Belfast City Council

Good Relations Research Programme

Good Practice in Local Area Planning in the Context of Promoting Good Relations

Final Report

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Executive Summary

- This research examines the connection between good relations and local area planning in Belfast. It uses comparative analysis, case studies and semi-structured in-depth interviews to see where and how spatial planning can make an effective contribution to the management and development of the post-conflict city.

- The research showed that Belfast is working at multiple speeds with some parts of the city benefiting from economic growth and political stability and other parts left largely untouched by conflict transformation. In the *progressing* city, a rising housing market, gentrification and consumption lifestyles are accompanied by greater sharing, whilst segregation and resource competition characterise the *other* city losing out in economic and political restructuring.

- Segregation and interfacing have significant costs, which include production and consumption effects such as the dislocation of labour markets, the inefficient use of services and facilities, demographic imbalance, significant urban blight and poverty. The diseconomies of segregation are borne disproportionately in these areas, which project an increasingly negative image as Belfast projects itself as an outward looking and modern location for investment and tourism.

- Policy has engaged the issue of segregation in land use planning, housing and urban regeneration. However, there is a disconnect between high level policy aspirations and the delivery of operational practice and some areas such as transportation have only weakly engaged the effects of territoriality on urban management.

- A review of policy and experience in other divided places highlights a number of learning points for local practice including the need: for a strategic approach that places good relations at the centre of spatial planning; for a stronger focus on sharing and urban connectivity; to deploy existing planning instruments to achieve mixed housing outcomes; to develop a stronger understanding of labour and housing markets in place making and mixing; to ensure that public space is open and accessible to multiple users including ethnic minorities; for governance and partnership working in making shared place; and for skills development to help translate policy into practice.

- The research showed that diverse approaches have been deployed to tackle interfaces and produce shared space. These include the application of planning zoning powers in the form of comprehensive development powers and community based interface interventions. Managed risk may be needed in project development including at local community level in order to challenge sectarianism and elite interests and it is important that new high value mixed spaces do not displace indigenous communities creating adverse affordability problems. There are some initiatives that recognise the importance of connectivity in opening segregated places and creating opportunities for work and consumption via innovative labour market and community transport schemes. The analysis also shows the importance of managing good relations in the context of both large scale bureaucracies and local governance structures in order to achieve sustainable outcomes.

- A policy framework for planning good relations in Belfast could consist of multiple elements including: a clear set of strategic priorities based on a shared and connected city; leadership across sectors but especially at a political level; strong agreed governance structures to make the system work effectively; decision making criteria to assist implementation; better skills development and sharing of practice with an emphasis on learning from policy into practice models; and monitoring systems to ensure that progress toward a shared city is being made.

1. Introduction

Belfast has changed remarkably in the last 15 years on the back of post-conflict economic growth, the sustained development of the property market and a decrease in unemployment and benefit dependency. In the most recent analysis of the *State of the City*, Michael Parkinson (2007) showed that; GVA in Belfast was £25,236, only second to Edinburgh in comparison with regional UK cities; the NVQ Level 4 plus rate was 40%, again only second to Edinburgh; and unemployment had declined in the last ten years from 9.3% to 3.9%. New elite investment sites have emerged in the central business district, Laganside and more recently in developments such as Titanic Quarter and Sirocco Quays. The property consultants CRBE (2007) show that there is currently planning permission for 186,00 square metres of office space in the city centre and that office take up in Northern Ireland exceeded 40,000 square metres per annum in both 2005 and 2006.

These changes had an impact on the changing distribution of segregation and integration as Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2006a) showed that the Dissimilarity Index for Northern Ireland rose only slightly from 0.66 in 1991 to 0.67 in 2001. However, their analysis of the Index (with 1.0 being total segregation and zero indicating complete integration) on Housing Executive estates in Belfast recorded a figure of 0.90, which had changed little in the previous ten years Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2006b). Similarly, DSD's (2007) review of poverty in Northern Ireland showed that of households in the bottom and second quintile of low income, 81% were living in Housing Executive property (in 2005-2006) an increase from 73% in 2002-2003. What is emerging here is twin speed city feeding of a dual economy in which those with the education and skills are doing well in key growth sectors whilst those without resources are increasingly corralled in the sink estates stratified by poverty, segregation and fear. Thus, new interfaces have been built in the last ten years at the same time as new mixed housing spaces have developed in the high value end of the south Belfast Housing market (Murtagh and Carmichael, 2006).

Deloitte (2007) suggested that the diseconomies of the segregation could mount to £1.5 billion in direct and indirect costs and opportunity costs in terms of "lost jobs (27,600 from 1983-2000), investment (£225 million GVA) and tourism (£1,461 million 2006 prices)" (Deloitte, 2007, p.90). The Portland Trust (2007) also highlighted the economy as the major driver in improving community relations, closing the differential between Catholics and Protestants and increasing the prospects for integration. There are therefore economic, social, community and political imperatives in the management of ethno-religious space and increased attention on the policy regime that can help improve opportunity and reduce the human and financial cost burden. This research examines the role that local area planning can play in the management of post-conflict spaces, which has been identified as a priority in the Council's Good Relations strategy and the range of connected research projects designed to provide an evidence base to aid policy development and delivery.

1.1 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this assignment were to:

- Determine, based on the examination of models from elsewhere and utilising different scenarios/options what is the optimum model for the delivery of good relations within local area planning;
- Identify criteria to allow local area planning decisions to be proofed on the basis of good relations and develop a coherent policy making framework for Belfast;
- Make recommendations on how to measure the quality of local relationships in local neighbourhoods;
- Carry out informal and formal consultations, discussions, interviews as required to gather relevant information, both quantitative and qualitative; and
- Report regularly on the progress of the study to the Project Manager and, if required, to the Project Reference Group and Good Relations Steering Panel.

1.2 What do we mean by local area planning?

At the outset it is important to clarify what we mean by local area planning and here the application of the principles of spatial planning were instructive to circumstances in Belfast. The concept of spatial planning was introduced in England and Wales under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) in the form of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks. The concept is in many ways incorporated in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and reflects the shift to a wider definition of environmental Planning. The Government sets out the following definition:

> Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they can function. Spatial Plans should: Set a vision for the future pattern of development with clear objectives, an implementation focus and evaluation system; Consider the needs and problems of communities and how they interact with them in the use and development of land – how will social and economic needs of the area be met; and Seek to integrate the wide range of activities relating to development and regeneration. ODPM (2005) *PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development*, p.30.

Simultaneously, there is a wider concern for the use of spatial plans to produce sustainable communities, which includes a commitment to social, economic and cultural diversity. These are broadly defined as:

- Flourishing local economy to provide wealth and jobs;
- Strong leadership;
- Effective engagement and participation by local people;
- A safe and healthy environment;
- Sufficient scale, size and density of housing to support basic amenities and minimise the use of resources, especially land;
- Good public transport;
- Buildings that can meet different needs over time;
- A well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures;
- Good quality local services including health, education and leisure;
- A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture;
- A sense of place;
- Low levels of and fear of crime; and
- The right links with the wider regional, national and international economy. *Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future*, ODPM, 2003.

In November 2007, the Minster of the Environment launched a review of the planning system in Northern Ireland to make it more responsive and efficient and here there is an opportunity to shape land use planning around a spatial approach, not least with the advent of Community Planning under the Review of Public Administration.

1.3 Research Methodology

The methodology for this research project consisted of three components:

1. Part 1 involved secondary research into the problems created by segregation and establishing the business case for a planned intervention in this arena. This also examined the efficacy of the policy response via an audit of strategies and programmes involved in the use and development of land.
2. Part 2 examined the lessons from international policy and practice and whilst experience imported from different places need to be treated with caution, there are valuable normative lessons for managing divided and contested places in Belfast.
3. The main part of the research involved a series of ten case studies designed to examine different problem contexts such as mixed and segregated areas but each was designed to

look at policy and programme interventions that could help translate the aspirations of good relations into planning practice. For example, this explored the use of planning instruments used to manage particular peacelines as well as high level organisational responses to bring good relations into public sector bureaucracies. The case studies were supported via a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in the policy system including representatives from the Council, planners, the Housing Executive, the Department for Social Development and the community and voluntary sector (Annex I contains a full list of participants in the empirical research).

1.4 Report Structure

The next section sets out the problem and policy context and presents the rationale for a policy connection between good relations and planning. It also highlights the significant policy work that has already been carried out in this area but identifies particular areas for practice development. Section 3 describes seven lessons from international experience and what they might mean for the development of a more active engagement of good relations and spatial planning in the city. This sets the context for the presentation of the case studies in Section 3, which weaves in the in-depth interviews to draw out a series of learning points from each one. This in turn leads to the conclusions, recommendations and ideas for future work in this area, particularly around the theme for policy to practice interventions.

2. Problems, Policy and Good Relations

This section sets the context for the empirical research by outlining the problems, relevant policy connections and implications for good relations practice. There has been a detectable shift in the way in which spatial policies have engaged the issue of segregation and territoriality, not least as a result of the equality agenda and the Shared Future strategy. The devolved administration signaled its intention to develop a stronger business growth agenda in the draft *Programme for Government* (2008-2011), *Budget* (2008-2011) and *Investment Strategy* (2008-2018). Whilst its wider aim is to create a peaceful, fair and prosperous society it is centrally based on *growing a dynamic economy*. This will involve an emphasis on infrastructure, protecting and enhancing the environment, modernising public services and promoting tolerance, inclusion, health and well-being.

The emphasis on creating the conditions for wealth creation and shifting the balance of value-added from the public to the private sector will see a reduced emphasis on welfare and state subvention. Urban regeneration and community development will be allocated £63.2 million in 2007-2008 although this will fall to £56.5 million by 2010-2011 and the *Investment Strategy 2008-2018* indicates that infrastructure will be prioritised in future spending plans. The DETI *Economic Vision for Northern Ireland* places a greater emphasis on innovation and skills and stresses the importance of the *welfare to work* agenda and the aim of moving people off benefits (especially Incapacity Benefit) into employment. This wider policy and budgetary context is important for understanding the status and scope of spatial policies, such as Neighbourhood Renewal and their capacity to deliver change at the local level. With the run-out of the Structural Funds, the investment in disadvantaged communities and interface areas will decline in real terms as greater emphasis is placed on promoting value-added economic sectors, skills and infrastructure. This section highlights the persistent nature of the problem of segregation, the innovation in policies emerging in planning and housing and the need for programme intervention in this arena to be supported, despite the contemporary expenditure and investment climate.

2.1 Planning, Segregation and Territoriality

The business case for a connection between planning and good relations has been made in a range of empirical studies, policy lobbying documents and site specific reports (see for example Deloitte. 2007; Murtagh, 2002). It is not our intention to repeat that analysis but rather to highlight its implications for the City Council's approach to the management of segregation and the development of increased shared space in Belfast. The table below identifies the key areas that are relevant for local area planning and highlight the need for an integrated policy response.

Table 1 The Policy Related Effects of Segregation

Issue	Description of Need
Activity segregation	Activity segregation resulting in facilities and services 'trapped' in the territory of the out-group.
Community institutions and critical mass	Locality population change undermines local institutional capacity thus accelerating 'exit' and the critical mass of the community necessary for sustainability.
Deprivation	High rates of socio-economic deprivation reflecting the residents' weak bargaining power in the housing allocation and transfer system.
Quality of life	Pervasive sense of fear, danger and direct violence to people and property.
Death and injury	Higher rate of death and violence in areas where the ethno-sectarian map is most contested.
Demographic imbalance and housing need	High demand in republican/nationalist areas fuelled by higher than average fertility rates, family sizes and younger age profiles. Protestant demographics generate comparatively less housing need particularly given the wider choice of housing search territory.
Symmetrical land and property markets	The reproduction of segregated space through symmetrical and often self-contained property markets.
Direct costs	Physical construction of interfaces, buffer zones and security adaptations to property.
Blight of land and property	Land and housing near interface areas blighted by fear, violence and lack of investment confidence.
Image	Negative imagery produced by walls of division, sectarian graffiti and physical dereliction to investors and tourists.

Source: Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006.

We also know that segregation has produced spatial effects by dislocating labour markets; that siting workplaces in mixed areas will attract people from both Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods; and a higher percentage from socially deprived wards. High levels of territoriality also create consumption segregation especially in the use of public services, retailing and entertainment. Interfaces and contested spaces have a blighting effect on land and property which is harming the attainment of ambitious brownfield housing targets and regeneration projects in Belfast. Interface areas are also the poorest in the city and there has been an established connection between segregation, deprivation, death and injury in the Troubles and ill-health which indicates the need for an integrated policy response.

There is a wider set of issues that highlights the strategic importance of these localities as a wider planning problem including differential demographics with Catholic population structures creating housing stress at the same time as the Protestant population is declining and residualising in some interfaces. Community capacities and organisational infrastructure vary considerably, with comparatively less developed groups in Protestant areas making locally based regeneration and cross-community contacts on which they depend, difficult to sustain. Fear and mobility work hand in hand to create insular places and inward looking communities whose 'mental map' of the city often precludes looking to other sites for work, training or consumption activities. These are often accentuated by demographics, resource competition, memory and paramilitarism, which can be deployed as part of a process claiming ownership and control of land. Finally, as Belfast attempts to reposition itself as a modern outward looking and progressive European city, the presence of peacelines and legacy of insecurity will have a negative effect on Foreign Direct Investment and even tourism. The growth of curiosity terror-tourism may be limited in the city's attempt to play effectively in a globalised economic and cultural world.

