiling the breakdown of ethnic minority students for 2004-2005 – Afro Caribbean(19), African(55), Indian(48), Pakistani(21), Chinese(185), Irish Traveller(24), Mixed other (66) and other (146). Ethnic minority students participated in the quantitative questionnaire and the qualitative focus group. This informed the initial themes for the drama production – the feeling of strangeness, prejudice and racial attacks, and feelings of apathy towards the authorities. The needs of students led to a partnership with the Belfast Metropolitan College Students Union (a member of NUS-USI) in developing the Student Induction Programme for approximately 1,800 full time students.

\textsuperscript{49} Cultural Diversity: Pilot Project Report (2005) Belfast Metropolitan College
The Journey

A Cultural Diversity Report, Student Induction Trainers Pack and two Codes of Good Practice - one for students and one for staff - were produced. The inclusion of cultural diversity in the Student Induction Programme was piloted and standardised. A separate website linked to the Belfast Metropolitan College site hosts the codes of good practice, photo gallery and video clips, provides a “blackboard” for students to access and complete the student induction programme, and provides information/texts on diverse cultures and resources to deliver the student induction programme.

During the development of the project contact was maintained with a significant number of groups and partnerships involving ethnic minority groups. The Performing Arts production, the drama “Darky” set in a rural Northern Ireland mushroom farm, written and facilitated by Damian Gorman, planned and performed by second year HND students in the Performing Arts was made into a video. This was distributed to departments to enhance and sustain the student induction process.

The second phase focused on mainstreaming the activity, engaging in staff development, encouraging student participation, embedding curriculum initiatives and enhancing policy and procedure with regard to cultural diversity.

Successes

Critical success factors underpinning the Cultural Diversity Project included the commitment of senior staff and the use of the Learning Support Group structure to embed the learning across the Belfast Metropolitan College. The research and findings on the number of international and ethnic minority students and the growth in English language classes enabled the College to think about how it should respond. The project was also timely as the Belfast Institute for Further and Higher Education and Castlereagh College were set to amalgamate which
required policies and procedures to be reviewed. The broadening of the student constituency, particularly students from China helped to create a focus for the project.

The impacts of the project included:

- The establishment of the International Office.
- The production of a *Student Induction Trainer’s Pack* which includes a series of interactive exercises on the feeling of strangeness, prejudice awareness, inclusive language in relation to ethnic groups, disability and gender.
- The promotion of clubs and societies for ethnic minority students which also provided a forum for students to liaise with the Senior Management Team.
- Home stay was identified as the preferred option for accommodation for International Students and this has now been implemented.
- The inclusion of practical information such as setting up a bank account in employer based English Languages classes.

**Failures, Limits and Challenges**

With ambitious targets set for the project, it has been important that the Department of Employment and Learning provided six months additional funding to deliver the training to academic and support staff across the organisation.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

A Cultural Diversity Advisory Group was established to steer the project and the Project Manager reported quarterly to it against the targets set for the project. The impact of the project is evaluated with staff and student focus groups and within the quality assurance systems. The Department of Education’s Education and Training Inspectorate report commended the quality of the project. The Sunday Times profiled the project favourably.
Reflection and Learning

The commitment to the project - from the Senior Management Team which is filtered to the academic departments through the Learning Support Group in which Senior Lecturers meet five times per year – was critical and ensures ongoing engagement in the project. The Cultural Diversity Report set out suggested milestones for enhancing existing Cultural Diversity Programmes. These are:

- To establish close working partnerships with relevant government bodies and community groups.
- To conduct a literature review on relevant government reports and legislation.
- To secure Senior Management Support.
- To conduct research among student and staff focus groups to ascertain current trends, views and opinions.
- To collate research findings to determine needs of the organisation in terms of cultural diversity.
- To develop Codes of Good Practice and policies based on your research findings and in consultation with staff and student groups, as well as relevant specialists in your organisation. The support and expertise of partners and government bodies is needed at this stage.
- To plan and deliver all staff and student training with a particular emphasis on induction and embedding Cultural Diversity throughout the training programme.
- To encourage the establishment of staff forums where issues can be raised, discussed and brought to Senior Management Team.
- To facilitate the organisation of culturally diverse events by students and staff throughout the year.

Sustainability

Training has been focused on student induction and embedding Cultural Diversity in the student induction training programme using the “Student Induction Trainers
Pack”. The sustainability of the programme has also been supported through the development of *Codes of Good Practice* for staff and students with print and website resources - to support cultural diversity. Belfast Metropolitan College has sought and obtained a further six months funding to fully implement and embed the project with full time students.

**Next Steps**

The work of Cultural Diversity Project has now been disseminated through the Association of Northern Ireland College Network through the project reports, codes of good practice, website and the videos. BMC’s approach is being promoted by the Department of Employment and Learning as the model approach to supporting cultural diversity in further education colleges.
Advisory and Building Partnerships

Case Studies

International Fund for Ireland

Community Relations Council
Project Title: International Fund for Ireland

Lead Bodies: The governments of United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the European Union

Contact Details
PO Box 2000 Belfast BT4 1WD
Website: www.internationalfundforireland.com

Organisations Involved

The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) was established in 1986 by the Irish and British Governments “to promote economic and social advance and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland”50. The seven person Board is appointed by the two Governments to develop the Fund’s direction and strategic priorities and make the decisions to financially support particular projects. The work of the Board is supported by a Secretariat comprising Joint (North/South) Directors General and staff, seconded from the respective Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland Civil Services.

The IFI works independently of but complementary to the Northern and Southern government departments. In the North, the Fund works closely with senior civil servants primarily from the Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development, Social Development, Enterprise Trade and Investment and Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. These working arrangements are reflected through the Inter-Governmental Advisory Committee jointly chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Secretary General, Department of Finance (ROI) which offers advice to the Board. The Board, considers all projects recommended for funding by the respective Programme Teams, Designated Board Members and the Advisory Committee and takes all decisions relating to the financial support of projects.

50 International Fund for Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2005:1
Background to Project

The IFI was established following the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement to utilise social and economic intervention as a vehicle for addressing disadvantage and promoting contact, dialogue and reconciliation in a deeply divided and segregated society that was continuing to experience significant levels of violence, community tensions and high levels of mistrust. Its geographical focus was on Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties. The social and economic thrust of the Fund took into account the high levels of unemployment, high levels of disadvantage, relatively low levels of economic activity and the struggling commercial life of urban centres, towns and villages.

The founding agreement specified that the IFI was “to be independent of government”. The Board is appointed by the Irish and British Governments and the EU and the Governments of the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are represented at meetings of the Board by their appointed observers. The IFI, because of the way in which it is established, is not a statutory organisation but it is an important partner with the statutory agencies, the public sector and project promoters. It is not subject to the parliamentary public accounts committee processes and it has the flexibility to work with projects - particularly those of a high risk - over a number of years to overcome obstacles and to bring projects to fruition. Its accountability and transparency is rooted in the Board, Designated Board Members, Observers appointed by the donor countries, Advisory Committee, Programme Teams, Secretariat and the Fund’s annually audited accounts and reports.

Development and Implementation of the Project

The activities supported by the Fund have included:

- **Community Relations**, with funding through the Community Bridges Programme, supporting contact dialogue and reconciliation;
- Communities in Transition;
• Integrating Education and work with children and young people through the Wider Horizons Programme’s work experience projects;
• Learning and Educating Together, Knowledge through Enterprise for Youth and special community projects.
• Regeneration of Deprived Areas through the Rural Development Programme, Community Regeneration and Improvement Special Programme, Border Towns and Villages Programme to regenerate small towns, and historically funding for enterprise centres and community regenerations schemes involving local communities.
• A range of Economic Development programmes have supported business technology, tourism, urban development, community property development, flagships and investment companies\(^51\).

The economic development work has continued to be important. As the Fund became established and the peace and political processes grew it has been possible to support a wider range of projects that are community based and include support contact, dialogue and reconciliation processes.

**Planning Stage**

The core work of developing projects is undertaken by the Fund’s agents and the Secretariat. Once projects have been worked up they are presented to a Programme Team, which draws in representatives from the relevant government departments. The Team’s recommendations are considered by Designated Board Members prior to their consideration by the Advisory Committee and finally the Board. The Fund’s approach to risk has been measured with a business plan and economic appraisal completed for large capital and revenue projects. In addition a legal charge is taken on each capital project. Conditions of funding which must be satisfied are set early in the development process.

\(^51\) International Fund for Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2005
The Journey

The Fund’s rationale is to be the “first money on the table” adding credence to a project thereby bringing other funding bodies on board. Despite the difficulties in attracting match funding for projects to which the IFI has committed funds it has achieved a leverage of 1:2 across projects which has resulted in total funding across IFI supported projects of £1.5 billion. Its total investment has, up to January 2006, been £550 million to 5,700 projects (with 87% located in areas designated as disadvantaged)\(^{52}\).