2.2 Policy Intervention

Any analysis of spatial planning policies in Northern Ireland suggests that there has been considerable policy engagement with the issue of segregation and territoriality. This is indicated in the Programme for Government and in *A Shared Future,* which makes a number of spatial policy commitments about: challenging segregation; creating trust and alliance within and between

communities; and renewing interface areas. However, the Shared Future approach is being reworked by the Executive around the themes of promoting tolerance, inclusion, health and well-being and there is less certainty about Assembly's stance on an explicit challenge to segregation and the need for a more shared society and integrated place. Notwithstanding the wider political direction of community relations in Northern Ireland, the region's main physical development plan has adopted progressive objectives on responding to segregation and stimulating opportunities for mixing. The Regional Development Strategy sets out two Strategic Planning Guidelines aimed at developing Community Cohesion and actively promoting integrated places.

Table 2 The Regional Development Strategy and Community Cohesion

Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG SRC 3) objective
To foster development which contributes to community relations, recognises cultural diversity and reduces socio economic differentials within Northern Ireland
SCR 3.1 Foster Patterns of development supporting to community cohesion
Facilitate the development of integrated communities where people wish to live together and to promote respect, encouragement and celebration of different traditions; and promote respect, encouragement and celebration of different traditions, and encourage communication and social intercourse in areas where communities are living apart.
SRC3.2 Underpin the dual approach by fostering community interaction which could also contribute, over time and on the basis of choice, to greater community integration
▪ Develop partnerships between public, private, voluntary and community sectors to facilitate community co-operation and involvement in securing social, economic and environmental objectives ▪ Facilitate the removal of existing physical barriers between communities, subject to local community agreement; ▪ Support the development of 'shared places' accessible to all members of the community; ▪ Revitalise the role of town centres and other common locations well served by public transport as focal points for shopping, services, employment, cultural and leisure activities for the whole community; ▪ Promote the development of major employment/enterprise areas in locations which are accessible to all sections of the community; ▪ Improve and develop public transport to assist in providing safe and equitable access to services, facilities and employment opportunities essential to the vitality of local communities; ▪ Strengthen the network of local museums and heritage centres and arts centres with a special focus on understanding cultural diversity; and ▪ Promote cultural diversity through the creation of opportunities in the creative industries associated with the arts.

Source: Based on DRD, 2001, p.34-35.

The draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) highlights the need to create a more equal and inclusive city but it is difficult to see how the planning system delivers these outcomes in practice. The Plan placed an emphasis on brownfield development and increasing the population of Belfast. It also zones new Major Employment Locations (MELS) and it is important that disadvantaged communities have the skills and mobility to access the opportunities that emerge here to 2015 (DOE, 2004). The *Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan* and the related strategies of Translink, such as the quality corridor bus initiative have emphasised the importance of public rather than private transport in developing sustainable transport infrastructure in Belfast. The DRD *Accessibility Strategy* also highlights the need to respond to particular groups such as disabled people and older people who face specific transport obstacles. However, it is far from clear as to how these policies are integrated to ensure that people in enclave areas reach new opportunity sites and places of employment.

The Housing Executive also made a significant institutional investment in Community Cohesion linked to a programme of work in interfaces, the removal of sectarian symbols and the promotion of mixed housing via innovative pilot projects in Enniskillen and Loughbrickland. *People and Place* highlighted the need to deal with the legacy of the conflict in Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans (DSD, 2003). The Semple Review of Affordable Housing has highlighted a variant of the issue in the way in which balanced communities need to recognise the impact of gentrification on mixed religion places.

Positive Steps (DSD 2005a) also highlights the importance of the community and voluntary sector as a resource in local regeneration and cross-community development whilst the five Belfast Area Partnerships are co-ordinating area based interventions including Neighbourhood Renewal and Renewing Communities. Positive Steps emphasises the need to rationalise the sector and to sustain initiatives around community development and cross-community development in a much reduced grant environment. The Local Community Fund also supports the capacities of local groups in the delivery of area based programmes, especially in the highly segregated north of the city. Renewing Communities (DSD 2005b) is a multi-element strategy resulting from the *Task Force into Working Class Protestant Areas* and there is a concern that this single identity focus works against the overriding aim of a Shared Future. The sheer number of area policies, the overload of governance structures and the dilution of policy responses makes it difficult to locate the decision making sites that the Council needs to engage on the good relations agenda. Some rationalisation of the approach, around spatial planning and agreed proposals around, sustainable communities would at least place some order on the current programme map.

2.3 Lessons from the Policy Review

Despite the development of a range of positive policy approaches there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in bringing good relations into local area planning:

- Segregation is a persistent problem and in some areas territoriality has deepened the exclusion of enclave communities since 1994. The budgetary climate indicates that fewer resources will be allocated to subsidise intervention in area regeneration and community development.
- There is a danger that the issue is sliding down the policy agenda in the urgency to modernise a private sector facing economy. Lobbying will be essential in making the business case to address the effects of segregation and the contribution that area planning can make to improving good relations and efficient spatial management.
- Whilst there is a high level strategic approach to policy and contested space, there is little evidence of this being translated into operational practice. For instance, SPG 3 in the RDS is not a strong feature of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP). Similarly, there is a disconnect between the strategic commitments in the Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Strategy and the District Housing Plans which set out the annual housing programme in each housing management area.
- There is a lack of clear policy integration *horizontally* so there is a disjuncture between planning, urban policy and housing in the creation of shared place. The Council's *State of the City* research programme has highlighted the way in which fractured governance and silo working has worked against effective integrated spatial planning approaches.
- Some policies seem contradictory or at least not mutually reinforcing such as the aspiration in A Shared Future for place integration and Renewing Communities which responds to the development needs of mainly Protestant areas. Whether these are sufficiently distinctive to require separate interventions is an important area for discussion, not least in the context of the proliferation of area based programmes and structures in the city.

3. Seven Lessons for Practice

The struggle to deal with the spatial effects of segregation is not unique to Northern Ireland and there is an opportunity to learn from practice in other segregated places and societies emerging from conflict. Not all of the learning from other places is appropriate to Belfast but they often identify examples of good practice and successful methods of intervention. We draw particular attention to a number of lessons for the development of good relations and area planning in the changing regional context.

3.1 Lesson 1: A strategic Development Approach

The Shared Future strategy and the Council's Good Relations plan raised the level of debate about the tolerance of difference and the limits to segregation. In Britain, the Community Cohesion agenda that followed the riots in British cities in 2001 also challenged 'parallel lives' and advocated a stronger emphasis on civic responsibility and a shared sense of British citizenship. The most recent national policy in the UK borrows the Northern Ireland policy aspiration to form its Shared Future strategy. This advocated a shared sense of identity that challenged segregation but Robinson (2005) was critical of the approach because it ignored the advantages of segregation, especially as a resource to cope with racism, exclusion and poverty.

There needs to be a clear set of priorities to inform policy and practice. As we have seen, the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland has its own Community Cohesion, dual objective, to promote integration and mixing whilst respecting people's right to segregated living. There is a need to have a clear central vision for planning, shaped around the central narratives in the Good Relations strategy about the economic inefficiencies, negative externalities and moral risk of a high level of segregation. Writing in an English context Furbey and Macey (2005) warn that:

> We have observed that many faith congregations and organisations already make a significant contribution to the legitimate work of civil society through their involvement in official schemes. Here religion can be said to contribute to social cohesion and 'regeneration'. However, other faith traditions 'resist' such engagement and develop introverted or militantly sectarian responses to, for instances, the challenges of globalisation and social diversity. Some of these responses provide disturbing reminders of the exclusive and reactionary understanding of community (2005, p111).

The example from Sweden below shows one approach to link planning policy and ethnicity and indicates an intolerance of social and ethnic segregation. What is needed here is a clear city-wide approach that links environmental planning, regeneration and good relations and here Reeves (2005) approach is instructive:

- Planning that takes into account the needs of numerous different people;
- Planning that takes a rights based approach and incorporates a duty to promote equality of opportunity;
- Planning that engages people in a participatory way as equals rather than as passive target groups simply to be consulted; and
- Planning that takes the social dimension of sustainable development as seriously as the environmental and economic dimensions.

Table 3 Strategic Level Planning and Ethnicity

The Metropolitan Development Initiative (MDI) approach in Sweden is an urban regeneration policy that has two aims: to promote economic growth and to break socio-economic, ethnic and discriminatory segregation. The key elements of the approach include a spatial focus on areas characterised by a connection between poverty and deprivation; an integrated approach management across the public and private sectors; a dedicated programme budget; a strategy endorsed by signed contracts between actors; a time frame to achieve and measure change; a commitment to community consultation and partnership delivery.

Source: Andersson, 2006.

3.2 Lesson 2: Spatial Planning and Ethnic Place Making

Both the Home Office reports and the Bradford report present a consistent explanation of factors likely to arouse community tensions. These include:

- Weak political leadership, resulting in an absence of an agreed vision and lack of trust in public institutions solving local problems;
- Poor joint working between community, faith and business leaders, and ineffective representation of the communities they serve;
- Older community and religious leaders failing to represent and communicate young people's interests;
- Lack of adequate social, recreational, leisure, sporting and cultural activities for the young can breed frustration and anti-social behaviour;
- Inter-community resentments stemming from competing for regeneration resources – winners and losers;
- Regeneration funding not meeting black and ethnic minority (BME) communities' needs and BME communities being under-represented in regeneration;
- Decline in traditional employment opportunities and obstacles preventing some BME communities from successfully engaging in the labour market;
- Situations where communities exist in isolation one from another and in ignorance of one another's culture and values;
- Situations or locations where racist or extremist groups operate;
- Situations where irresponsible media coverage of events is biased against race equality issues;
- Schools adopting single culture admissions policies, reinforcing segregation and ignorance of other cultures; and
- Discrimination and fear of racist victimisation. (Community Cohesion and Race, www. renewal.net, accessed 2007)

This list emphasises the importance of an integrated response that cuts across physical development, economics and culture and here spatial planning could provide a framework for connecting these issues in a development context (RTPI, 2007). Booth (2006) points out that spatial planning has created a new energy around equality by explicitly identifying *communities of exclusion* as a target for intervention. He rightly points out that success depends on the 'attitudes and culture' operating within planning organisations which in turn need to resist the procedural basis of planning theory and practice. The Bradford Community Accord is one illustration as to how this might be translated into operational practice.

Table 4 Conflict Resolution and Mediation in Bradford

The Bradford Community Accord project addressed problems that were identified following the disturbances that took place in Bradford in 2001. The community highlighted the need for some sort of facilitation/mediation service to address the continuing potential for conflict in the community. The aim of the project was to identify tensions before they escalated into actual conflicts, and to diffuse the tensions by enabling people to discuss honestly, in a safe manner, the issues at stake and to come to mutually agreed actions to deal with those issues. This involved providing a safe place/space; negotiating a process whereby people were heard and listened to; and training facilitators to listen to problems, to clarify issues, and to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to have their say. During the project, five mediation cases, which came from referrals by the police, the Criminal Defence Service (CDS) and the education service, were undertaken. There were also two Open Forum workshops. (Community Cohesion and Race, www. renewal.net, accessed 2007)

However, applying these interventions to a wider regeneration context needs to understand dynamics of desegregation and mixing at different spatial scales. In their study of public spaces Lownsborough and Beunderman suggest that there are eight types of spaces that need to be understood in the context of ethnically charged segregation.

- Exchange spaces: places where people exchange ideas, information and goods;
- Productive spaces: used by people engaged in activities to grow or create goods;
- Spaces of services provision: support services are run from these spaces, either by statutory or voluntary providers;
- Activity spaces: where people gather for leisure, such as for play, sport or informal events;
- Democratic/participative spaces: for shared decision-making or governance;
- Staged spaces: 'one-off' special occasions where people are brought together for a specific purpose;
- In-between spaces: places which are located between communities; and
- Virtual spaces: non-physical spaces, such as those created online by social networking sites (Lownsborough and Beunderman, 2007, pp.52-53).

The lessons from their research can be summarised in four main recommendations for practitioners and policymakers in the future:

- Be flexible in the use of space, understand the grain of people's everyday lives and reflect it in the design of public space;
- Aim to create the setting for 'trusted' spaces, where people feel secure to take part in unfamiliar interactions;
- Foster positive interactions but don't promote them: take an indirect approach to changing behaviour; and
- Embrace creativity and innovation in finding new and imaginative uses for spaces that will transform interactions between people.

3.3 Lesson 3: Policy Instruments to Support Ethno-spatial Management

The Fair Housing Act (1999) in the United States aimed to outlaw discrimination in housing and produce racially diverse neighbourhoods. Whilst progress on this agenda has been slow, the investment in policy instruments provides valuable lessons for local practice. *Moving to Opportunity* (MTO) was established in five cities as an explicit desegregation initiative, especially in African-American inner-city housing projects. They deployed Section 8 housing agreements, coupled with advice and personal counselling to support movers into mixed, often suburban neighbourhoods. Section 8 housing vouchers allowed participants to find and lease a unit in the private rented market but at a rate subsidised by Federal government. Varady and Walker (2000) found that where the initiative had been implemented, it improved living conditions, personal satisfaction levels, employment prospects and educational performance. Nyden et al (1998) made an important

distinction between these initiatives, which promote 'diversity by direction' and market driven 'diversity by circumstance' outcomes. In the latter, mixing is a product of middle-class gentrification that creates new forms of social segregation whilst characterised by a stronger ethnic mix.

Table 5 Characteristics of *Diversity by Direction* Communities in the US

- Community-based organizations (CBOs) concerned with sustaining and promoting the racial diversity of the neighborhood are developed;
- Community organizations to improve local quality-of-life;
- Religious institutions are encouraged to play a prominent role in promoting pro-diversity values;
- The places where different groups in the community come together on a regular basis are more prevalent and developed than those in the diverse-by-circumstance communities;
- These communities have more political and financial resources than diverse-by circumstance communities;
- Working relationships are formed with banks and real estate agents to market the community; and
- The emergence and ongoing existence of skilled, dedicated leadership is a necessary element.

Source: Nyden et al, 1998.

A pure form of Diversity by Direction is exemplified by the Rotterdam Law, which involved a series of quotas on allocations in housing management allocation areas. The quotas apply to household income and ethnic group in delineated neighbourhoods that showed signs of segregating and work across the city to thin out the spatial location of the poorest and the non-Dutch populations.

Table 6 The Rotterdam Law

In 2003, the city of Rotterdam introduced an action programme aimed at creating a city of balance via an explicit 'dispersal law'. The Rotterdam experiment identified 19 streets in designated *hotspots* where low income households are excluded and only tenants with middle and high incomes can apply for a dwelling. The metrics have been widened to include non-migrant households, to micro-manage the ethnic composition of selected neighbourhoods across the city. The *Contact Hypothesis*, which suggests that racism is reduced through increased knowledge and experience of out-groups via geographical proximity, has powerful appeal in the Dutch context. Here, structural integration (language skills, education and employment) and cultural integration (adaptation to mainstream values and norms) is the overriding objective (Van Der LaanBouma-Doff, 2007). Gijsberts and Dageuos (2007) stated that rapid and large volume immigration into concentrated urban areas was in itself, sufficient to generate negative attitudes among the indigenous population. This parallels the experience of housing change in highly segregated areas of Belfast, especially on a site basis in the north of the city. For the Dutch, small area housing management aimed at the avoidance of concentration is an essential application of housing policy instruments.

Source: Based on Van Der LaanBouma-Doff, 2007; and Gijsberts and Dageuos, 2007.

Practice in England on Community Cohesion highlights the methodologies for preparing strategies at neighbourhood levels which demonstrate practical approaches to linking regeneration and racially inclusive local plans. This involves the need for baseline research and participatory consultation, integrated government service delivery and the development of community activities within the context of a wider approach to cohesion. The suggested elements of the approach in each area include:

- Appoint a senior champion to lead on Community Cohesion;
- Promote the principles of Community Cohesion through workshops and seminars;
- Use public authorities' race equalities schemes to help achieve Community Cohesion through their positive promotion of race equality;

- Involve the whole community – BME and White communities – at the outset;
- Establish a baseline of the communities and Community Cohesion in your areas;
- Agree and publish a Community Cohesion Vision;
- Provide time and resources to enable effective community engagement to take place;
- Develop projects and programmes that are likely to promote Community Cohesion rather than to reinforce community separation and tensions, eg through competitive bidding;
- Engage mainstream service providers in reviewing services and pursuing Community Cohesion, eg the take-up of services, relevance, barriers to take-up;
- Provide summer activities for children and young people;
- Use education and educational facilities to promote Community Cohesion, e.g. a venue for cross-cultural interaction and activities;
- Ensure housing policies and processes do not support discriminatory practices;
- Review employment and unemployment for all sections of the community in order to establish a baseline and to introduce targeted interventions;
- Ensure that the police respond to all racist and provocative incidents promptly and rigorously; and
- Build relationships with the press to discourage any inflammatory reporting likely to increase community tensions (Community Cohesion and Race, www.renewal.net, accessed 2007).

However, the Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE) analysis of physical regeneration argues that local authorities, regional development organisations and national agencies are failing to acknowledge race in policy formulation, consultation exercises and project delivery. As with EQIAs in a Northern Ireland context, it shows that Race Assessments are poorly carried out and fail to explain the way in which racial minorities are engaged in regeneration programmes. The impact of Pathfinder initiatives in promoting regeneration has often involved the displacement of ethnic communities by private sector led property projects (CRE, 2007). The lack of social or affordable housing is especially concerning to the CRE especially where it reduces the prospects for ethnically balanced communities to be retained.

3.4 Lesson 4: Labour Markets and Housing Markets

In South Africa, diversity by circumstances was characterised by new forms of segregation as poor Black people occupied spaces abandoned by Whites or as more wealthy ethnic groups colonised safer or mixed neighbourhoods. Lemon and Clifford (2005) referred to this as a process of 're-segregation within desegregation' and drew attention to the interplay between housing markets and labour markets. They concluded that the extent of desegregation is dependent on wealth, social mobility, class restructuring, tenure and land costs and accessibility. The pace of economic change will play out spatially, especially in housing markets and this raises the need to consider a wider understanding of mixing. Atkinson (2006) drew attention to the process of 'urban bubbling' whereby the middle-class increasingly segregate themselves in insulated residences and drive on protected routes to elite sites of consumption, shopping, work and entertainment. The route to desegregation is economic progress, social mobility and a wider understanding of place mixing but the negative effects of this form of segregation also need to be understood. Musterd and De Vos (2007) noted that between 1994 and 2004 Moroccan and Turkish segregation decreased in Amsterdam as they assimilated and made progress economically as well as in the housing market. Indeed in their work on Dutch segregation, Gijaberts and Degeros (2007) pointed out that contact between non-Dutch migrants and the indigenous population in new high value housing markets had a strong positive impact on community attitudes and social closure.

Counter-urbanisation in and beyond the Belfast Metropolitan Area is generating a range of development challenges in small towns and villages in the urban fringe. This is especially important where the in-movers have a different religion than the resident population or where they lack sensitivity about rural lifestyles and cultural mores. Reeve and Robinson (2007) studied racial attitudes in small rural settlements and noted that 'otherisation' rendered many small hamlets 'out of bounds' to ethnic minorities whilst their distinctive needs were invisible on the agendas of service delivery agencies (p.569). The interplay between changes in the labour market and the

housing market are increasingly important to our understanding of desegregation and mixing and where and crucially, who, mixes in the city. It is simply not possible to understand the ethno-religious pattern of the city, connectivity and shared spaces without analysing underlying structural change in the performance of the economy.

Holmes (2006) looked at the findings from seven studies into mixed income communities, which showed very high degrees of satisfaction with many of the schemes. He made the point, noted earlier, that house size was often a more destabilising effect than tenure mix, especially where a disproportionate number of large households often attracted dysfunctional households and behaviours. He also showed how inner-city mixed communities can attract young families, especially where there is a strong infrastructure, particularly schools. One idea to retain the longer term stability is the Community Land Trust which safeguards the ownership of land with the whole community, and makes it possible to exercise controls over who purchases properties and how a whole community is managed in the longer term. In their review of Section 106 agreement, Monk et al (2005) pointed out that planning gain interventions to supply affordable units in new housing developments is best delivered at a time of sustained housing growth. Section 106 agreements build in a proportion of affordable housing into the scheme and have been delivered to good effect in England and as we shall see, there are proposals to adjust Article 40 of the Planning Order to translate this to a Northern Ireland context.

3.5 Lesson 5: Public Realm and Connectivity

Residential segregation in Northern Ireland is not likely to be unpacked easily or quickly and as we have seen in twin-speed Belfast. Interfaces are increasing in disadvantaged communities but many of the new sites emerging in the Central Business District, Victoria Square Cathedral Quarter, Laganside and Titanic Quarter are neutral places; each one a *resource* for mixing and increased sharing. We noted that the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) designated four Major Employment Locations (MELS) in Purdysburn, Mallusk, Lisburn West and Titanic Quarter. A critical issue here is how people living enclave places reach these sites as both the skills mismatch and spatial mismatch between disadvantaged communities and the new spatial economy is deepening their poverty and isolation. Holland et al (2007) criticise public spaces, especially in town centres as mundane, banal and inaccessible. Planning inclusive places means:

- A design that aims to include people of all social strata and age groups including children and older people;
- A design and management that draws on public consultation and involvement; and
- Spaces with a range of security regimes to make people feel both welcome and safe.

Similarly, Worpole and Knox (2007) looked at the critical success factors for the creation of diverse and sustainable public spaces, which included ease of access, appearance and a use that is capable of attracting multiple users. The table below is drawn from work by Demos that highlights the need for places to be managed, especially if they are to attract and hold diverse demographic groups, which they argue is vital to their vitality and energy.

Table 7 Characteristics of Mixed Public Spaces

- Access and availability with open places well connected to the urban fabric;
- Inviting spaces, especially attracting a range of groups who feel secure in its use;
- Exchange based relationships so that the users of places are actively involved in the activities occurring in particular sites;
- The 'choreography of spaces' needs to be discretely managed while also leaving room for self-organisation;
- Moving beyond mono-cultures, encouraging diverse groups and activities to share common spaces; and
- Avoiding over-regulation as security and feelings of well being are more likely to grow out of active use.

Source: Mean and Tims, 2005.

The Sustainable Communities agenda in England has championed the notion of mixed social communities and many of the practices it suggests are transferable to the management of ethnic space in Belfast. Roberts (2007) argued that mixed income communities can be created, with good quality design that does not differentiate or stigmatise social from private housing. This is especially the case where the layout creates opportunities for 'bumping into each other' in especially designed circulation space and generators and receptors of pedestrian movement. There are four specific recommendations to aid this process:

- First, any visible signs of potential stigma should be avoided;
- Second, there should be a clearly differentiated and high quality public realm to encourage encounters;
- Third, the edge of neighbourhoods should avoid divisive spaces and use, for example, play areas and recreation space to create and maintain mixing; and
- Fourthly, high rise and high density developments should be avoided.

Worpole and Knox point out that both people and place need to be involved as elements in the co-production of a successful public realm. Similarly, Watson and Studdert (2006) showed how urban markets are dynamic places of ethnic mixing especially by encouraging people to linger and interact. These have been a successful feature of life in Belfast with both farmers' and Christmas markets providing important illustrations of the way in which space can be engineered to create sharing albeit on a short-term basis. Chan (2007) raised an important point about the way ethnic communicative and multiculturalism are commodified in place making. His analysis criticised the way in which China Town is used as a label to market Birmingham in a way that is inauthentic and unrecognisable to local ethnic groups. In a warning, relevant to Belfast, he argues that the application of 'quarter-labels' lacks substance and fails to reflect a real living identity (p.82). In Belfast's wider re-branding project, authenticity and accountability need to underpin how the city's ethno-religious character is understood and represented.

Skuse and Cousins (2007) also noted that the transition to post-Apartheid created winners and losers, with "certain sections of society being incorporated into the policy and especially the economy, on fundamentally adverse terms" (p.980). This led to a process of reactive resistance among the disposed, especially over land use and settlement and space became politicised in new agonistic ways. Similarly, the process of spatial change in Israel created new sites for mixing simultaneously with more dangerous spaces where recalcitrant behaviour made access difficult for the wider public to use and enjoy. Clearly, there is a need to think about the connected nature of places and how new investment sites are reached and perceived by communities enclaved by poverty and religion. Managing these reception spaces in a way that avoids their degeneration into risky place is a key priority for local planning. No matter how well intentioned, re-branded quarters can, if badly managed, become divisive, unsafe and uncertain for the wider populous.

Table 8 Spaces of Risk

Jabareen identified the emergence of 'Spaces of Risk' in Israel where people feel vulnerable and defenceless against terrorising urban clashes and riots. The drivers that produce and reproduce spaces of risk include lack of access to the city, the importance of globalisation and private sector growth-led development and the absence of communicative planning procedures. More collaborative and inclusive methodologies are advocated to ensure that planners understand the way in which local people understand and 'read' their neighbourhood.

Source: Jabareen, Y. 2006.

3.6 Lesson 6: Governance and Inclusive Practice

The link between effective participatory practice, listening techniques and governance regimes is crucial to establishing dialogue building trust and gaining ownership of the delivery of local planning (CIOH, 2004). The Home Office guidance on building community cohesion into Area Based Initiatives makes the point that "Better community cohesion will result when you consult effectively with local residents, and when local residents feel confident and skilled enough to participate in regeneration projects and activities" (Home Office, 2004, p.25). Similarly, guidance on the developing of a *Learning Curve* for Neighbourhood Renewal highlights the importance of partnership structures and environments that help communities learn from each other about their aspirations, identities and priorities for neighbourhood action plan. Pieterse (2006) who was working on post-Apartheid South Africa, brought a number of these factors together suggesting three in particular that will stimulate mixing and help to unlock spatial segregation:

- Vibrant politics in a democratic context, that respects both civic and representative forms of engagement;
- An active community that generates imaginative ideas that are not inward looking and develop innovative strategies based on agreed *meta* (high-level) objectives; and
- Sufficient private and public capital capable of delivering the meta-objectives in practical ways.

Here the need to think about the quality of governance and how these structures relate to resources outside the neighbourhood is essential in creating sustainable places. Partnerships with a narrow brief and inward looking focus are unlikely to make these political connections needed to attract resources and opportunity.

3.7 Lesson 7: Skills and Managing Spatial Diversity

The correlation between ethno-religious segregation and social polarisation is especially important in a UK context and underscores the complexity of the competencies required to mange unpredictable places (Kitchen et al, 2004). The Egan Review (2004) identified generic skills in mediating conflict and the HEA Employability Profile also highlighted the need to understand the values and positions of people from different cultures. Similarly, CABE (2004) identified conflict resolution and mediation as core skills in local development in an English context (HEA, 2004). In its response to the Egan recommendations ODPM (2004) undertook to encourage stronger representation from BME communities within the professions but the Scottish approach set out by the Scottish Centre for Regeneration is, however, more directive. It identified a suite of skills including *Process Skills: Enabling Change* in which it highlighted the importance of "working in an inclusive and non-discriminatory manner" (SCR, 2004, p.13). This involved recognising and respecting people's diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and access to services and challenging oppressive and discriminatory practices and attitudes. The ASC (2006) set out principles, best practice, and problem solving techniques and learning resources in dealing with intercultural aspects of creating sustainable communities. The principles are set out below and this volume of work indicates stronger support work in this area compared with Northern Ireland.