“Sharing Our Space” the 2006-2010 IFI strategy announced in January 2006 has been designed to secure the foundations of the Fund’s work and to address the new and diverse challenges in building a more integrated and reconciled community in Northern Ireland and the Southern Border Counties\(^{53}\). The strategy identified new priorities for the remaining years of the Fund:

- **Building Foundations** – Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration, Communities in Transition and Community Leadership,

- **Building Bridges** – Youth Programmes bringing young people of different ages and from both communities and on a cross border basis for the purposes of study and work training, Community Bridges Programme working across divided interfaces and focussing on reconciliation between entire communities;

- **Building Integration** – supporting the conditions for sharing in education and collaborative partnerships between schools and efforts to make social housing communities more welcoming for all through “Re-imaging Communities” and supporting community organisations from both sides of the community in the same areas to undertake joint work and even merge; and

- **Leaving a Legacy** by supporting the long term work of reconciliation\(^{54}\).

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\(^{52}\) International Fund for Ireland Background Briefing Note 16 January 2006

\(^{53}\) International Fund for Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2006

\(^{54}\) International Fund for Ireland Ibid
Successes

The viability and network of over 40 enterprise centres and community regeneration projects - with many undertaking second and third phases with further IFI support - evidence the long term contribution to addressing social and economic conditions in designated disadvantaged areas and creating a locally based focus on economic renewal. In 2004 an independent external evaluation by Deloitte and Touche established that the Fund was responsible for 39,000 direct jobs and 16,000 indirect jobs (18% of which were located in the Southern Border Counties)\(^{55}\).

Failures, Limits and Challenges

The capacity of the system to absorb new and by their nature ‘high risk’ projects has been problematic. As the ‘first money on the table’ reserved until the project can commence the delays in obtaining match funding of projects has proved frustrating for projects and the IFI.

The capacity of communities has also been a limiting factor.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board and the Secretariat and the annual report and audited accounts have been the primary monitoring and evaluation systems. External evaluations of the impact of the Fund have been completed and a work on the history of the Fund has been commissioned.

\(^{55}\) International Fund for Ireland Background Briefing Note 16 January 2006
Reflection and Learning

- The international support for the IFI has been a critical factor in its work as it has located the Fund outside government but fostered a close working relationship with it.
- The International Fund for Ireland is not a statutory agency but has performed a role of providing “lubricant in the system”.
- The flexibility in the Fund’s approach and its ability to commit at an early stage to a project have been significant factors in creating credibility for innovative social, economic and community based projects and in securing support from other funders.
- Access to genuinely additional funding.
- The flexibility to commit resources and operate outside public sector funding restrictions.
- The capacity to wait for a number of years for other funders to satisfy procurement requirements and release funds have kept projects “alive”.
- The role played by the managing agents in building relationships with communities has enabled organisations in both communities to work with the IFI.
- Providing moral and technical support to projects especially those working in tense situations and areas of conflict has been critical to the success of the Fund’s work.
- The provision of technical assistance for architectural design work or economic appraisals has contributed significantly to developing projects and bringing them to fruition.
- Risk taking has been measured and has occurred within a strong project development framework.
- The IFI as a long term sustained model of conflict transformation is relevant to other areas of conflict.
Sustainability

Sustainability is the cornerstone of the new five year strategy “Sharing Our Space” launched in 2006. Political agreement will need to be “accompanied by a transformation in the way more marginalised communities interact”\(^\text{56}\).

Next Steps

Over 20-25 years the International Fund for Ireland has developed as a model mechanism in supporting conflict transformation. It gradually built the support of the communities it seeks to help. These communities broadly welcomed its new strategy to support greater shared space in the places people live. The Fund has taken considerable risks to support projects in areas where community tensions have been high, exemplified by the Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project on the Suffolk Lenadoon Peace Line and in flagship projects such as the International School for Peace Studies at Messines in Belgium.

\(^\text{56}\) Sharing This Space: A strategic framework for action 2006-2010. International Fund for Ireland 2006
**Project Title: Community Relations Council**

Lead Body: Community Relations Council

**Contact Details**

Dympna McGlade – Policy Officer, Community Relations Council  
Tel: 02890 227500  
Email: dmcglade@nicrc.org.uk

**Organisations Involved**

The Community Relations Council has played a number of roles which include advisor, co-funder, member of committees, research and liaison, ideas and risk sharing. The informal and formal partnerships detailed below reflect the range of work with which CRC has been involved. The range of organisations involved is indicative of the four approaches CRC has adopted to policy and practice development in the last five years. The approaches are outlined below and identify the organisations with which CRC has been involved.

The first approach is involvement with informal and formal partnerships with:

- Belfast City Council - co-production of BCC Good Relations Plan and a partner in interventions on bonfires, St Patrick’s Day, community planning preparations; and
- NIHE - Community Cohesion Fermanagh, Springfarm Shared Neighbourhood and Re-imaging Communities.

The second approach is CRC’s funding role and its assessment of the capacity of core funded groups to lever change. Funding is allocated in line with community relations principles. This includes:

- core funding and small grants funds work through core funded groups (training, development and innovation), youth diversionary activities, the Mobile Phone Networks, supporting shared neighbourhood work in Ballymena and work with Victims groups; and
- locally based interventions in relation to critical issues and disputes such as interface communities and parades.

The third approach is direct work with other agencies and groups on major projects:
- NBCAU, NB Interface Working Group, the future development of the former Girdwood Road military barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol and the future of the former Ebrington barracks with ILEX and Victims Forums.

The fourth approach is learning, dissemination and advocacy using:
- Conference, seminar, research programmes and dissemination via websites and publications.

**Background to Project**

The Community Relations Council was established in 1990 and has supported practical initiatives underpinning progress towards a society whose principles are Equity, Diversity and Interdependence. CRC completed its 2004-2007 Strategic Plan in 2006/2007. The annual review 2006-2007\(^\text{57}\) reports significant achievement of its strategic objectives which were:
- Objective 1: To establish a shared vision of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and translate it into practical policies and action.
- Objective 2: To develop relevant CRC responses to critical issues and disputes.
- Objective 3: To refine and implement CRC’s role as an intermediary body developing dialogue, inquiry and partnership.
- Objective 4: To identify and promote models of sustainable inter-community relationships across Northern Ireland.

\(^{57}\) Community Relations Council Annual Report 2006-2007;13-28
The rationale and approach, piloted between 2002 and 2007 has focused on achieving significant change through partnerships with statutory and no-statutory agencies.

Planning Stage

An early example of this approach was the Creating Common Ground Consortium with the NIHE, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and Groundwork Northern Ireland. This has been based on the persuasion that the promotion of good relations is a significant issue as is the promotion of a shared future and:

- leveraging resources and commitment of the statutory sector;
- partnership is required between people committed - including people in local communities - and people who have resources – departments, statutory and no-statutory agencies; and
- that change is generated only in an inter-relationship.

The Journey

CRC has intervened in partnership on the following:

- The co-production of the Good Relations Plan with the Belfast City Council;
- To work on practical issues around bonfire sites with the Institute for Conflict Research and Groundwork NI;
- The Re-Imagining Communities Programme through participation in the Shared Communities Consortium;
- To address issues arising from migration, community cohesion and the increased diversity of Northern Ireland with OFMDFM, DEL and PSNI. This has included a series of documentary films *From Homeland to Townland* about incomers to Northern Ireland and a series of short films for use in the primary school revised curriculum *My Day* following the individual everyday lives of a group of ethnically diverse children aged 4 to 7 years living in Northern Ireland.
The development of the Conflict Transformation Project with BCC, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, NIHE, Belfast Metropolitan College, Belfast Education and Library Board, OFMDFM, DSD, PSNI, NIHE and BLSP.

The promotion of shared future in the Titanic Quarter, with the Strategic Investment Board, and discussions with NICVA and QUB.

To promote discussion in the debates on parades subject to Parades Commission determinations.

To support the consultation with community groups throughout North Belfast on the development of an agreed planning process to establish the North Belfast Interface Working Group and to develop the *North Belfast Interface Action Plan*.

To partner the Shared Communities Consortium (Re-imaging Communities) with the IFI, DSD, Arts Council NI and the NIHE.

**Successes**

The achievements of these approaches by CRC include:

- Support for the development of a sustained and systematic Good Relations Strategy for the City of Belfast.
- The co-ordination of funding strategies and priorities for Community Sector which has led to over 30 locally based voluntary and community organisations operating in areas of high conflict being core-funded in a position to play a strategic role in promoting better community relations.

In an advisory role with BCC:

- The development of a bonfires strategy;
- The development of St Patrick's Day events and securing political agreement;
- The development of an integrated City-wide Good Relations Plan.
- Research on crucial issues has been undertaken and owned by BIP, ICR, and others.
- The Re-imaging that has occurred in several difficult communities.
- The input into the planning of EU PEACE III Programme.
- The promotion of the Slavery Debate.
Failures, Limits and Challenges

The future challenge involves joining up the good relations/community cohesion strategies to the other critical departments in statutory agencies. It is important to develop greater understanding of community relations in the context of community safety and policing as occurred in the Springfarm Estate with regard to Neighbourhood Policing.