Table 9 Twelve Principles of Good Practice in Intercultural Engagement

1. Clear ground rules should be established;
2. The process must have an honest intention;
3. Engagement needs to be built over a long time;
4. Aim to inform and involve all those who have a justifiable right to participate;
5. Make sure that communication and publicity is inclusive;
6. Use methods of involvement which are relevant to the communities concerned;
7. Train community members in planning and engagement techniques;
8. Resources need to be identified to support the process;
9. Conflict is inevitable;
10. Staff attitudes are crucial;
11. Consultation should contribute to building cohesion; and
12. Participants have a right to expect that the process of data analysis and the formulation of conclusions will be conducted with transparency.

Source - Academy for Sustainable Communities, 2006.

3.8 Conclusions

This section provides a brief overview of some of the strands in comparative policy and practice that help to inform our thinking about the development of good relations and local area planning. This includes:

- The best policy has a clear strategic purpose that sees culture and identity as part of the mainstream strategic planning system. It does not drive the planning agenda but makes a clear business case for its inclusion in plan formulation, implementation and evaluation;
- Planning, linked to urban policy and housing management interventions, has a clear role in the creation and maintenance of mixed residential communities and the best examples of integration share a wider socio-economic, tenure and demographic understanding of the concept;
- It is not possible to understand mixing in residence or the public realm without understanding the performance of the regional economy, the effect this has on labour market shifts and how all of this plays into tenure restructuring;
- The public realm is an important arena of sharing and circulation of different demographic groups and the literature presented here has shown that mixing can be engineered in appropriately located sites;
- Governance and participatory practice are essential to achieving ownership of durable mixing in both public and private spaces; and
- The best examples of planning for cultural and ethnic plurality involve identifying and supporting the appropriate skills sets across the stakeholders needed to affect a change across places.

4. Research Findings

This section sets out the findings of the case studies and we have weaved this with the in-depth interviews conducted with key agencies and experts across the policy field. We noted that the selection of case studies was designed, not to be representative, but to explore different problems, policy instruments and skills to deliver a good relations agenda in local planning. This includes an analysis of land use planning interventions, community based instruments, economic development approaches, governance development and capacity building. We highlight learning points in each case and use these to help in the development of recommendations in the next section.

4.1 Duncairn Gardens: Northgate Comprehensive Development Area

This case study looks at the use of Comprehensive Development powers to manage one of the most contested interfaces in Belfast. In March 1990 a senior civil service team was set up by the Belfast Development Office (now Belfast Regeneration Office) to examine the problems of Duncairn Gardens in North Belfast. What is interesting about this approach is: the explicit identification of the interface as a spatial planning and urban regeneration problem; the demographic imbalance between Protestant and Catholic areas; and the competition between the two communities over land and housing. This work was conducted at the height of the violence and involved a physical audit, community consultations (conducted separately in the Tiger's Bay and New Lodge) and an assessment of the economy and the use of services in the wider area.

The development concept attempted to re-engineer the interface which, coupled with the Yorkgate complex formed a new gateway to the north of the city. The document described the sectarian geography as a constraint to the development of housing and so neutral light industrial commercial units were designed as a wedge to help secure and consolidate the housing on either side of the peaceline. A new Enterprise Park was designated within the core of the CDA but it linked to housing Redevelopment Areas (RDAs) on both sides of Duncairn Gardens. There were also specific proposals to upgrade the frontage as a neutral environmental buffer zone. The overall development was delivered in three phases and the scheme evaluated in both communities by local representatives, politicians, traders and businesses and the church leaders.

North Belfast remains problematic and Duncairn Gardens can still be a violent flashpoint. However, the scheme deployed mainstream planning instruments to: reshape the interface; consolidate the security of housing space; create economic, commercial and employment opportunities; reduce internecine conflict; and involve the community in a process of consultation to formulate and implement the design concept. All of this was achieved during the Thatcher approach to market planning when the property economy rather than direct intervention would regenerate the Central Business District, the docks and Laganside area. There were some criticisms that the scheme reinforced segregation and simply displaced conflict but in general the investment registered significant environmental, housing, cross-community and economic benefits. The CDA was a one-off response to the territorial problems of North Belfast. The political culture of direct rule ministers toward retail-led growth in the city centre and the growing importance of the Belfast Action Teams as the instrument of local regeneration meant that the method and approach was not transferred to other places or problems.

The Council has developed a range of physical regeneration initiatives across the city but especially on the arterial routes. This has involved negotiating with elected representatives and community leaders on political murals and iconic places which again requires skills in mediation that are not often accessible in formal professional training. There was an acknowledgement that good relations support was needed to help support bottom up development approaches, how to negotiate over culturally sensitive sites and how to understand and deal with community power structures in both Loyalist and Republican areas in the city. Assessing risk and barriers to progress were also identified as important practices that are often intuitive but which need to be supported among front line staff working in community and local development. The issue of the

Andersonstown police station site was raised in this respect. This site was released by Government for development and awarded to a private sector developer. There was an absence of community approval for the proposed scheme and the developer withdrew. There is a view that a lack of engagement and appreciation of the site's emotional importance has created uncertainty about how it should be developed.

- The designation of problematic interfaces as a 'zone' for land use interventions is an important precedent in land use planning but was not transferred to other sites or problem areas.
- The approach is comprehensive in that it looked at the environmental, social, economic and ethno-religious aspects of local change.
- The intervention was preceded by a programme of consultation with the key stakeholders around the pragmatic negotiation of a land use solution to an explicit, named problem around segregation and conflict.
- The CDA has potential divisive and displacement effects but has stabilised the urban economy in a violent part of the city.
- Much of the intervention by frontline staff relies on their intuition and experience and whilst this is necessary it highlights the need for this high risk intervention to be valued, formally recognised and most of all supported through well resourced training and skills development.

4.2 Dunmore Housing Development North Belfast

This case study looks at the development of the old Dunmore greyhound racing stadium for brownfield housing beside Alexander Park in North Belfast. The scheme proposed by a private housing developer was for 136 private dwellings with an access onto Alexander Park Avenue. The proposal was rapidly contested especially as Unionists felt that the access meant that it would inevitably appeal to Catholics despite the concentration of Protestants in the adjacent Jellico Avenue. Newspaper archive material highlighted the undisguised tribal stances adopted to the proposals:

- 'Police Service of Northern Ireland trying to block 150 houses for Dunmore'. *North Belfast News, October 1999.*
- 'These homes mean trouble: residents'. *Irish News 20th January 1998.*
- 'DUP object to major housing development in North Belfast'. *North Belfast News, 1st October 1999.*

Unionists were concerned that the development could create a new interface whilst Nationalists argued that it was a necessary scheme to relieve housing pressure and promote the regeneration of the area. The Carville Group received planning permission for 111 units (later increased) on 12th December 2001, although the Planning Service file showed the objections by Unionist elected representatives raised concerns about: land contamination; who would be liable if the area created a violent interface; and the need to ensure security between the new development and existing housing in Jellico Avenue. A survey completed in 2006 showed that when the development was completed it settled and stabilised quickly and the data indicated that:

- 45% came from the immediate Antrim Road area;
- 73% did not intend to move away in the future;
- Few people had difficulties accessing shopping, health facilities, schools or work;
- Most (75%) were not concerned about community relations and violence though 23% had some slight concerns about violence in the future at the interface;
- 71% thought that Dunmore was a mixed religion development although 25% suggested that it was becoming more Catholic;
- Overall, 70% were satisfied with life in the area and 61% stated that they were 'proud' to say that they lived there;
- The development was comprised of: small families (36%); large families (28%); and two adult households (16%). Only 5% of the population was single person households; and

- The area is comprised mainly of working heads of households with the modal income range of 35% between £15,000 and £29,999 (compared with 19% for the population as a whole at that time) (Bell, 2006 and interview 2007).

The analysis showed that planners were sensitive to the ethnic-religious effects of the development and the treatment of the interface boundary in particular. Despite the concerns about the impact on the ethnic geography of the area, the scheme has worked out as a stable and successful medium density, mid-city brownfield scheme. The predictions of violence and ethnic meltdown did not materialise and the scheme indicates the need for measured risk in developing on contested sites.

- The case study demonstrates how quickly housing is sectarianised, on both sides, as a resource to control and own land.
- It also shows the value of taking risks to achieve sustainable housing outcomes.
- Ultimately, there was little space for a negotiated or mediated consensus across the religious divide and there are limits to tolerance in deciding in major housing scheme.
- Demographic and house type mix, access to services and quality design are some of the ingredients of a successful scheme.
- Political leadership and community responsibility are also important for success and need to be supported via skills training and challenging the sectarian discourse underlying positions on housing development across Belfast.

4.3 A Mixed Housing Community: Ballynafeigh

The Ballynafeigh case study was selected because it was perceived as a stable, mixed-religion community in Belfast. The area was the subject of a series of research projects by the Housing Executive, QUB, the Institute of Conflict Resolution (ICR) and Democratic Dialogue (see Murtagh and Carmichael, 2005; Murtagh, Carmichael and Todd, 2006). It is surrounded by parkland and middle class markets, with road public transport creating the right planning context for the maintenance of mixed space. Its porosity and physical connectivity to the rest of south Belfast and the city centre also suggest that the planning context is important in maintaining integrated communities. Although the area has had a high level of religious integration, recent economic, tenure and social change reflects the gentrification of the area. The QUB research showed that a wedge of mixed religion housing has emerged in the south-east of the city. Here, a growing middle class, young and professional population has formed a new housing space that is more readily linked to new consumption sites in the Central Business District, Laganside and in Titanic Quarter.

We saw that the South Africans identified a process they termed *re-segregation within desegregation* whereby breaking up the Group Areas Act and the townships released market pressures that saw new forms of social segregation displace old forms of place Apartheid. In Belfast, new 'elite' sites are emerging in residential developments in the south of the city in particular that are increasingly characterised by their absence of social housing. Survey data in the area indicated that a new population is living in Ballynafeigh and was much less likely to shape its identity around traditional tribal difference; was more likely to express multiple identities, lifestyle aspirations; and have a concern for labour and housing market mobility. They are also more likely to form their connections outside the neighbourhood and are more capable of negotiating their way around a new city emerging in *parts* of Belfast. Investors and the private rented sector have been attracted into the market further creating affordability pressures.

Ballynafeigh Community Development Association was set up in the 1970s and has developed projects and initiatives designed to ensure that the area is a safe place for people of all identities and community background. BCDA has sought to promote tolerance of difference and facilitate debate on the themes of mixed and shared communities and places. Where possible, the Association mediates any neighbour or community incidents and seeks to plan for any situations that might generate conflict. The Association also lobbies for policy initiatives which would help maintain and promote shared and sustainable neighbourhoods. It has thus focused on policy areas such as planning and affordable housing and has shared its experience with both other communities and public sector agencies including NIHE, PSNI and BCC. The Association believes

that its community relations and mediation work is possible because of its track record of community development work and service provision in the area. It fears however that resources for its work in promoting a shared community will become increasingly difficult to secure in the future.

- Ballynafeigh is undergoing mid-city gentrification, which is driving tenure, demographic, socio-economic and religious change and so the extent of mixing should not be overstated.
- The results show the impact of modernising Belfast on labour and housing market restructuring with new forms of social segregation overlain on old patterns of ethno-religious territoriality.
- Hyper-growth in these housing markets has displaced existing populations and affordability has become an important local issue.
- Planning gain - instruments that promote affordable and social housing and the creation of mixed communities with multiple facets (such as religion, income and tenure) - is a priority for policy and practice.
- Community mediation and the promotion of shared neighbourhoods require long-term commitment and a community development/services context.

4.4 The Gasworks Development

The Gasworks development was part of the overall Laganside complex and provides an interesting illustration of the changing spatial economy in the city. The project is also important because it is in Council ownership and attempted to engage communities in the surrounding area via intermediary labour market approaches. The Laganside Development Corporation was established to regenerate the riverfront and docks area and achieved remarkable success in investment terms using £123 million of government resources to lever an additional private investment of £639 million. By 2005 this had created 11,240 jobs, 170,000 square metres of office space and 51,000 square metres of leisure space. However, Laganside was criticised for its lack of impact on contiguous communities, public participation, the openness of governance and social inclusion impacts. One of the final stages of the project involved the regeneration of the city's former Gasworks with a multi-use development and it too generated important property outcomes. The projected totals included 660,000 square feet of new developed space, £115 million in construction costs and £7.5 million in rental levels. The Council established a cross-agency and inter-sectoral Trust and supported the development of the Gasworks Employment Matching Scheme (GEMS) in 1999 with the following objectives:

- To provide a one-stop shop of employment support;
- To provide a co-ordinated and effective network of employment support services which meet the needs of local unemployed people in order to return to employment;
- To provide specifically targeted information, guidance, training and personal development support for people who are long term unemployed; and
- To be proactive in designing and managing programmes that provide a bespoke response to the needs of long term unemployed people in the area, especially those identified as socially and economically excluded.

The service was initially part funded by the Laganside Development Corporation and delivered by the South Belfast Area Partnership. It was aimed at young people, the long-term unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities and women returning to the labour market. It uses career guidance, personal development programmes, practical assistance with job applications and CVs, interview preparation, job search and linking people with specific employment opportunities in the Gasworks and Laganside area. It developed a close working relationship with Laganside which facilitated access to major employers in the area.

This application of the social economy has helped to develop the Gasworks, not just as a neutral site but as a shared place where there are reasons for local people drawn from the lower Ormeau and Donegall Pass to use the site. The site is pivotal as it sits between these neighbourhoods where there has been recurrent violence, especially during the summer period. Whilst the site is

accessible and usable to both communities, the development of intermediary labour markets is just one illustration of the way in which their inclusion and participation can be maintained. The point is that mixing needs to be managed and negotiated with instruments and incentives used to engineer the potential for multiple users to benefit from these new economic spaces. The *creation* of mixed public realm is clearly more than just designing the physical realm, with thought given to access, site context and function in managing sustainable shared space.

The Council's Economic Development unit has worked effectively to promote neighbourhood business development and to co-ordinate and facilitate five Labour Market Intermediaries across the city to operate in more joined up ways. This has led to the development of their work with the Employers Forum and an acknowledgement that the Belfast labour market is more urban based than localised. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor for Belfast suggests that entrepreneurial rates are still low and new firm formation is less likely to happen in disadvantaged areas. Here, there is an acknowledgement that good relations make business sense and economic sense for the wider performance of the city's economy.

- The GEMS intervention demonstrates that even high growth sites can be made relevant to excluded groups and disadvantaged areas if the stakeholders involved work together to pool their expertise and networks for a common purpose.
- Inter-sectoral partnerships that bring together the key actors and resources in the labour market are needed to deliver an effective intervention.
- The initiative highlights the importance of developing specific skills in community economics in order to lever local benefit from large scale capital programmes.
- Similarly, it shows the value of participatory processes and the involvement of the partnerships in making the connection between development schemes and the wider labour markets.
- The GEMS model has been transferred to other sectors of the city and to new major capital schemes. It has been used to assist in the development of the Gasworks as a shared site and to stimulate movement of people from segregated neighbourhoods such as that in the Lower Ormeau and Donegall Pass.

4.5 Strategic Policy: Community Cohesion and the Housing Executive

The Housing Executive's Community Cohesion policy is especially important as it showed how a government agency has attempted to strategise about mixing and de-segregation. The Housing Executive had been criticised in the past for adopting a technocratic approach to the treatment of territoriality and not engaging the effects allocation policy and redevelopment programmes on the city's ethno-religious mix. Stimulated by the equality duty and the Shared Future strategy the agency engaged in a process of research, consultation and structured discussions to formulate a new evidence based strategy, a dedicated unit and pilot projects. The Community Cohesion Strategy has the following aims:

- Respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict;
- Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society;
- Respect the rights of people who choose to live in single identity neighbourhoods; and
- Facilitate and encourage mixed housing as far as is practicable, desirable and safe.

The strategy has had considerable success in addressing loyalist graffiti through an interagency approach that involved close cooperation with the City Council. This has removed a large quantity of aggressive sectarianism murals, painted kerb-stones and flags, especially in interface and high visibility areas. Here, the Housing Executive point out that it needs particular skills that facilitate entry into tightly knit communities that are often suspicious or even hostile to public bodies. How to identify access points, negotiate entry in a trustful, ethical and respectful way and work with partners to address sensitive issues needs to be at the core of any best practice programme here.

One of the most important experiments under this programme is the integrated housing scheme in Enniskillen, with others planned for Loughbrickland and Ballycastle. The Carran Crescent development of 20 houses by Ulidia Housing Association in Enniskillen, recently won a major housing award and the Association suggest it has been a highly successful intervention. Applicants taken off the waiting list understood the nature of the scheme and that a *Neighbourhood Charter* would regulate behaviour, especially around issues connected with religion and political opinion. The Charter has been so successful that surrounding estates propose to adopt it as part of the housing management regime in their areas. The community relations organisation, *Diversity Challenge*, also want to extend the method to smaller settlements affected by rapid population growth linked to counter-urbanisation and new housing developments. This has often involved a new population with a younger age structure, different religion and with urbanised attitudes being grafted onto an indigenous, settled and primarily rural community. The testing of these community agreements in community relations settings has wider applicability to the management of other contests in the built environment.

Interestingly, the Housing Executive initially wanted derogation from the Common Selection Scheme (the points based waiting list) to ensure that the estate maintained a religious balance. However, it was prevented from doing so as equality legislation did not permit targeting different religious groups for different treatment, services or facilities in mainstream policy. The agency with its partner housing association had to micro manage the waiting list to ensure a mixed religion, race and gender composition of the scheme.

The Housing Executive has extended its action on shared estates with funding support from the International Fund for Ireland to assign workers to a new *Shared Future Neighbourhood Programme* that will involve work on around 30 shared estates across Northern Ireland over the next three years. One area the agency has an interest in is Titanic Quarter which received planning approval with a condition stipulating 400 social/affordable housing units in the residential mix. The Housing Executive wanted to develop a shared housing project but is currently negotiating with the developer to ensure that this is an integrated scheme which has a substantial element of social housing as well as low cost private units.

- This is an experimental pilot that is limited in size but has important learning for the management of diverse places, new build integrated housing approaches and how to desegregate public sector housing.
- This might capitalise on what Wood et al (2006) called the ‘diversity advantage’ and to see tenants ‘intercultural innovators’ creating a new socio-spatial mix as an alternative to stubborn segregation.
- The approach is also nested in a wide strategic framework, based on a strong evidence base, internal consultation and interagency working.
- The overall strategy is itself integrated and looks at a continuum of spatial problems from segregated areas to mixed residence and this is led by a new unit, people and financial and programme resources.
- There is some concern that the strategic objectives are not always translated into delivery programmes, especially the District Housing Plans that set out the annualised housing programme across Northern Ireland.

4.6 Case Study: Community Empowerment Partnerships

The Dunlop Report (2002), commissioned by OFMDFM in the wake of community violence in North Belfast and in particular the Holy Cross dispute, set out a vision for the area leading to *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*. To support this objective government established the North Belfast Community Action Unit (NBCAU, OFMDFM) in August 2002 with the aim of; building community capacity; developing and supporting Community Empowerment Partnerships (CEPs) within and between communities; and addressing interface issues. Capacity building resources have been provided to the CEPs and each CEP has, in turn,

delivered training to organizations, activists and residents within their area. The CEPs were also encouraged to share training resources and materials, financial resources, information and advice as well as developing inter-group understanding and networks.

Fourteen CEPs were to be established across the North Belfast constituency. And each aimed to develop three tiers of participation namely partnership, delegated power and citizen control. In addition, there were connected objectives linked to a capacity building programme including: creating additional community leaders; improved knowledge, understanding and experience of grant regimes and business plan preparation; and the training of community leaders in leadership skills, transparent management and community advocacy. Capacity building measures were aimed internally in developing the skills of community development practitioners and externally at creating a cross-community dialogue at the interface.

The CEPs have had important impacts on skilling up local groups, internal cohesiveness within areas, participation and activity rates in the wider community, delivering projects and getting some connections with mainstream policies and programmes. There was also some evidence that cross community work has been initiated or deepened although there has not been a consistent development of localised interface infrastructure to facilitate sustained dialogue between the most segregated communities. It was inevitable given the territorial nature of North Belfast that some CEPs have relied on internal development work, although it is unclear how or where this sets a context or development trajectory leading to some future cross-community interventions.

The development of infrastructure within government is also important as the NBCAU has made progress with the statutory agencies with the establishment of the *Agency Reference Group* which shares information on a strategic basis and a *Network Reference Group* with representatives from all the CEPs working towards a lobbying strategy for North Belfast. Similarly, the strategy involved the establishment of the *North Belfast Key Interface Steering Group* made up of statutory agencies and other stakeholder organisations to work in more integrated and reinforcing ways and a separate *Community Interface Group* made up of community representatives from the areas across North Belfast. These groups have now come together to form one joint statutory/community Interface Working Group which continues to meet regularly. The Working Group has conducted an audit of interfaces, developed an Action Plan to address potential summer unrest and set out longer term measures to tackle underlying problems in the area.

A recent review of the initiative conducted by Richard McKenzie highlighted the need to review the assumptions on which the model was based, define more clearly nebulous concepts such as capacity building and community infrastructure and greater connectivity between the role of the CEPs and mainstream area regeneration programmes such as Neighbourhood Renewal, the EU URBAN II 2000-06 initiatives and the North Belfast Housing Strategy. Crucially an emphasis was placed in having a clearer set of core skills relevant to the delivery of regeneration programmes aimed at economic and physical development. An illustration of this was that community capacity building measures should achieve the following principles in the delivery of their work.

- A unitary set of values and interests;
- Empowerment that is not detrimental to others;
- The rolling out of capacity building projects that are relevant to residents;
- A capacity building model which does not increase competition between CEPs;
- Building upon shared knowledge;
- Creative synergies and capacity of stakeholders to work together locally to solve common problems; and
- The potential of CEPs to affect policy making.

Learning from the case study:

- Governance and organisational structures at a local level are crucial to getting key agencies and interests involved in local development;

- Similarly, the need for structures at central government that can direct resources, prioritise policies and coordinate delivery in support of developmental work within and between segregated areas;
- The analysis also highlights the need to re-examine concepts such as capacity building and empowerment to ensure that we are developing the skills needed to tackle complex issues such as the interface;
- Similarly, community intervention projects that build a range of skills need to connect these competencies to the delivery of mainstream programmes in disadvantaged areas, in this instance toward Neighbourhood Renewal; and
- The case study again raises issues about the multitude of programmes and structures that potentially confuse policy direction and overload the system with key people and agencies being stretched by servicing the sheer number of governance bodies across the city.

4.7 British Urban Regeneration Association (BURA)

This case study looks at issues around skills for local planning and managing ethnic and religious diversity. BURA first developed its training programme in 2002 with ten modules delivered around the substantive themes of area based regeneration. In 2006, BURA applied the model to Northern Ireland which was applied to suit the local institutional, policy and community context. The course structure in Northern Ireland is set out below:

Module 1: Economic Development and Funding;
Module 2: Environmental Factors;
Module 3: Property and Physical Renewal;
Module 4: Working with Communities;
Module 5: Training and Labour Markets;
Module 6: Strategy Development;
Module 7: Programmes and Projects;
Module 8: Partnerships and Engagement; and
Module 9: Research, Intelligence, Performance and Best Value.

Module 4 looks specifically at placed based communities, the importance of participatory practice and the centrality of governance in local planning and decision making. The module also covers faith based communities and the positive and negative roles that faith plays in building social capital as a precursor to effective regeneration practice. There have now been four waves of courses involving government organisations including the Housing Executive and Belfast City Council as well as community groups across Northern Ireland. BURA has evaluated the Northern Ireland programme formally and informally with a regional Steering Group and this has shown a mixed experience.

There was positive endorsement of the action learning approach, which has involved an emphasis being placed on skills development through practical case studies that draw on local examples from across Northern Ireland. The substantive models address the range of economic, social and environmental drivers of spatial change although the courses also look at strategic planning and programme management and project delivery. This how to approach is supported by looking at techniques such as community consultation methods, financial planning and audit and environmental impact assessment. The modules were delivered by specialists working in each area and involved some of the leading academics and practitioners in the UK.

There were also some negative experiences reported with students feeling that national examples were not relevant to Northern Ireland conditions while tutors felt that the generic learning about regeneration encouraged cross-national and interdisciplinary learning. Tutors also questioned the motivation, contribution and receptiveness of some students on the course and suggested that there was a level of resistance to delivery not evident in the rest of the UK.

Learning from the case study:

- The BURA model is interesting because it sets out a practitioner learning approach unencumbered by the procedures of an academic setting and is aimed at those working in management and delivery of local planning and regeneration;
- The course addresses a range of substantive issues to understand how places function, why they change, how they can fail and most importantly, what to do about it;
- The approach has a strong normative focus in that it focuses on techniques and analytical tools that can be applied in practice or to understand concepts, especially for those outside the formal planning arena;
- BURA is extending the approach through the development of the Regenerator Workforce (see www.bura.org.uk/regenerator) in order to build a stronger shared culture, exchange of ideas and practices and achieve scale economies in delivering educational programmes. This is a development Northern Ireland and Belfast could benefit from and should encourage; and
- BURA stated that it is resisting accreditation and formalisation of learning outcomes, favouring a more responsive, accessible and engaging mode of delivery. It is not clear however, how we know what has been learned, how the programme connects with other training products and the level and type of competencies being developed.

4.8 North Belfast Community Transport

The North Belfast Community Transport Project provides a community transport service for all the communities of north Belfast. It is aimed, managed, operated and staffed on a cross-community basis and has a membership of over 200 local community groups. The Project is funded by the EU Urban II Programme under its Sharing Spaces objective and is seen as an innovative way of both meeting objectively assessed needs and providing a shared service. The Project proposal was developed as a strategic intervention involving Urban II and the six Community Empowerment Partnerships from across the whole area. The needs identified at this project development stage included:

- Need to provide a transport service to employment locations not well serviced by public transport which flows in and out of the city centre;
- The lack of employment and training opportunities in north Belfast;
- The increasing development of shift work patterns not matched by public transport provision; and
- The acknowledged difficulties unemployed people encounter in securing and retaining employment and training due to the cost and/or unavailability of suitable transport provision.

The development of the Project required consistent emphasis by Urban II on the shared spaces concept and the Programme aims. This created the framework which enabled representatives from the separate communities to come together in designing the Project. The skills employed by Urban II staff and their knowledge and understanding of the local communities were essential to the development of agreement on Project design.