The public promotion of sensitive community relations work has to be balanced with the need to demonstrate progress and change. However, there is some evidence from the high level of interest in Community Relations Week 2006 by participants drawn from statutory and non-statutory agencies and community and voluntary groups that this is now less sensitive than previously.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress in achieving the strategic plan is monitored through meetings of the Council, senior management team meetings and staff supervision and reported in the annual report. External evaluations of CRC and of the initiatives in which it is involved are also undertaken.

Reflection & Learning

The relationships developed between CRC and its partners account for the achievements. The promotion of good relations and conflict transformation initiatives has been most effective when partner agencies are committed at the most senior level with a dedicated support unit, the work is well connected to the partner institution, and there is openness to the community. Examples of this include the BCC Good Relations Unit and the NIHE Community Cohesion Unit. Belfast City Council took considerable responsibility through the core team and each successful initiative encouraged BBC to make further progress. The
identification of practical opportunities to lever the staff and resources of partner organisations into practical expressions of promoting good relations has been effective.

CRC has proactively supported an inter-agency, inter-community group to address community cohesion issues within South Belfast. The learning from the South Belfast Roundtable on Racism suggests when communities feel under threat, time is required to enable people to ‘have their say’ and stay on board. The learning in relation to the following approaches includes:

- Partnership and direct work.
- Quickly establish the constraints and limitations on action by partners.
- Direct work supports translating community relations principles into practice by working with the problems agencies are identifying.
- Timely/Opportunistic - working in partnership/direct work (BCC Good Relations, ex-military barracks, North Belfast).

Partnership:

- some evidence this works in levering others to work for a Shared Future in their areas of responsibility (ex. Mixed neighbourhoods/shared housing/interfaces/rationalisation of schools).

As an intermediary organisation:

- The simultaneous engagement with locally based groups and act as a development partner with agencies and with direct work in major projects

Community Engagement and Funding Role:

- The importance of engaging with groups, communities and individuals with strong political allegiance and overcoming reluctance to engage with the ‘other side’.
- The importance of recognising that progress depends on voluntary effort achieved through influencing people.
- The ability to fund and lever resources adds weight to advocacy of community relations and shared future.
Sustainability

It is important that there are sufficient resources to develop the conflict transformation work and the commitment of statutory agencies and departments to A Shared Future and community cohesion.

Next Steps

The Peace III role envisages CRC working with local authorities to develop their good relations plans. This will intensify CRC's role as a critical friend. The Shared Future policy is comprehensive and therefore it has the capacity to support meaningful change in particular in housing and education. However, A Shared Future was published in March 2005 under direct rule, and early in 2007 when the Assembly considered a motion to endorse the framework it amended it to merely take note of the document. This indicates that there may be some discomfort with the policy, or parts of the policy, amongst political parties and the Assembly itself.

CRC and partner organisations need to focus on and be committed to outcomes.

Similar Projects

Project Title: Skegoneill Glandore Common Purpose
Lead Body: Mid Skegoneill Residents Group and Glandore Residents Group

Background

Skegoneill and Glandore community representatives approached CRC Policy Officer for support in their drive to deal with interface violence and unrest. CRC then invited Belfast City Council's Good Relations Unit and North Belfast Community Action Unit to become involved in supporting the project. The project
is led by an inter-community panel of community representatives who have constituted themselves as ‘Skegoneill Glandore Common Purpose’.

**Key Achievements:**

- Relationship building between the community associations involved which has included a residential event.
- Capacity building for Mid Skegoneill Residents Group.
- A joint residential has taken place to define a vision and action plan for the project.
- A Business Plan has been commissioned to examine the feasibility of a social capital project to be shared by the two communities.
- The expression of interest application to the Community Bridges programme (now managed through CRC) has been successful.
- The Terms of Reference for a Development Plan for the area have been agreed.

**Community Relations Council Support**

CRC has provided support with the following:

- relationship building between all the groups involved;
- funding applications;
- drafting Terms of Reference for commissioning expert advice;
- providing capacity and motivation support;
- funding for residential sessions; and
- the group has made an application for a small grants to meet the costs of action planning for Skegoneill.

**Critical Issues:**

- There is a disparity in capacity between the two community groups.
- The lack of a clear vision for the project.
Key lessons:

Agencies need to try to find to a balance between allowing communities to gather their own momentum whilst gently leading when necessary. Time must be allowed in cross community ventures of this nature to allow relationships to build.

Project Title: Belfast Interface Communities: Building A Shared Future
Conference
Lead Body: Belfast Interface Project

Background

In 2006 CRC supported a number of research seminars and a research publication. This led to a joint Belfast Interface Project and CRC conference titled “Belfast Interface Communities: Building A Shared Future”. The themes explored at the conference were:

- The way in which the current experience at grass-roots level could complement the objectives of A Shared Future Policy and Strategic Framework (2005).
- How to help translate the aspirations of ASF into meaningful actions which would be of real benefit to interface communities in Belfast and throughout Northern Ireland.

Success

- The development of a relationship with BIP as a key stakeholder on interface issues.
The conference brought together key practitioners from across the different interface communities and statutory agencies tasked with developing and delivering government strategies.

Workshops were held to explore key issues thematically and identify practical actions and recommendations including the statutory agencies that needed to be involved and the necessary resources.

The workshops also considered what success might look like.

Good Practice was showcased at the conference.

The production of a Conference Report and recommendations.

A joint delegation from CRC and BIP presented the conference recommendations to officials in OFMDFM in April 2007 and encouraged government to move the debate forward and ensure the realities and needs of interface communities are at the forefront of government policy.

Community Relations Council Support

The Community Relations Council provided ideas, support, practical assistance and co-funded the Conference.

Critical Issues

The critical issues to date have been:

- To ensure grassroots experience is heard.
- To influence public policy by raising awareness within public bodies, support their identification of actions and lobby on implementation.
- To assist in the development of new partnerships and strategic approaches by key stakeholders. This led to the development of projects which will expand on previous work of groups such as Belfast City Council, Belfast Interface Project and Community Relations Council.
Key lessons

The key lessons identified were that:
- CRC can offer support in a number of ways to community and voluntary groups.
- It is important to empower organisations to take the lead and develop mechanisms that enable them to identify issues and solutions, and to lobby public bodies to take a more strategic approach.

Project Title: Mobile Phone Network

Lead Body: Interaction Belfast

Background

Interaction Belfast (previously Springfield Inter Community Development Group) approached the CRC for support towards the establishment and maintenance of a Mobile Phone Network for interface areas along the Falls Shankill divide – the Springfield Road. The group first sought support in 1998/99 at a time when interface violence was very intense. The CRC worked closely with the group through its Community Relations/Community Development and Core Funding Scheme to develop best practice and commissioned research into the effectiveness of mobile phone networks in addressing interface violence.

Key Achievements

The key achievements have been:
- Clear and effective protocols have been established as to the best use of mobile phone networks.
- A large network of community workers representing all communities living in the respective interface areas has been established.
Grant aid support has extended beyond the costs of mobile phone costs and now included support towards regular network meetings between community workers.

A clear guide has been developed by CRC relating to the funding of mobile phone networks which also includes an outline of support to diversionary work.

The work of Interaction has become a model of best practice which other groups have been able to learn from.

CRC regularly received and recorded feedback from the group which led to the development and enhancement of the support it gives.

**CRC Support**

CRC has provided support in:

- Funding of mobile networks and associated support meetings.
- Bringing together interface workers to share best practice through workshops and seminars.
- Commissioning research into effectiveness of mobile phone networks and developing best practice.
- Providing information and support to other agencies working in interface areas.

**Critical Issues**

- The burden placed on Mobile Phone Network members in terms of being on the streets late at night for prolonged periods, the real threat of injury during times of community conflict.
- The maintenance of positive relationships between mobile phone network members during times of conflict/crisis.
- It is a challenge to measure success in terms of conflict that doesn’t happen or property that is not attacked.
Key Lessons

- The effectiveness of mobile phone networks is based on the quality of relationships between its members; therefore face to face meetings are essential.
- Support needs to be given throughout the year and not just during the summer months when community tension is at its height.

Project Title: Building Peace through Partnership

Lead Bodies: The North Belfast Conflict Transformation Forum which includes North Belfast Interface Network, LINC Resource Centre, North Belfast Conflict Intervention Programme, The Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne and Intercomm.

Background

LINC Resource Centre approached the CRC’s Measure 2:1 Programme (Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace) for support for their current Building Peace through Partnership project in August 2005. It had been funded under the Peace II Programme since November 2002. LINC have proactively sought to address the legacy of the conflict by working constructively at community level to promote and deliver services and resources aimed at breaking the cycle of alienation, conflict and violence that remains endemic within specific working class estates and interface communities across North Belfast and adjacent wards in Newtownabbey.