The Project is managed by a cross-community Management Board and uses five minibuses to provide a service for groups in and across traditional community boundaries. Recently the Project has opened membership to individuals and now organises visits and outings for these members. The Project has enabled unemployed people to avail of training at a variety of job locations outside of north Belfast. It has also trained over 80 volunteer drivers so that groups can hire the minibuses.

The Project staff and management are now developing the structure of the organisation and planning for its sustainability beyond Urban II funding. One obstacle encountered by the Project has been the interpretation of public transport regulations and managers have been advised that it cannot transport people to their place of employment. The difficulties in accessing suitable

transport is one of the main barriers to unemployed people obtaining and retaining employment and the Project is thus exploring ways of overseeing the regulatory obstacle.

- Focusing on meeting a clear need which is common in divided communities provides a meaningful context for developing a shared agenda.
- Funding bodies need to have a clear and well developed rationale when inviting project proposals for shared initiatives.
- Funding bodies need to equip their staff with the skills needed to mediate agreement for shared project planning in local areas.
- The planning of shared initiatives is influenced by the political environment at both macro and micro levels.
- Promoters of shared planning need to have a track record of delivery, good working relationships with local representatives and an understanding of the local context.
- Transport is key to creating connectivity between communities and between disadvantaged areas and places of opportunity. Regulations (or the interpretation of them) should facilitate this connectivity not act as a barrier.

4.9 Strabane Community Hubs Programme

The 'Community Hubs Programme' was developed following research undertaken by the Strabane Local Strategy Partnership (LSP). The research revealed the need for a strategic approach to further the integration and consolidation of the community sector across the District Council Area. This need was largely due to the growth of the sector and the reduction in funding available for its sustainability. The research also found a lack of co-ordination in the District's community sector with many groups having no formal links with other groups in the District. The findings were also of concern to the District Council because groups looked to its Community Support Plan for longer term funding.

The Community Infrastructure and Consolidation Programme (better known as the Community Hubs Programme) was designed by the Partnership and the District Council to:

- Increase the sustainability of community service provision in the Strabane District Council Area;
- Improve the quality of service provision to address community need, strengthen community participation and capacity building;
- Reduce the duplication of service provision;
- Create a better collective identity for the community sector in the Strabane District;
- Encourage greater integration between community and voluntary associations in the district.

The programme aimed to develop a network of better equipped Community Hubs across the District but mostly in areas of disadvantage. Each Hub had to involve at least five community groups in an agreement on the management and use of the equipment. Hubs also had to agree to participate in a training and development programme to develop the skills of the partner groups and thus help strengthen the sector's sustainability. This was seen as an important element to the project in the light of a report published by Community Technical Aid which concluded that the community sector needed a mixture of physical, human, social and financial capital to sustain its operations.

The funding set aside for each Hub was £10,000 and the Partnership envisaged supporting eight projects. The Programme exceeded its targets with each Hub involving more than five groups and the Partnership funding nine Hubs. Within each Hub the partner groups were drawn from both the traditional communities and applications were assessed for cross-community involvement in the planning, design and management of the Hub.

A Steering Group was established for the nine Hubs with membership drawn from each one. This Group met regularly and in each Hub's premises to share learning and good practice. The training

programme was also delivered in the nine Hub centres with a total of 250 participants involved. Networking events on themes including diversity and sustainability enabled the dissemination of learning to a wider audience. An external evaluation of the Programme reported "*more frequent and equitable service provision - largely on a cross-community basis"* and that *"85% of user groups … feel services are provided on a cross-community basis by the Community Hubs."*

- Good relations outcomes may be more achievable when integrated with measurable community benefits.
- There is good relations value in linking investment in local projects with meaningful wider networking and practical training programmes.
- Leadership by funding bodies and local political representatives creates a more receptive environment for Good Relations Projects.
- Modest resources can have significant impact if well planned and strategically targeted on identified needs.
- The commitment and skills of the staff in funding bodies plays a significant role in explaining the rationale and value of good relations projects.

4.10 Suffolk and Lenadoon Local Peace Building Plan

This case study focuses on the development of a Local Peace Building Plan (the Plan) by the Suffolk and Lenadoon communities on either side of the interface on Stewartstown Road in West Belfast. The Plan is now being taken forward by the Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG). Brief details of the development of SLIG and of the background to the Plan are presented below to provide a context for the case study.

The Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG) was first established on an informal basis in 1996 following a period of dialogue and exchange of views through an intermediary (Chris O'Halloran of the Belfast Interface Project). This exchange of views covered a range of issues of common concern including changes in the Action for Community Employment Programme which at the time was a major source of funding for local projects and services. The role of the Group expanded as it began to consider how the impact of interface incidents on both communities might be reduced. This included planning for any anticipated difficulties and the use of mobile phones to prevent and/or manage incidents through improved communications.

On the Suffolk side of the interface there were terraced houses and a block of flats with retail units on the ground floor. Some of the houses were used as community offices, a few were occupied while others were unoccupied. All were in the ownership of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) which decided as part of a wider redevelopment strategy, that the houses and flats were surplus to the housing needs of Suffolk and should be demolished. NIHE informed community groups in Suffolk of its decision and gave the groups five years to develop a viable alternative.

The Suffolk groups developed project ideas (including community business units) and sought the support of the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) who informed them that their project idea was not Value for Money because the population of Suffolk would on its own, be too small to sustain the project proposed. The IFI suggested that Suffolk consider involving the Lenadoon community. When this idea was put to the Lenadoon community representatives on SLIG they were receptive to exploring it with Suffolk. This exploration proved difficult in both areas particularly because of the impact the Drumcree dispute was having on this and many other interface areas. However over time the idea took root and a new community regeneration company was established to develop what is now the Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project. The Project encompasses retail units and commercial and community offices. All the floor space is let and a phase two building is now nearing completion. The two communities are equal partners on the Board of the Company and receive equal shares of any surplus income generated. In addition each community has a veto on the type of uses to which the building is put.

At the same time as the regeneration project idea was being developed SLIG became formally constituted and funded by the IFI Community Bridges Programme. The initial period of three year funding was for foundation building in each community. Since 2006 SLIG (with further IFI support) has employed a full-time worker in Suffolk and two part-time workers in Lenadoon.

This track record of achievement by the two communities working together forms the backdrop to the development of the Local Peace Building Plan. Initially Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) invited SLIG to develop proposals for "shared spaces." Following a period of facilitated dialogue it was agreed that each community would initially prepare a plan for shared projects and that from these a joint, agreed Peace Building Plan would be developed. In a Joint Statement of Intent the two communities agreed that:

> "The Plan will respect the positions and values of each community while specifically seeking to:
>
> - Identify shared activities that can be accessed by both communities;
> - Identify shared services that can be accessed by both communities;
> - Identify shared spaces that can be accessed by both communities;
> - Identify activities that are required to provide security and build confidence within and between communities;
> - Identify and respect that some activities, services and spaces will not be addressed in the short term but may form part of future options.
>
> Furthermore the Plan will include proposals of the development of an Advocacy role and the development of Good Practice projects that can benefit both communities. The Joint Plan will include indicative budgets and timeframes for activities. It will also include indicative levels of investment from other bodies including statutory organisations".

With AP funding the Suffolk and Lenadoon Community Forums each appointed consultants to facilitate the preparation of Community Plans. A two day workshop was then facilitated by these two consultants and two others who had not been involved in the separate community planning processes. The workshop brought together people from each community who were not involved in SLIG and those who had been for some years. This new level of involvement was made possible by the achievements of SLIG, the process itself, the wider climate of political agreement and the belief that new funding from AP and elsewhere would be attracted if agreement on a Plan could be reached. This new level also reflected an emerging consensus on the desirability and need to directly involve more residents in cross-community activities and to reduce reliance on a small number of community activists.

The design, structure and facilitation of the workshop enabled the gradual building of agreement on: joint projects which could be shared; proposals which had the potential for sharing in the future; and issues which could not be included in the Plan (primarily housing). These agreements formed the basis of the Local Peace Building Plan which was presented to statutory stakeholders a few weeks after the communities' workshop. AP is now providing funding to SLIG for the employment of staff to take forward elements of the Plan including work with young people and on health, sports and women's development. Difficulties continue to be encountered at operational, management and administrative levels. These are a symptom of different interpretations of targets and variations in community capacity and approaches to management and governance. A baseline survey is now under way in both communities to identify attitudes to and 'readiness' for good relations activities.

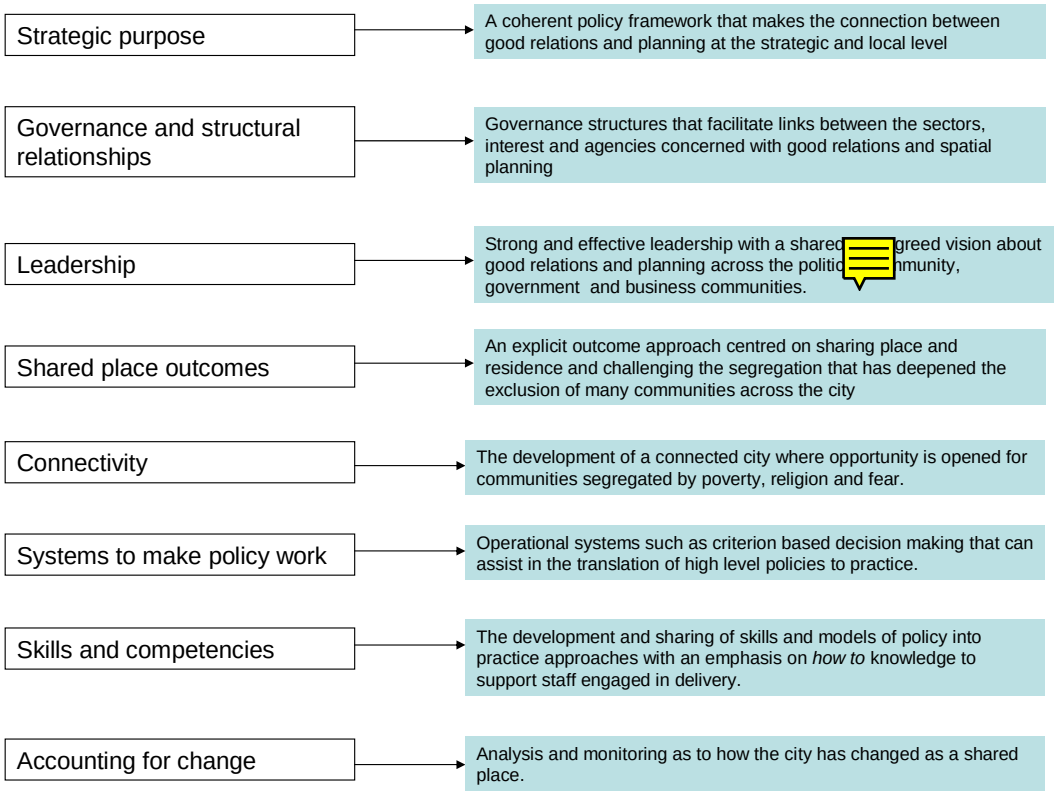
- Local Area Planning for Good Relations is possible where there is a history of inter-community delivery of practical benefits to separate communities.
- Local Area Planning for Good Relations needs, in itself, to be able to demonstrate measurable benefits for each community.
- Independent facilitation which combines community development and community relations skills and experience is valuable for this form of local planning.

- Community leaders with a track record in delivery and with skills in negotiation and persuasion are essential. However good relations will be restricted if there is over reliance on a small number of activists. Community Planning can draw in more people to the process and deepen good relations outcomes.
- Funding agencies involved need to set, explain and persist with clearly defined goals.
- An agreed shared vision is a vital element in Local Area Planning for Good Relations but is a living thing which requires nurturing, maintenance and reinforcement throughout delivery of the Plan.
- Local Planning for Good Relations needs to focus on what is achievable and give recognition to the issues which divide communities.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This section sets out the implications of the research for policy and practice and the work of the Council in both local area planning and good relations. This looks first at the issue of leadership and need for policy innovation and stronger corporate working both inside and outside the organisation. Planning specific issues are then examined, especially with regard to the creation of good relations in the built environment and the specific challenge of mixed housing and a shared public realm. The development of a good relations paradigm for local planning will require a cultural shift in practice and skills and to this end we suggest a new approach to social learning within and between the key stakeholders in the planning system. The diagram below describes a suggested approach that addresses the strategic, organisational, staff and skills needs of a policy for good relations and spatial planning. This shows that developing a policy framework requires the articulation of clear strategic aims, a shared political culture and decision making rules to facilitate the delivery of practice. It also underscores the need for an explicit commitment to a shared and connected city and to the development of competencies that can help implement action on the ground. In this analysis we suggest specific roles for the Council in developing and delivering this agenda in practice.

Figure 1 Policy Framework for Spatial Planning and Good Relations



Belfast City Council should use this model to assess its Good Relations Strategy and Action Plan against each element.

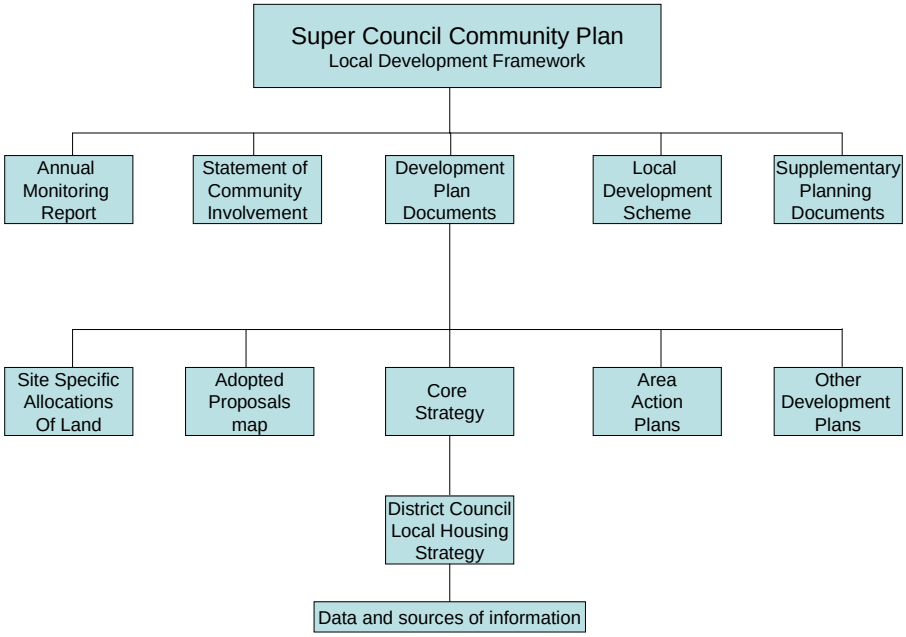
5.1 Policy Aims and Organisational Structures

In his *State of the City* presentation in 2006, Michael Parkinson made clear that the performance of the Belfast city region will drive the Northern Ireland economy. We noted in the policy review that BMAP provided a strategic development framework for the city in land use planning but that

workable relationships need to be developed to ensure the city region is prioritised in policy development and political decision making. The City Council should, in the short term, build a city region alliance with local authorities in the Belfast Metropolitan Area to champion the area, ensure that it attracts the infrastructure investment and so that strategic transportation is managed and resourced at the appropriate scale. A Belfast city region *champion* could be appointed, especially to build the case for the city in the Assembly but also at Westminster and in the EU. Crucially, the importance of building an inclusive and shared city would provide a central focus for this work.

However, the development of good relations interventions needs to anticipate the changing policy regime and in particular a clearer understanding of the evolving institutional landscape for local planning. There therefore needs to be a stronger debate about the architecture of planning in the context of RPA and in a way that better connects local development to good relations. Semple set out a proposed planning policy framework (Annex 3 of his report) based on a Council wide Local Development Framework. Clearly, a more flexible, integrated and delivery-led planning system under Council control could help to deliver the strategic aspirations of a Shared Future and the RDS more effectively.

Figure 2 Proposed Council Planning Structures and Strategic Approach



Source: Based on Semple Review into Affordable Housing, Final Report, Spring 2007, Annex 3, p.57

It is important that there is an effective strategy for linking good relations to area planning in a way that helps to generate sustainable communities. There is a concern within planning (and related disciplines) that *Good Relations* is faddism, impossible to implement and detracts from effective delivery. There need to be explicit objectives for Good Relations and how it will complement efficient plan making, not distort it. These strategic objectives should be limited to a number of critical planning issues such as say:

1. To effectively manage interface areas to reduce their impact on connectivity and the use of services and facilities;
2. To work progressively to remove interfaces and contested sites in concert with a range of interests;
3. To identify and respond to areas at risk of demographic and ethno-religious change so that early intervention may prevent the slide into deeper socio-spatial decline;
4. To promote the creation and management of shared spaces and services in order to encourage interaction and sharing between diverse communities; and
5. To maintain and promote mixed residence leading to sustainable and durable communities.

Belfast City Council should champion the development of a stronger plan-led approach to good relations internally and externally and with Departments and agencies in developing clearer and deliverable objectives for expanding shared space. This plan-led approach should thus be utilised by SNAP and Community Planning.

5.2 Political Leadership

It is clear that political leadership especially within Council has led to the development of a progressive good relations vision. The strategy is based on four goals that redefine community relations around a more explicit engagement of space and contestation including: securing shared city space; transforming contested space; developing shared cultural space; and building shared organisational space. What confronts us here is similar to that confronting policy makers on the disconnect between high level rhetorical commitment on community relations and operational delivery of principles, literally on the ground. There was a concern raised in the research that elected representatives had manipulated territoriality as a resource for political gain, on both sides of the divide. The housing project at Dunmore in north Belfast revealed the rawness of sectarianism around any form of residential development in contested space. It is difficult to challenge this practice in direct ways and there is a tension between emotional and rational discourses in decision making about housing. Training, best practice case studies or looking at experience elsewhere is unlikely to influence sectarian elites but there is an imperative to shift practice in that direction. In doing this, Council could take the lead in a wider civic and political debate about the future of interfaces in particular. A normative debate about the logic of interfaces and who loses and benefits from territorial living, especially in the context of the modernising city, might present a challenge function to all the stakeholders with an interest in building a just and inclusive city. In some senses this has already begun via the Belfast Interface Group and the attempt to remove interfaces across the city but there is a need to build on this work in a way that brings in multiple stakeholders, including the local community to debate the future of all forms of interfacing in the city.

Belfast City Council could lead a focused training development programme on a site by site basis to: open conversations; more explicitly name the negative effects of interfaces; and explore alternatives to managing contested space.

5.3 Community Leadership

Community groups and local activists have been at the coalface in some of the most violent and dangerous places in 30 years of conflict. This intervention and the infrastructure supporting community development have held places and people together, with often limited resources and staff. The EU PEACE Programmes have developed and deepened this expertise and we have seen that Community Empowerment Partnerships and Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships provide important governance arenas for the sector to participate and deliver area based regeneration. However, the valuable skills needed to develop and maintain communities over the last 30 years may not necessarily be the same as those needed over the next ten years when very different development pressures will impact on the city and will impact differently in neighbourhoods across Belfast. This will require, for instance, greater sophistication about: financial investment and property markets; social economics; negotiating and bargaining over projects and development initiatives; understanding the restructuring of the spatial economy and its relationship with neighbourhood disadvantage; globalisation, technology and foreign investment; and managing contestation and contested place.

The case studies demonstrate that a solid community development track record provides the context for local leaders to more effectively tackle good relations at the neighbourhood level. Funding organisations and staff need a stronger rationale for good relations and need to know what it is they want to achieve from planning in this area. This is a process that, as we point out later, clearly needs to be articulated repeatedly within and between organisations with an interest in local development. There also needs to be a clearer understanding of the role of community

relations approaches and the development of sustainable communities. For instance, there is a potential conflict in objectives by continuing to invest in single identity work when the aim of *A Shared Future* is towards integration. There is a further issue in that the causal link between investing in single identity work to create conditions for cross-community engagement needs to be shown to work in practice. Indeed, all this investment might do is shore up ethno-religious identities and their investment in segregation. There needs to be a radical overhaul of community relations and community development funding based on strengthening the stock of social assets and interventions that supports sustainable communities. Only organisations (programmes or projects) that demonstrate a clear commitment to the objective of creating a shared and sustainable city should be prioritised for good relations funding.

The Council could lead, potentially using PEACE III resources, on *Policy into Practice* pilot projects to show how community led interventions and skills might be supported, developed and shared with other groups attempting similar interventions in contested areas.

5.4 Spaces of Hope

The very lateness of development pressures in Belfast provides the city with an opportunity to steer growth pressures in more inclusive ways, especially around the ethno-religious mix of neighbourhoods. A short term priority is to ensure that existing shared spaces are protected and enhanced. We saw in the policy review that there are extensive tracks of designated housing land in BMAP that could be populated by mixed housing. A total of 409 hectares (31%) of the 1324 hectares zoned was classified as 'open' in that it could be safely occupied by both Protestants and Catholics (DOE, 2004). However, these areas need to be managed sensitively and design briefs should be: sensitised to ethno-religious segregation; treatment of boundaries and interface; connections to services and facilities addressed, contiguous land uses and development trajectory need to be specified; and there are planning and housing instruments such as Comprehensive Development Areas that could provide a delivery mechanism to ensure that this happens effectively. We detail options for delivering practice later in this section.

We noted earlier that many areas that have the appearance of a mixed neighbourhood are experiencing gentrification and tenure restructuring characterised by new forms of social segregation. It is not possible to understand the mixed housing debate in Northern Ireland without seeing the connection with macro-economic restructuring, labour market shifts and post-industrial growth and how this then relates to housing market change. New elite spaces such as Titanic Quarter and Sirocco Quays together with gentrified spaces emerging in the mid-city and gated communities in the suburban south and east may be religiously mixed but create new types of social segregation which contain their own problems in the creation of a shared city. The need to understand mixing as part of a wider dynamic and to adopt a more inclusive definition of integrated residence cutting across tenure, income, demography, and race, should help shape this debate in the city. This is especially applicable to areas at risk, where weak signals indicate the potential slide of a neighbourhood into poverty and increased segregation. DSD has promoted this concept under the Renewing Communities initiative and it is important that these neighbourhoods are prioritised for early intervention.

The terms of reference indicated the need to identify criteria to allow local area planning decisions to be proofed on the basis of good relations. We have looked at three sets of circumstances: mixed residential housing areas; shared public realm; and interface communities. It should be emphasised that this criterion based assessment approach is suggestive and requires application to site circumstances and local conditions. The table below, for instance, draws on previous research for the Housing Executive and articulates the decision making criteria that might guide assessments about the planning and design of mixed housing spaces in the city. The analysis indicates that mixed housing will be conditioned by structural factors and it is fear that will ultimately regulate the extent of integration and desegregation. It is also important that the demographic context is understood as the long term supply of mixed religion, income or racial groups will clearly determine the trajectory of shared residential space. Engaging the community in

the management and maintenance of mixed places is vital and the Neighbourhood Charter in Carran Crescent, Enniskillen is an illustration of how this might work in practice. The table suggests the actions for management and planning in each case. The potential to deploy frameworks such as this on the 1324 hectares of land identified in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan could be evaluated to refine and develop this approach.

Table 10 Criteria Set 1: Shared Housing Space

Area	Content	Project management implications
Structural factors	Political stability	Macro political stability over a sustained period provides an essential and non-negotiable context for the implementation of mixed schemes.
	Conflict and fear	Likewise the absence of political violence is an essential prerequisite to the implementation of the project. The area should have a tradition of low crime particularly in terms of the death rate over the period of the Troubles.
Market factors	Existing Religious balance and trajectory of change	The balance should have an even proportion of Protestants and Catholics. The change in the balance of the respective religious categories should be stable and not threatening to the viability of any one group.
	Presence of minimum threshold	There should be a sizeable core of more than 30% of anyone religion in the local market. The wider spatial market should demonstrate that it could supply Protestant and Catholic tenants in sufficient numbers to allow the project to be sustainable in the long term.
Site circumstances	Location of key services and facilities	The site could be in an neutral area but the services and facilities could be trapped in out-group territory.
	Size	The project should be large enough to be viable and non-vulnerable but small enough to be easily and flexibly managed.
	Pedestrian and vehicular movements	The site should ensure safe and protected access by people and vehicles engaged in the routine of daily life.
	Integrating infrastructure	The provision of safe and mixed places of employment, shopping and service provision should be widely available. The provision of integrated education options would help to support the maturation of the scheme.
	Location and route plan of public transport services	Public transport should be accessible and sensitive to local ethnic geographies. It should be useable in a safe and non-threatening way.
Site imagery	The presence of sectional symbols in the area	Zero tolerance on graffiti and territorial markers.
	Site history	The land should have limited definable ethnic or political history.
Community	Community infrastructure on site	There needs to be a strong sense and level of development of community organisation and development.
	Community relations in the wider housing market/district	The wider housing market should have a history of good community relations.
	Community relations should encourage positive and non threatening celebration of identity	Community identity should not be ignored, denied nor undervalued. Positive expressions of identity should be facilitated in community development programmes within the project (but not inconsistent with criterion on symbols).
	Arbitration and mediation services available	Problems should be anticipated with the appropriate mechanisms but in place to resolve disputes particularly around issues of identity.
	Community facilities provided and integrated into the overall scheme	The design of the project should include provision for physical space for a community development facilities.
Management	Mix of tenures, incomes and ethnic groups	The scheme would avoid being 'badged' or ghettoised by encouraging a mix of tenures but with a strong social housing content.
	Mix of house types and styles	This would help to ensure a balanced demographic community.
	Local management through participative methods	The continuous, intensive and local management of the project would help ensure that collective ownership and investment may be supported.
	Waiting list supply and quota filters to control turnover	Turnovers would need to be carefully monitored to ensure that the religious balance of the social rented component is maintained. This may necessitate legislative changes to the operation of the waiting list.
	Tenant contract on living in a designated mixed scheme	Tenants should sign a contract specifying the conditions of living in a mixed housing context (based on the NIHE Neighbourhood Charter).
Design	Entry and exit points achievable	These should be sensitively located to offer maximum protection and safety.
	Tenant involvement in site location, layout and design	The sustainability of the scheme would be further encouraged by the full participants of tenants in all aspects of site and dwelling design.
	Crime free and safe environment	The design and layout of the estate should minimise the possible of on-site crime, vandalism and conflict.
	Sensitive community policing and community neighbourhood watch support	Every attempt should be made to ensure that tenants take ownership over safety monitoring.
	Display latest in energy efficient house and estate design	The model nature of the scheme could be broadened to display best management and design principles

Monitoring	The project should be subject to close and continuous monitoring	Tenant feedback, stock indicators and local housing management perspectives should be routinely collected particularly to signal problems with the scheme. The transfer potential of the initiative should be an ongoing part of the learning process.
	Contingency plans should be prepared in the case of catastrophic failure	A clear set of actions and options should be explored to respond to scheme failure.