Other partners include:
- East Antrim Conflict Transformation Forum.
- Rathcoole/Bawnmore/Longlands Mobile Phone Network.
- North Belfast Alternatives.
- North Belfast Interface Steering Group.
- Macedon Community and Policing Forum.
- Intercomm.
- North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group.
- Multiple agency task-force working out of Newtownabbey Community Safety Partnership.

**Key achievements**

- 12 focus groups have been established.
- The mentoring approach with focus groups has proved successful in providing opportunities to problem solve the communities’ live issues without the need for external training programmes.
- The successful launch of a Senior Citizens document with cross community support from political representatives and statutory agencies.
- A summer intervention facilitation programme in conjunction with North Belfast Interface Monitoring Group.
- Strategic planning sessions, community liaisons and consultations have been provided to local groups - such as Sunningdale Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Group, Rathcoole Culture and Festival Group and Peace Building on Interface Communities’ Education Group.
- The successful facilitation of dialogue surrounding Carnmoney Cemetery Protest preventing protests over the past two years.
- All the work carried out has incorporated notable involvement from an impressive range of partnerships which has undoubtedly enabled successful delivery of objectives.
- The implementation of an Active Citizenship programme with young adults in conjunction with Intercomm.
Community Relations Council Support

The support provided has included:

- The funding of programme activity between November 2002 and February 2008 and associated support meetings.
- Bringing together workers to share best practice through workshops and seminars i.e. CRC Practitioners Forums, Live Issues, Financial and Monitoring and briefing days.
- Facilitating the sharing of best practice through the provision of best practice scenarios in the Snapshot Feedback Bulletin of Measure 2:1 funded activity which has included best practice updates on Summer Intervention Programmes in interface areas (North Belfast Interface Network), Mobile Phone Network (Interaction ) and the establishment of the Rathcoole Community Forum to facilitate the bringing together the community (LINC).
- Providing information and support as and when required to facilitate roll out of programme activity ensuring value for money prevails.
- CRC regularly receives and records feedback from the group which lead to the development and enhancement of the support it gives.

Critical Issues

- The late recruitment of staff - due to the delay in the Peace II Extension - affected the original project timeframe and affected the delivery of objectives.
- The support of gatekeepers is essential in order to progress work.
- Day to day mentoring has created a greater impact on performance than training because it is difficult to sustain interest as a consequence of weak community infrastructure.
- The increase in racially motivated attacks emerging in North Belfast and Northern Ireland is a significant problem. The reality is that racial interfaces as well as sectarian interfaces will emerge.
Key Lessons

- Issue based mentoring as opposed to external training programmes are more effective.
- Sensitive issues around the summer and parades meant that the number of representatives involved in discussions had to be balanced in order not to exclude either community or to make one community solely responsible for the violence.
- Full transparency, openness and information surrounding programme activity is essential in order to secure support from all political parties.
5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Common Policy and Framework

The case studies represent a body of good practice in conflict transformation in which the contribution of statutory and non-statutory agencies has been identified. They cover completed and on-going work from 1996 to the present. The case studies cover a broad range of work across five themes – Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods, Building Shared City Spaces, Children and Young People, Equality and Cultural Diversity and Advisory and Building Relationships. With the exception of the work of the International Fund for Ireland, the good practice has largely developed as the peace and political processes evolved. As the examples suggest good practice in conflict transformation is based on the willingness and capacity of statutory and non-statutory agencies and their community partners.

It should be noted that the good practice projects included are fairly unique and in the main they have not been broadly mainstreamed. It is likely that good practice in conflict transformation will remain reactive and disjointed, based on one off individual projects, unless there is a sustained and co-ordinated approach that mainstreams and resources community relations, community cohesion and a shared future across the strategies of departments and agencies. Re-imaging Communities demonstrates how a number of statutory and non-statutory agencies have formally come together in a consortium, sharing risks, pooling resources and cementing their co-operation in order to support conflict transformation at a local level. (Recommendation 6.1.1).

5.1.1 Learning Environment and Research

5.1.1.1 Learning Environment

The importance of statutory agency, non statutory agency, political and community group leadership was identified in the good practice records. In the Leadership table numbers two to six, it has been possible to identify critical issues that account for the success and good practice developed in the case studies.
One of the striking features of the tables is the significant degree of interlinking between the statutory and non statutory agencies and at the political and community leadership level. In all the case studies examined no one agency or level of leadership was able to act alone. However, this does not equate necessarily to harmonious or non competitive relationships. Arguably one of the reasons that the approaches identified in the case studies have not become widespread or replicated is that collaborative work remains relatively under-developed. A recommendation has been identified to engender a greater learning environment among organisations engaged in conflict transformation.

The case studies have identified the contribution of agencies operating in Belfast. By definition therefore the research has a Belfast focus but there was interest in learning from experience elsewhere. In order to consider and apply lessons from other environments, there is a need to develop a learning and reflective environment. This would draw on good practice outside Belfast, in Northern Ireland, the UK, the Republic of Ireland and internationally. (Recommendation 6.1.2).

### 5.1.1.2 Skills in Conflict Transformation

Among the challenges and solutions identified in the North Belfast’s Interface Communities Action Plan was the need “to widen and develop skills in conflict management, dispute resolution and community planning within and between communities”\(^\text{58}\) in order to support interface and community relations interventions at community level. The success with which statutory organisations have been able to utilise arts, regeneration and social and economic interventions suggests that skills in conflict transformation need to be made more widely available. Interventions that interlink conflict transformation with other interventions are time consuming and require considerable staff resources. Moreover, if the objective is to disseminate good practice so that these unique projects are replicated and

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\(^{58}\) An Action Plan for North Belfast’s Interface Communities May 2007:18
innovation encouraged, the skills base needs to be increased. (Recommendation 6.1.3).

5.1.1.3 Research

Some of the good practice surveyed utilised audits and research to inform and develop practice. Three examples of good practice that utilised formal research tools to guide action were particularly notable in how they dealt with sensitive issues. Belfast City Council’s Memorabilia Project resulted from an audit of memorabilia and recommendations, adopted by Council. Similarly Belfast Metropolitan College’s Cultural Diversity Project used focus groups and a questionnaire survey with students from a range of different countries and backgrounds to identify the relevant issues. The results influenced the content of the full time student induction programme. Through this work BMC was also able to identify how it could better meet the needs of its increasingly culturally diverse student body. The research methods utilised by the Royal Hospitals for the Traveller health needs assessment were successfully adapted to survey the men in the Traveller community. The researchers worked in tandem with Lay Health Mentors – all of whom were recruited from within the Traveller community – and this brought depth to the research. (Recommendation 6.1.4).

5.1.2 Section 75 Equality Duty, Good Relations and A Shared Future Policy

The establishment of the Royal Hospitals Health and Social Inequalities Unit and the Belfast Metropolitan College Cultural Diversity Project were informed by their statutory duty under Section 75 (1) and the promotion of good relations Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act (1998). These explicit interventions focused efforts and contributed to good practice in conflict transformation. The case studies illustrate good practice in responding to the increased diversity in the workforce, in the student body and in Northern Ireland generally. The interventions by the Royal Hospitals and BMC have utilised practice to inform policy and to embed new learning in the organisation. In the case of the Royal Hospitals the work developed was “over and beyond compliance”. Both
organisations involved senior management and trade unions, staff and users/clients from ethnic minority backgrounds in creating mechanisms for dialogue such as an ethnic minority forum, clubs and societies through which issues can be addressed and regular communication planned. (Recommendation 6.1.5).

*Belfast Carnival Arts Programme, Re-Imaging Communities and the Royal Hospitals Travellers Health Outreach Project* are good examples of projects and initiatives that make explicit the linkages between Good relations policy and implementation. The *North Belfast Interface Working Group* devoted one of three sub groups to Good Relations. However, in *An Action Plan for North Belfast’s Interface Communities* it argued that one of the difficulties of turning ideas into action was that the policy landscape was muddled. Moreover, the sites of real decision making were difficult to locate particularly in relation to development and regeneration.

One of the lessons from the *Finaghy Crossroads Group* was that the linkages between good relations and community safety are insufficient at both policy and implementation levels in that community safety is a critical issue for citizens living in interface areas and other tense situations and these are also critical locations for community relations. However, greater co-ordination would assist in resourcing and focusing locally based work. Specific recommendations have been made in 6.2.2 and 6.3.13).

A number of the good practice examples preceded A Shared Future Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations, most notably the *Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project* and *Finaghy Crossroads Group*. Nonetheless, these projects made direct and indirect references to reducing conflict, building relationships and shared space. (Recommendation 6.1.6).

As Belfast has become more ethnically diverse the issue of community cohesion has increased in importance. Two case studies from the Royal Hospitals and the Belfast Metropolitan College have highlighted good practice in this area that could be usefully shared and a recommendation has been included to disseminate good practice. For example the Royal Hospitals committed to staff training and cultural awareness sessions delivered solely by Travellers empowering both staff and the Traveller community. (Recommendation 6.1.7)

5.2 Relationship Building and Collaboration

5.2.1 Partnership

Informal and formal partnerships between statutory and non-statutory agencies played a significant role in most case studies. The major challenge identified in the Traveller Health Outreach Project was that partnership approaches involving statutory agencies and community organisations create tensions between different organisational cultures, methods and approaches. In the North Belfast Interface Working Group the statutory and non-statutory agency partners took the time to understand the constraints of each and to develop relationships. It was within these discussions that a shared commitment to empower local communities emerged. In the Shared Communities Consortium sufficient trust and confidence developed between statutory and non statutory agencies to promote co-operation within the agreed framework. Thus the Shared Communities Consortium - in which statutory and non-statutory agencies entered into a formal memorandum of understanding - underpinned the Re-imagining Communities programme.

Informally negotiated partnerships such as the Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project, St Galls Concept Plan and Renewing the Routes have been effective in regenerating and securing physical improvement at interfaces and along sections of inner city arterial routes. In Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project the International Fund for Ireland and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive committed to a project jointly owned and managed by Suffolk and Lenadoon Community Forums. Partnership approaches between statutory agencies had the effect of unlocking land along the Lanark Way interface in the St Galls...
Concept Plan to facilitate affordable housing, a new homeless hostel, a nursery and primary school in the immediate area and new roads infrastructure in Mid Springfield. The partnership also facilitated the acquisition of a site for a new health and social care building on the Shankill Road. In Renewing the Routes, BCC manage the physical improvements agreed in informal partnership between traders and private land owners, and local communities at the junction of the central business district and the inner city.

Both formal and informal partnerships require clear terms of reference, clarity about roles and responsibilities. A willingness to negotiate and build relationships is required to assist organisations to develop good practice conflict transformation projects. (Recommendation 6.2.1).

5.2.2 Community Development Foundations

Relationship building was a critical success factor in the Finaghy Crossroads Group, Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project, Carnival Arts Development Programme and in the North Belfast Interface Working Group. In each case the relationship building relied upon pre-existing community infrastructures. All four initiatives had to deal with the issues of territoriality, segregation and contested identities. Critically within the single identity processes there was commitment to progression from building relationships and dialogue between communities through to delivering concrete benefits to their communities. Finaghy Crossroads Group developed from a single identity training and development project for local people involved with the Finaghy Community Centre. In the process they explored community development and community relations and developed a wider appreciation of their own and others institutions, culture and heritage. The use of social settings such as working dinners and residential settings were seen as important elements in enabling individuals to relate to one another. Stewartstown Road was predicated on the emergence of the Lenadoon and Suffolk Community Forums which had been established to increase participation and co-ordination between groups and to improve local conditions. The formation of the Belfast Festivals Forum and the Carnival Arts Consortium created new
opportunities for local festivals groups - based on specific local identities - to network and collaborate around the contentious issue of performance in public space. The community empowerment partnerships and the statutory agencies in North Belfast engaged in parallel processes before they established the North Belfast Interface Working Group as a joint planning mechanism. In North Belfast there was recognition that the mechanism built on a substantial body of community based community relations interface work from which trust and relationships had developed. (Recommendation 6.2.2).
5.3 Leadership

5.3.1 Local Complexity

The issues of territoriality and contested identities in managing conflict created difficulties for leadership in statutory and non-statutory agencies and at the political and community level. Arguably this is related to that fact that the complexities increase the level of risk over and above normal project and programme risks. For example the Housing Executive took account of the dynamics and the differences in capacity and co-ordination of interfaces areas and encouraged more strategic thinking. It utilised its relationships with local groups in Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project and St Galls Concept Plan.

5.3.2 Maximising Impact on Conflict Transformation

The interventions that utilised arts, regeneration, social and economic initiatives and improvements in service delivery were particularly successful in promoting the transformation of conflict because they addressed identified local community needs and statutory agency objectives. One of the examples of such interlinking of conflict transformation work across agencies and groups is arts based interventions. In the Carnival Arts Development Programme, arts and culture have been utilised by Belfast City Council in conjunction with festival and cultural heritage groups to create shared celebration of public space. Success has been based on working with indigenous skills - promoting excellence and developing skills - and with local culture and arts groups by engaging the strong sense of locality and local pride. In order to implement the Renewing the Routes Programme, Belfast City Council engaged local groups, traders and property owners in shaping the environmental improvements. Other examples include Stewartstown Road Regeneration Projects, St Galls Concept Plan, the International Fund for Ireland and the Waterworks Multi Sports Facility. (Recommendation 6.3.1).

The principal issues identified in the tables three to seven in relation to leadership
for statutory and non statutory agencies, and for the political and community level are now discussed.

### 5.3.3 Statutory Agency Leadership

In the case study environments the legitimacy of statutory agencies is challenged and it is difficult to exercise effective authority. The *North Belfast Interface Working Group* planning process was broadly supported at a senior level by the Belfast City Council’s Chief Executive, and by officials tasked by the Permanent Secretaries of the Department of Social Development and the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. Senior level commitment was also evident in the *Cultural Diversity Project*, the establishment of the *Royal Health and Social Inequalities Steering Group*, *Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project*, *Belfast Memorabilia*, in the *Springfarm Estate* consultation process and the *St Galls Concept Plan*. Two specific interventions - providing support and early wins - increase the credibility and authority of statutory agencies. A range of approaches utilised by statutory agencies increased their capacity to exercise authority effectively and to manage risk through partnership. The importance of partnership approaches has already been discussed. In addition to formal partnerships, the case studies suggest that informal partnerships are used. For example the informal partnership between the IFI and the NIHE helped to create the positive conditions for a win:win scenario in which Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project developed as a shared, jointly owned and managed space with redundant and derelict land at an interface being redeveloped. (Recommendation 6.2.1).

#### 5.3.3.1 Technical and Moral Support

When there is senior level engagement this tends to be followed by a significant commitment to utilising the agency’s expertise, technical and other resources. This increases the authority and credibility of agencies to overcome obstacles, solve problems, make partnerships work and champion initiatives. (Recommendation 6.3.2).
5.3.3.2 Early Wins
Four of the initiatives factored early wins into their processes. In North Belfast the operation of the Summer Youth Interface Programme in response to local demands was a small win. The development of the Lidl supermarket brokered by the NIHE in Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project and the Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme’s Youth Diversionary Programme in North Belfast increased credibility and the authority of the agencies involved. (Recommendation 6.3.3).

5.3.3.3 Approaches to Conflict Transformation
In addition to the importance of partnership and community development foundations, three further approaches were evident – transparency, sustained support and community development and community relations.

5.3.3.4 Transparency
The North Belfast Community Action Unit facilitated an agreed process in North Belfast. Recall sessions were organised at key stages with the wider network or database in the interests of transparency and openness. The community engagement and consultation processes used by the Housing Executive were proactive. In public meetings and consultation sessions the Housing Executive used three dimensional drawings and photographs to explain the St Galls Concept Plan and the Stewartstown Road development. Three case studies suggest that transparent consultation strategies were important in allaying fears and overcoming potential opposition, particularly in interface areas. (Recommendation 6.3.5).

5.3.3.5 Sustained Support
The good practice examples highlight the importance of sustained commitment to engagement over lengthy periods of time to address clearly defined issues. The case studies suggest that a realistic time scale to make an impact in these complex environments is from five to ten years. Initiatives may be initiated by community groups and statutory agencies but require co-operation and
collaboration between communities and statutory agencies if they are to be successful. Statutory agencies in the *North Belfast Interface Working Group* and in *Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project* supported structures over five years that empowered local communities to participate in equal partnerships. (Recommendation 6.3.6).

5.3.3.6 **Community Development and Community Relations**

In Finaghy, Belfast City Council Community Services utilised community development and community relations strategies to support Finaghy Community Centre Management Committee and user groups to address local issues in a deteriorating situation where there was a high level of interface violence. Progression from single identity to inter-community dialogue and the commitment to create a shared neighbourhood at Finaghy Cross Roads was a feature of this intervention. (Recommendation 6.3.2)

5.3.4 **Critical issues for Statutory Leadership**

The key points that emerge from the case studies are:

- be strategic in addressing conflict transformation;
- use regeneration and service delivery to promote good relations;
- recognise mutual responsibilities of statutory agencies and communities;
- audit the environment, assess territorial complexities and assess community constraints and capacity;
- use transparent and open processes based on equality and race relations legislative requirements and/or consistent approaches, policy and procedures and objective criteria to develop interventions;
- engage with communities to promote strategic thinking and empower communities;
- effective community development practice is needed to embed community relations and conflict transformation;
- manage and share risk through partnerships and third parties;
- promote win:win scenarios and early wins that address needs identified with the communities;
- invest in staff training to underpin the organisational commitment to conflict transformation;
- release assets to other agencies or groups to maximise their use; and
- empower staff to assist conflict transformation projects with technical skills, knowledge and flexible and timely use of resources.

### 5.3.5 Non–Statutory Agency Leadership

Two organisations that are non-statutory agencies made significant contributions. These were the *International Fund for Ireland* and the *Community Relations Council*. The role played by the International Fund for Ireland preceded the 1998 Equality Legislation and the Shared Future Policy. However, the IFI itself is as a sustained long term model of conflict transformation. The success of its approach was based on its intergovernmental structure, its commitment to address difficult issues, its partnerships and its flexibility in responding to local situations. The Fund took measured risks in a strong project development framework. It is doubtful if some of the projects such as *Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project* would have occurred without IFI support or that *Finaghy Cross Road Group* or *North Belfast Interface Working Group* could proceed to implementation without the endorsement of funding from the Fund. Thus the Fund has acted as a “lubricant in the system” encouraging further support from the statutory sector. (Recommendation 6.2.7).

The *Community Relations Council* made a substantial contribution to the development of the policy and framework that became *A Shared Future*. In its role as a critical friend, it played the roles of advisor, co-funder, and committee member; undertook research and participated with other agencies by generating ideas and sharing risks. This was particularly notable in its relationship with Belfast City Council. The relationships developed with BCC, the commitment and leadership of the BCC core team and the observation that success breeds success, were identified as critical success factors. (Recommendation 6.2.8).
Leadership within this framework relies on facilitation and persuasion. Access to funding creates opportunities for co-funding and engagement with statutory agencies and departments and increases the level of influence. This was evident in the case of both the IFI and CRC.

The approaches used by non-statutory agencies levered policy and project development and they relied upon building partnerships of the willing. IFI utilised formal arrangements through the programme teams and the Inter-Governmental Advisory Group. The early commitment of funds and the use of pre-conditions guided the projects towards community relations outcomes. CRC utilised a mix of approaches. These included membership of the Shared Communities Consortium; advising and assisting Belfast City Council in the development of the Good Relations Plan; working with North Belfast Community Action Unit in engaging statutory agencies and community groups in the development of the planning process. In an extension of their funding role, CRC encouraged core funded groups such as Belfast Interface Project, to expand their influence by involving them in new partnerships and strategic approaches.

Non-statutory agencies exercising leadership were also able to work closely with local communities in innovating and shaping policy such as occurred with the Shared Neighbourhood work on the Springfarm Estate. Two of the important factors underpinning the approach of non-statutory agencies was their flexibility to support innovation and to take risks. This makes them valuable partners in statutory led partnerships and interventions that promote conflict transformation. (Recommendations 6.3.9 and 6.3.10).

5.3.6 Critical Issues for Non-Statutory Agencies

The key points that emerge from the case studies are:
- be strategic;
- support for innovations in good relations;
- provide funding support;
flexibility to commit resources at an early stage within a strong project development framework with prior conditions that have to be met;
ability to take risks;
engagement statutory agencies and departments in supporting interventions;
facilitate discussion and partnership with statutory agencies and community groups;
shape the development of policy through policy work in communities;
empower community and voluntary groups to take the lead;
develop mechanisms to identify issues, problems and solutions; and
advocate for strategic approaches to conflict transformation.

5.3.7 Leadership at the Political level
The evidence in the case studies highlights some of the difficulties inherent in engaging political leadership in a divided city. At a Council level, strategies and plans promoting good relations have been approved by the political leadership. This is evident in the case studies of Belfast Memorabilia, Carnival Arts Development Programme and the Good Relations Plan.

In the case studies the engagement with political leadership stretched from gaining the acquiescence of local representatives to the need to underpin the planning process in North Belfast with political support. The need to improve the mechanisms for keeping political representatives updated on how initiatives develop was identified at the commencement of the North Belfast Interface Working Group and was a recommendation contained in the final Action Plan. In Renewing the Routes local Councillors played a key role in identifying contacts and brokering community involvement in the environmental improvements. The most effective political leadership understood the need to respect the sensitivities and allow gradual progress to be made by grassroots initiatives in conflict transformation.

However, political leadership needs to find new ways of relating to and engaging with the complexities and sensitivities of this work, which are appropriate in
the changing city, in order that communities can engage with them in a more accountable way. Political leadership needs to continue, and expand, its explicit support for statutory, non-statutory agencies and communities local conflict transformation interventions. Without such an environment such efforts are likely to remain disjointed and sparse. A recommendation has been made with this in mind (Recommendation 6.3.11). The principles currently utilised in securing cross party support have been identified from the case studies in paragraph 5.3.8.

5.3.8 Critical Issues for Political Leadership

The key points that emerge from the case studies are:

- clear political leadership can support the use of social and economic regeneration to promote conflict transformation;
- the importance with continuing to support leasing assets to other groups to maximise use;
- the importance of gaining the confidence of political representatives through transparency about activities; and
- the importance of regular briefing, providing updates as processes develop and at key stages for political leadership.

There is clearly a need to reconcile the tensions within the political leadership between active involvement, support, opposition and acquiescence for grassroots conflict transformation and good relations work. This is particularly important for community development approaches to community relations and those initiatives that are locally based in tense situations and areas of conflict, where limited political support will impede progress. (Recommendation 6.3.11).

However, the critical issues for political leadership are not straightforward. From the case studies a number of important principles that may underpin obtaining the explicit support of political leadership have been identified. These are:

- the agreement of strategies at Belfast City Council (Good Relations Plan);
- to utilise informal/non-institutional spaces to create space for negotiation (Belfast Memorabilia, Good Relation Steering Panel);
- securing sufficient agreement to make progress (Carnival Arts Development Programme);
- city wide programmes (Renewing the Routes);
- to develop objective criteria (Renewing the Routes); and
- to ensure transparency in activities and regular updates and information about progress on conflict transformation activities (North Belfast Interface Working Group/CRC).

5.3.9 Leadership at the Community Level

It was noted in a number of records that given the complexities involved communities needed to be at the heart of Renewing the Routes, Re-imaging Communities and the interventions at interface locations. The importance of local community leadership was emphasised, as was the continuing risks for such leaders and the variations in capacity throughout the city. It is in this context that the conclusions drawn in relation to the importance of community institutions and structures - through which communities and leaders promote reductions in violent incidents, shared space, alternative visions of culture and heritage and independence – can be understood. Obtaining community consent, negotiating benefits for each community and equal partnership are responsibilities that require credible community leadership. The need to provide sustained support for community development and community relations strategies to engage communities has already been discussed and recommended. Two further aspects of leadership have been identified – access to external independent facilitation and the importance of creating linkages between community development, community relations and community safety.

5.3.9.1 External Independent Facilitation

Invariably the relationship building utilised external facilitation described as the role of an “honest broker”. The Belfast Interface Project fulfilled that role in
relation to Finaghy and Stewartstown Roads. The Culture and Arts Unit in Belfast City Council working with a lead partner - the Beat Initiative - brokered those relationships with the festival and cultural groups. (Recommendation 6.3.12).

5.3.9.2 Operational Linkages

In the North Belfast Interface Working Group and in Finaghy Crossroads case studies, strengthening the operational linkages between community development, community relations and community safety was considered important. All three strategies are relevant to promoting good relations particularly in interface areas. By linking these three approaches their impact on conflict transformation will arguably become more focused and effective. (Recommendation 6.3.13).

5.3.10 Critical Issues for Community Leadership

The key points that emerge from the case studies are:

- The capacity to support conflict transformation is variable;
- the importance of sufficient co-ordination at community level to enable vision and leadership to be supported;
- community ventures at interfaces and in relation to shared neighbourhoods take a long time to develop;
- access to external independent facilitation is essential to progress the inter-community processes and overcome difficulties;
- networking supports co-operation;
- access to small amounts of funding to support the process as it emerges organically is essential;
- the use of social settings assist relationships of trust and mutual understanding to emerge in inter-community processes;
- develop a transparent and inclusive dialogue with political leadership of the city;
- community managed interventions are at their best where they are inclusive, engage in outreach activities and build capacity among users; and
- effective interventions that respond to needs identified locally.
5.4 Conclusion

The good practice identified in the case studies has made extensive use of partnership and collaboration between statutory agencies, non-statutory agencies, political leadership and community leadership. This suggests that good practice is predicated on an implicit recognition of mutual responsibility. However the work profiled is owned rather than shared between organisations. The challenges of the Equality and Race Relations legislation, the new Programme for Government and Peace III are to proactively ensure equality and fair treatment for all citizens, promote good relations and community cohesion, proactively address segregation and to build positive relations at the local level. The recommendations in Section 6 based on the evidence from the case studies suggest that greater synergies could be achieved through Common Policy and Frameworks, the development of a good relations learning environment, relationship building and a commitment to leadership and associated actions across the statutory and non statutory agencies and the political and community leadership.
Table Two Leadership Issues Statutory, Non Statutory, Political, and Community Level: Interface areas and the promotion of shared neighbourhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Relevant Case Studies</th>
<th>Statutory Agency Leadership issues</th>
<th>Non-Statutory Agency Leadership issues</th>
<th>Political Level Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interface areas and the promotion of shared neighbourhoods: issues of territoriality and contested identities</td>
<td>St Galls Concept Plan, North Belfast Interface Communities Working Group, Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project Finaghy Crossroads Group, and Springfarm Estate. Also relevant to the three case studies concerned with Building Shared City Space.</td>
<td>Developing an overview – concept plan – enter into partnership to meet service delivery needs (housing, education, health) (St Gals). Audits environment, assess territorial complexities, community constraints and capacity. Recognises that communities must be at the heart of change - empower communities – communities own the plan (NBIWG) and the assets (SRRP). Engage with community groups to develop strategic thinking and promote win:win situations. Mutual responsibility of statutory agencies and communities.</td>
<td>Flexibility to commit resources at an early stage and set conditions which must be met (IFI). Development agents provide moral support and IFI meets cost of technical assistance (IFI). Risk-taking in a strong developmental framework utilising business plans, economic appraisal and prior conditions (IFI). Facilitate discussion with statutory agencies and community groups (CRC/ NBIWG). Intervention in Springfarm with NIHE provided material for a NI Shared Neighbourhood Policy (CRC)</td>
<td>Secure political intervention to allay fears and build support. Build political active support for local developments. Need to underpin process with political support. Importance of gaining confidence of political representatives by regular briefings, updates as processes develop and at key stages. Securing negotiated agreement through political parties in the Council.</td>
<td>Time to allow cross community ventures to develop (medium to long term process). Existing community infrastructures: Sufficient co-ordination at community level to enable vision and leadership to be supported locally. Community Engagement was underpinned by community based community relations work on interfaces (NBIWG). External independent facilitation to progress the inter-community processes and overcome difficulties. Access to small amounts of money from BCC, CRC etc. to support the process as it develops organically (Finaghy, Springfarm)</td>
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<td>Endorsement of the planning process by Chief executive BCC and representatives of OFMDFM and DSD (NBIWG).</td>
<td>Use regeneration as a tool to promote inter-community dialogue and co-operation.</td>
<td>Managing Risk – transparency with information and consultation.</td>
<td>Deliver early wins and increase credibility and authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Shared City Spaces</td>
<td>Carnival Arts Development Programme, Renewing the Routes, Re-imaging Communities.</td>
<td>Used arts as a tool to promote inter community dialogue and co-operation by breaking down barriers. Consultation with community arts groups shaped the training and skills programme (Carnival Arts). Invested in high quality through using international artists. Created opportunities for collaboration through carnival events. Utilised funding streams flexibly (Carnival Arts). Utilised third parties through Good Relations Steering Panel and an Expert Advisory Panel to make recommendations to Council (Memorabilia).</td>
<td>Participation in Shared Communities Consortium partners (Re-imaging Communities) (Arts Council NI/CRC/SOLACE). Ability to take and encourage others to share risks</td>
<td>Recognised implicitly contested nature of public events in Belfast. Identified individuals and groups for consultation (Renewing the Routes).</td>
<td>Leadership of community consortium based on track record and demonstrable high quality. Linked carnival arts development to indigenous art forms (i.e. drumming). Encouraged inter-community participation at skills workshops and at carnival events. Networking through Carnival Arts Consortium and Festival Forum. Made input through Good Relations Steering Panel (Memorabilia). Provided opportunities for communities to engage in discussions about physical development along the inner city arterial routes (Renewing the Routes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Shared City Places</td>
<td>Renewing the Routes City wide programme - Developed objective criteria to choose the improvement nodes on the arterial routes. Shared Communities Consortium (Arts Council, IFI, NIHE, DSD, PSNI) relies on expertise of partners, careful preparation and planning, development of relationships with local communities. Manages risk through obtaining a reference from statutory and non statutory agencies (Re-imaging Communities).</td>
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<td>Community leadership and sufficient support to negotiate change in the image of local areas. Communities encouraged to tap into and validate, often hidden identification of people to where they live and the past (Re-imaging Communities). Variable capacity</td>
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<td>Children and Young People</td>
<td>CRIS and YSCRSP, Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility.</td>
<td>Developed programmes strategically through the development of a consistent approach that embedded equity, diversity and interdependence in the schools and youth service community relations programmes with a commitment to progression from foundation work, to issues and conflict resolution underpinned by inter-community activities. Inclusion of community relations in the Revised Curriculum. Developed suite of community relations training programmes for teachers and youth workers. Support for summer youth diversionary programmes has led to more and new groups becoming engaged in the Youth Service Community Relations Support Programme. Unused tennis courts leased to North Belfast Play Forum and the Council provides continuing financial support towards a core salary and maintenance of the facility (Waterworks).</td>
<td>Funding support</td>
<td>Supported lease to North Belfast Play Forum and continued support.</td>
<td>North Belfast Play Forum – intercommunity mechanism developed Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility – to respond to substance abuse in the park and to reclaim the park. Continued oversight from North Belfast Play Forum and annual strategic planning ensures continued outreach to communities and new programmes to respond to community needs (Waterworks). Engages with schools, community group and sports organisations. Manages risk by piloting all new programmes (Waterworks). Participants trained as coaches. Community relations and conflict resolution is an integral part of training programmes (Waterworks). Diversionary programmes to divert young people from interface violence (YSCRSP/Waterworks). Voluntary uptake of Youth Service Community Relations Support programme.</td>
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<td>Equality and Community Cohesion</td>
<td>Traveller Health and Community Outreach, Cultural Diversity Project</td>
<td>Senior level leadership committed to equality and promotion of good relations. Projects underpinned by research and consultation with Travellers and BME students and organisations. Commitment to empowering the Traveller community with skills and knowledge to identify their health priorities. Policy and procedures reviewed (BMC) and action taken to embed the learning in the institutions. Staff training was organised to meet information/training needs in relation to the health of the Traveller community. Learning disseminated through Learning Support Groups and Toolkits (BMC). Mechanisms such as the Royal Hospitals Ethnic Minority Forum and the BMC International Office ensure regular access to senior management. Involvement of management, staff, trade unions in Staff Diversity Group (The Royal Hospitals).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partnership between Royal Hospitals and An Munia Tober (Travellers organisation). Traveller women recruited an trained as Lay Health Mentors. Traveller community began to take ownership of their health issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Organisational Capacity through Advisory Role and Building Partnerships</td>
<td>IFI, CRC</td>
<td>Committed leadership at Senior level to promotion of good relations. Advocates statutory agencies take a more strategic approach and raises awareness for the need for engagement on conflict transformation by departments hitherto uninvolved (CRC).</td>
<td>Use of programme teams to develop proposals with departmental input and endorsement through the Inter-Governmental Advisory Committee (IFI). Building relationships and encouraging statutory and non-statutory agencies to support projects (IFI) and to be more strategic (CRC). Flexibility in funding (IFI). Roles include advisor, co-founder, member of committees, research, liaison, ideas and risk taking (CRC). Supported development of a Belfast City Good Relations Plan. Work at grassroots level and brings partners to the table (CRC). Assist key stakeholders to develop new partnerships/strategic approaches to expand on previous work (CRC).</td>
<td>Decided at national level that IFI would be independent of governments. Use of social and economic intervention as a vehicle for addressing disadvantage and promoting contact, dialogue and reconciliation. Ensure relationships with political representatives are based on transparency and advocacy (CRC).</td>
<td>Use of development agents and provision of technical and moral support (IFI). Issues identified under Interfaces and Shared Neighbourhoods. Supported leadership in funded groups by issue based mentoring rather than external training (CRC). Communities prepared to innovate and to engage with partners. Community is the key driver of the project (Springfarm Estate/CRC). Empower community and voluntary organisations to take the lead and develop mechanisms to identify issues, solutions and lobby public bodies to take a more strategic approach (CRC). Variable capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Recommendations

6.1 Common Policy and Framework: Community Cohesion

6.1.1 Developing Critical Mass
Strategic and collective action, resourced and monitored by statutory, non-statutory agencies should develop opportunities with local communities to add scale and momentum to the development of shared spaces and activities in the city of Belfast over the next five years.

6.1.2 Learning Environment
Develop a conference, seminar, research and study visit programme to draw on best practice in community cohesion, conflict transformation, cultural diversity and integration from Northern Ireland, the UK, Ireland, the European Union and internationally in order to stimulate greater effort and innovation.

6.1.3 Skills in Conflict Transformation
Develop a programme in Peace III to increase the skills base to facilitate conflict transformation in relation to the issues of territoriality, segregation and contested identities and issues that may be perceived as contentious to be delivered across all sectors.

6.1.4 Research
In establishing a common policy and framework, in audits and research it is important to develop a shared evidence base for integrated action planning.

6.1.5 Corporate Objectives
Embed the Equality Duty, the Promotion of Good relations, community cohesion and shared future action plans in the performance management systems of statutory agencies through their inclusion in resource allocations, core competency frameworks and other management tools.
6.1.6  **Building Relationships**  
Statutory and non-statutory agencies should build and sustain relationships of collaboration and co-operation in order to address issues that may be perceived as contentious and to address the legacy of the interfaces.

6.2  **Relationship Building and Collaboration**

6.2.1  **Partnership**  
Partnerships between statutory agencies and community organisations should clarify terms of reference, roles and responsibilities and recognise the need to invest in the relationships and to negotiate on an on-going basis.

6.2.2  **Community Development Approaches**  
The use of community development processes are essential in order to develop community infrastructures and community co-ordination that can progress from single identity work. A commitment to move from parallel approaches must be embedded in community development practice and lead to intercommunity contact, dialogue, projects and solutions.

6.3  **Leadership**

6.3.1  **Interlinking with Good Relations**  
Utilise arts, regeneration and social and economic initiatives to promote good relations and shared activities and spaces

6.3.2  **Early Wins**  
Early wins meeting local community needs are essential in the long term processes of conflict transformation in order to maintain credibility in the conflict transformation process.

6.3.3  **Community Planning**  
The case studies indicate that no one approach is sufficiently sensitive to meet the need to engage and improve service delivery to all interface communities or areas and groups relevant to conflict transformation. The approach adopted should take into account the importance of promoting good relations, the
complexities at local level and the design should promote flexibility to interventions that promote conflict transformation.

6.3.4 Transparency
Meaningful engagement processes with communities should be open, transparent and agreed.

6.3.5 Sustained Support
Conflict transformation projects based on shared neighbourhoods and shared spaces at interfaces may take between five to ten years to develop and achieve tangible outcomes and need on-going structures to support development.

6.3.6 Transforming Interfaces
Proactively explore how the Peace III funds could complement the IFI model of conflict transformation. IFI interventions must also be designed to complement city objectives as outlined in the Peace III Plan. Such a proactive approach is needed to support interface communities in conjunction with departments, such as the Department for Social Development, to utilise opportunities, develop plans and projects to change their physical, social and economic life.

6.3.7 Establishing Momentum
The Community Relations Council, in recognition of the roles it has played in promoting good relations and community relations should proactively support and co-fund Belfast City Council and its partner agencies to build momentum in interagency and inter community efforts to transform the conflict based on the principles of equality, diversity and interdependence.

6.3.8 Engagement in Statutory Led Partnerships
The approaches of non-statutory agencies identified in the case studies add value to good relations and conflict transformation interventions through their capacity to bring partners to the table, act flexibly, manage risk and develop relationships of trust at a local level.
6.3.9 Political Leadership
Explore with political leaders the principles that could underpin explicit political support for locally based conflict transformation work using good relations, community development, community relations and community safety programmes of work.

6.3.10 External Facilitation
Conflict transformation processes that engage with the complexities of territoriality and contested identities require access to experienced and external facilitation skilled in supporting dialogue and resolving conflict.

6.3.11 Operational Linkages
Develop the operational linkages between community development, community relations and community safety approaches in programmes of work.
## Table Seven: Recommendations Common Policy and Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Policy and Framework: Community Cohesion (6.1)</td>
<td>Developing Critical Mass (6.1.1)</td>
<td>Add scale and momentum to the development of shared spaces and activities in the city of Belfast over five years.</td>
<td>BCC, Statutory, Non-statutory Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Environment (6.1.2)</td>
<td>Develop a conference, seminar, research and study visit programme and draw on best practice in Northern Ireland, the UK, Ireland, the European Union and internationally.</td>
<td>BCC and Peace III Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills in Conflict Transformation (6.1.3)</td>
<td>Develop a programme in Peace III to continue to build the skills base to facilitate conflict transformation in the context of territoriality, segregation and contested identities and issues that may be perceived as contentious to be delivered across all sectors and disciplines.</td>
<td>Peace III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 75 Equality Duty and A Shared Future</td>
<td>Research (6.1.4)</td>
<td>Utilise research in establishing a common policy and framework, engaging with all groups and developing evidence based action.</td>
<td>BCC and partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corporate Objectives (6.1.5)</td>
<td>Future action plans in relation to community cohesion, cultural diversity good relations and conflict transformation should be embedded in the resource allocations and performance management systems of statutory agencies.</td>
<td>BCC and Statutory Agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table Eight: Recommendations Relationship Building and Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Building and Collaboration</td>
<td>Partnership (6.2.1)</td>
<td>Partnerships between statutory agencies and community organisations should clarify terms of reference, roles and responsibilities and recognise the need to invest in the relationships and to negotiate.</td>
<td>Lead partners in partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Development Approaches (6.2.2)</td>
<td>Promote community co-ordination and capacity to develop inter-community solutions.</td>
<td>BCC and Peace III Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Action by</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Interlinking with Good Relations (6.3.1)</td>
<td>Utilise arts, regeneration, social and economic interventions to promote good relations and shared activities and spaces.</td>
<td>BCC and Statutory agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Wins (6.3.2)</td>
<td>Early wins meeting local community needs are essential to maintain credibility in the conflict transformation process.</td>
<td>BCC and Statutory Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Planning (6.3.3)</td>
<td>The approach adopted should take into account the importance of promoting good relations, the complexities at local level and the design should promote flexibility to interventions that promote conflict transformation.</td>
<td>Belfast City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transparency (6.3.4)</td>
<td>Meaningful community consultation processes should be open, transparent and agreed with community and statutory stakeholders.</td>
<td>BCC and Statutory Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustained Support (6.3.5)</td>
<td>Support for conflict transformation projects based on shared neighbourhoods and shared spaces at interfaces is necessary as they take between five to ten years to develop and achieve tangible outcomes.</td>
<td>Funders and Statutory Agencies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transforming Interfaces (6.3.6)</td>
<td>Develop the Peace III programme to complement and work in conjunction with Departments utilising the IFI model of conflict transformation and bring forward plans and projects to physical, social and economic life at interfaces.</td>
<td>BCC, Statutory and Non-Statutory Agencies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Building Momentum (6.3.7)</td>
<td>CRC should continue to proactively support BCC and its partners to build momentum in inter agency and inter-community efforts to transform the conflict based on the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence. The co-funding role of non-statutory agencies should be continued.</td>
<td>CRC/IFI</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement with Statutory Led Partnerships (6.3.8)</td>
<td>Non-statutory agencies should be included as partners in statutory led partnerships.</td>
<td>BCC, Statutory/Non-Statutory Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Leadership (6.3.9)</td>
<td>Explore with political leaders the principles that would underpin explicit political support for locally based conflict transformation work using Good Relations, community development, community relations and community safety approaches.</td>
<td>BCC and partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Facilitation (6.3.10)</td>
<td>Conflict transformation processes that engage with the complexities of interfaces and division require access to external facilitation skilled in supporting dialogue and resolving conflict.</td>
<td>Peace III Community/ Training groups/ CRC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational linkages (6.3.11)</td>
<td>Develop the operational linkages between community development, community relations and community safety in programmes of work.</td>
<td>BCC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I

Initial meetings and follow up discussions were held with the following:

Joan Dempster  Arts Council Northern Ireland, Re-imaging Communities
Hazel Franey  Belfast City Council, Good Relations Manager
Anne Deighan  Belfast City Council, Good Relations Officer
Catherine Taggart  Belfast City Council, Community Services Manager
Yvonne Coyle  Belfast City Council, Community Development Officer
Jenny Oliver  Belfast City Council, Community Development Officer
Seorise Caldwell  Belfast City Council, Community Development Officer
Frank O’Hagan  Belfast City Council, Community Development Officer
Esther Broomfield  Belfast City Council, Economic Development Officer
Lisa Martin  Belfast City Council, Economic Development Officer
Siobhan Stevenson  Belfast City Council, Culture and Arts Officer
Deirdre Robb  Belfast City Council, Arts Development Officer
Mark McCashin  Belfast City Council, Manager Ozone Leisure Centre
Caroline Diamond  Belfast City Council, Economic Development Officer
Frankie Smyth  Belfast City Council, Economic Development Officer
Siobhan Watson  Belfast City Council, SNAP Manager
Anne Marie Campbell  Belfast City Council, Policy and Research Manager
Geraldine McGreevy  Belfast Education and Library Board
Paul O’Connor  Belfast Metropolitan College, Head of Information and Student Services
Paula McCauley  Business in the Community
Dympna McGlade  Community Relations Council, Programme Director
Duncan Morrow  Community Relations Council, CEO
Senior Management Team  Community Relations Council
Sandy Smith  International Fund for Ireland, Joint Director General
Sam Corbett  International Fund for Ireland
Jackie Hewitt  International Fund for Ireland, Board Member
Maurice Johnston  Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Jim Carlin  Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Veronica McEneaney  The Royal Hospitals, Health and Social Inequalities Unit
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Buchan</td>
<td>North Belfast Community Action Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Douglas</td>
<td>North Belfast Community Action Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raymond Stewart</td>
<td>Finaghy Community Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Smith</td>
<td>Finaghy Community Centre Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy Wylie</td>
<td>Waterworks Multi-Sports Facility</td>
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</tbody>
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