Source: Based on Murtagh, 2001

BCC should lead in the preparation of an audit of designated residential development sites in the BMA to explore further the areas where mixed housing might have the best prospects of success. More detailed analysis should be undertaken to support the preparation of design briefs aimed at shared housing development on a limited number of sites.

5.5 Shared Space

The table below sets out criteria to evaluate shared open space and again reflects the wider planning context, movement dynamics and interactions and the need to micro-manage places. There are consistent themes running through the criteria set for inclusive and interconnected spaces. For instance, the site needs to be capable of creating a place where natural footfall and circulation help to retain people, which in turn has implications for the types of uses, the time use of the site and ontological security. The analysis points to a mixed use site that can be sustainable and which can in turn, sustain the type of human interaction implied in shared rather than passively neutral space. This preliminary criteria set is suggestive and more authoritative research in this area by the CU2 team at Queen's University should assist in the articulation of this approach.

Research into shared space across the Council's funded programme is producing innovative ideas on sharing the public realm and this could form the basis of a interagency pilot initiative on one site (say with the Parks Department) to demonstrate the management lessons in securing mixed accessible places across the city. Again, this is especially suited to some of the priorities in the PEACE III Programme.

Table 11 Criteria set 2: Mixed Public Space

Component	Criteria
Structure and scale	The site should be sufficiently large to create scale economies with sufficient users to permit mixing to happen on a meaningful basis. Too small and the site (and the users) is insufficient to allow sufficient mixing within and between a range of groups and interests; and too large it becomes difficult to regulate or engineer a sharing dynamic with pedestrian generators, mixed nodes or exchange spaces.
Accessibility and contestation	It is important that the place is not owned or claimed by either community and is safely accessible to both traditions and other interests living in the catchment area. This invites a wider strategic understanding of population movement, mobility and transport infrastructure. The porosity of a site and its use in an urban context will regulate the extent to which people, especially vulnerable groups (such as both younger and older people) can feel safe in the place.
Market sustainability	The development should be capable of reproducing mixed religion users which necessitates an understanding of pedestrian footfall and traffic generators and receptors. The desire lines that people use and how they relate to shared space should form part of the micro-analysis of site survey and investigation. Methodologies such as *Space Syntax* relate logical rational movements to actual mobility and show how human variables affect the way in which space is read, understood and used. The mental maps are as important as the descriptive maps in this instance. The uses should also aim at a level of retention that not only attract mixed clientele to a place but keep them there to ensure that recirculation is reproduced over time.
Land use	The use to which the site is but must not create or reinforce, directly or indirectly, community segregation. Residential use, for instance, could ultimately produce a single identity community and lose the potential of the site as a shared space. Surrounding land uses should be conducive to sustained mixing so, for instance, the presence of contiguous segregated residential areas might limit the potential for dynamic integration. The appropriate application of Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) could explore the land use options most conducive to sharing and integration although use value, profit and rate of return will continue to be a driver of the development process. The approach may therefore focus on where or how planning gain might develop the shared potential of the site.
Place management	Mixing needs to be driven and the creation of good relations, at least in the short term may not happen naturally. Thought needs to be given as to how the site, once developed, is managed especially in Council provided services such as sports, recreation, parks and community facilities. Codes of practice, management contracts, good relations training, educational materials are all part of a wider programme but it again demonstrates the importance of applying good relations skills to ensure that shared places stay shared. There are good national illustrations of this type of intervention such as the *SPACE* initiative which used sports as a medium to tackle the physical, racial and social isolation of young Asians in West Yorkshire (NRU, 2004).

Monitoring and evaluation	We also need to know if it works, why and how risk needs to be understood in these circumstances. This also relates to the Council's requirement for performance management systems and indicators that demonstrate shifts in behaviour, attitude and opinions with regard to sharing and both spatial and social closure.

5.6 Interface Planning Criteria

In the table below we look at criteria for managing interventions at the interface and in this instance we consider how major planning decisions, say a planning application, might be evaluated. This is a different working of the criterion approach and serves to understand the need for a range of interventions to understand the connection between good relations and spatial planning. Whilst there may be consistent themes running through the analysis there is not a universal set of rules to govern intervention in every case.

Table 12 Criteria set 3: Planning and the Interface

Component	Criteria
Safety	Land uses that maximise the safety of people living in interface areas and moving within and between neighbourhoods should be encouraged.
Conformity	Land uses proposed in interface areas should conform with the existing land use structure of the area.
Blight	Land uses that deal effectively with the long-term removal of blighted land and property and promote sustainable development should be prioritised.
Circulation	Proposals must ensure that they do not directly or indirectly negatively affect people's use of local facilities and services.
Flexibility	Uses that are flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances should be encouraged. It is important that we do not assume that interfaces are an inevitable permanent response in highly segregated neighbourhoods.
Social need	Land use should, where possible, contribute to social inclusion especially where it offers local employment or employability opportunities or services and facilities needed by local people.
Consultation	Proposals for the treatment of interfaces should, as far as possible, involve local consultation about the use of sites, buildings, peacelines and access points.
Comprehensive	Where possible, land and property in interface areas should be treated in a comprehensive fashion. Proposals that demonstrate a multi-agency and multi sectoral approach to deal with the territorial, community, social, economic and physical effects of the interface will be prioritised.

Similarly, the work on interfaces across the city needs to be supported but Council could, in partnership with elected representatives and partner agencies, identify a pilot area to develop a community debate on the future of the interface. This could involve expert facilitation based on data and criteria to set out a cost-benefit framework and scenarios for the treatment of the peaceline.

5.7 Policy Instruments

In November 2007, the Minister of the Environment announced a programme for planning reform in Northern Ireland stating that “I want to see a planning system which delivers for everyone in Northern Ireland. No aspect will be left untouched in the quest for a more streamlined development plan system, a more effective development control system, improved efficiency of processing and greater certainty about timescales” (DoE, 2007). The review represents an opportunity to develop a strong good relations focus which the Council needs to take a lead on in the context of Belfast. The Planning Service representative suggested that there are three drivers of change including; the continuation of the Modernising Planning process and the need to make the system more responsive; the merging spatial planning regime in Britain; and the Review of Public Administration locally. Clearly Belfast City Council aim to take greater responsibility for planning functions, but in the short term, the programme of research on place and planning should form the basis of a response to the consultation in early 2008.

One concrete issue that was raised in the case studies is affordability. Here, Article 40 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991 (and the proposed reworking of PPS 12 and HOU 2 on affordable housing) permits use of planning agreements on affordable housing and the Semple Review identified a number of ways in which mixed tenure and mixed cost housing could help to create multiple opportunities for a range of income groups to live in particular neighbourhoods. Community Land Trusts for instance provide one instrument that could be used to achieve or maintain mixed ethno-religious communities in the city. Instruments such as this and Community Asset Transfer could also form the basis of a pilot initiative to evaluate their potential to assist in the regeneration or stabilisation of shared places.

The point here is that there is a range of instruments that are already on the statute, policy or programme 'book', which could be deployed to help achieve good relations objectives. The equality regime for instance has considerable potential in planning for a spatially diverse society. EQIAs provide one instrument that could be better used to evaluate major planning, housing and urban regeneration decisions for their effects on religion and/or political opinion as well as the other categories. The problem here is that equality has become a highly legalised instrument in which compliance with the requirement of the Act rather than thorough interrogation of effects, often hallmark the approach. The criterion based approach suggested here provides one example of how this might be developed.

BCC could develop stronger practice support, examples and models to help use EQIAs to more thoroughly interrogate the effects of land use decisions on sustainable communities.

5.8 Skills and Capacities

We noted earlier that the sorts of capacities that were needed in the last ten years are not the same as those required for the next decade. In England the *Academy for Sustainable Communities* and Regional Skills Centres were established to support the implementation of the Egan Review into skills for sustainable communities. These distinguished Generic competencies from Technical competencies and the skills centres support public, private and voluntary sector organisations in the delivery of local regeneration programmes. Northern Ireland needs a similar skills base to develop and deepen skills in managing spatial diversity and skilling people across areas, organisations and sectors to create sustainable communities. This could investigate and share best practice and build on approaches on: cross interface development; starting and managing contact; and developing local initiatives that show the potential of win-win spatial development.

We have suggested (paragraph 5.3) a series of Policy Into Practice pilot projects to support and develop the skills needed for interventions in contested spaces. These should include a focus on making existing policy instruments work more effectively to create good relations outcomes.

5.9 Connectivity and Mobility

Residential desegregation is not likely to happen either quickly or completely and Boal has shown that historically Belfast has been characterised by a 'ratchet effect' whereby the level of segregation never returns to its pre-violence rate. In his review of Belfast and other 'core cities' Michael Parkinson highlighted the importance of connectivity and mobility within and between cities. We noted that dBMAP has designated four new Major Employment Locations (MELs) in Purdysburn, Titanic Quarter, Mallusk and Lisburn West. The new spatial economy of Belfast will create opportunities in parts of the city distant from often inward looking disadvantaged segregated communities. A key development challenge will be to reconnect Belfast's segregated areas with new investment sites and consumption opportunities. Currently disadvantaged communities experience:

- A skills mismatch in that they often lack the skills and the job competencies required in high growth sectors of the economy; and
- A spatial mismatch in that the jobs are not going to be created in or near poor areas.

Urgent investment is needed in developing a strategic transport infrastructure to integrate the city in a more open and inclusive way. Flexible and demand responsive transport options are needed to help renegotiate the city's ethno-religious map. One recent innovation that may have particular application in this context is the Transport Development Area (TDAs) advocated by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS, 2002). TDAs are:

> An integrated land use/transport planning approach operating around urban transport interchanges or nodal points well served by public transport in which a more specific relationship between development density and public transport service is instituted. (RICS, 2002).

The principles for a workable TDA direct the following analysis of planning themes:

- Land use planning issues including a clear planning context to delineate and support area specific TDAs, especially around high volume, mixed use sites;
- Transport planning issues including modal transport functions in the area; public transport infrastructure; and transport funding, especially between car and non-car based options;
- Transport operations and transport operators including the services operated by bus and train companies and their integration with residential areas and mixed use development sites;
- Development industry and financial considerations including the content of planning gain and benefits to key stakeholders and how transport and accessibility is built into scheme design;
- Urban design and the environment including the size, density and quality of the public realm and how it is used;
- Community viewpoints including the need for co-ordination and integration of transport provision and strategies leading to a reduction in car usage; and
- Active urban management that involves all the stakeholders; strategic management and authority and measuring impact and success around sustainable well connected communities.

The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (DRD, 2004) provides for strategic infrastructure in the city and as noted previously recognises the modal shift toward public transport, the need for quality bus transport and the link between the MELS and strategic public transport infrastructure. However, TDA, especially applied to address segregated areas cut off from key service or employment sites, is a concept that could be piloted by the council. This would not only address the disconnect created by segregation but wider sustainability and environmental concerns within the city.

There should be a review of the restrictive interpretation of the regulations governing non-standard transport schemes, especially in the community sector. Alternative demand responsive and flexible transport will play a crucial role in opening choice and opportunity in enclave areas.

5.10 Programme Indicators

We have highlighted the importance of monitoring spatial change and sharing within the city and the State of the City process has facilitated a valid and reliable assessment of economic performance and urban growth. It would be useful if this type of analysis was applied to the internal as well as the comparative performance of the city and here, the SNAP team has already conducted important work building up neighbourhood profiles via GIS methodologies. It is important that these profiles take account of segregation and can build in data that covers for example: reported incidents to PSNI; planning permissions and building control data as an indication of activity; and house price data where the geographies are large enough to report sub-

area reporting. It is also important that progress toward a more shared city is measured in a way that records behaviour and not just attitudes. The *Good Relations Plan* has identified outline performance measures across the four objectives, which covers the types of spatial outcomes envisaged in the planning system.

Securing Shared City Space

- Percentage of people who felt intimidated/annoyed by republican/loyalist murals, flags or kerb painting in the last year;
- Number and type of sectarian/racial incidents and hate crimes recorded in Belfast (PSNI statistics); and
- Percentage of people who would define their main shopping area as a 'shared/neutral' space.

Transforming Contested Space

- Number of interface areas in Belfast (NI Housing Executive);
- Number of vacant houses at interface areas (NI Housing Executive);
- Proportion of population living in mixed/segregated areas (Census data); and
- Number of contentious parades as a % of parades notified by type.

Developing Shared Cultural Space

- Percentage who believe racial prejudice in NI is on the increase/decrease; and
- Percentage of people who have friends of a different religion.

Building Shared Organisational Space

- Percentage of people who are willing to work in a mixed religion workplace;
- Percentage of people who believe the government is actively encouraging shared communities where people of all backgrounds can live, work, learn and play together.

Council should adopt the performance indicators set out in the Good Relations Plan as Council wide indicators linked to the corporate planning process.

5.11 Conclusions

The analysis suggests a number of strategic and operational recommendations to advance the connection between good relations and local area planning:

- The development of policies and programmes in good relations work will be most progressive in the context of community planning and more integrated approaches to spatial planning. As well as developing good relations practice, the Council needs to ensure that the concept of sharing is a central feature of plan formulation and implementation.

- The emphasis in the short term needs to be on delivery and taking the broad commitments of A Shared Future and the Regional Development Strategy to the operational level. There are existing policy instruments such as Article 40 on planning gain and EQIAs which could assist in this process rather than constantly inventing new techniques.

- There also needs to be a debate on the purpose and effects of segregation in an attempt to shift policy toward a more rational understanding of integration. The business case for sharing and the sectional interests that motivate segregation should be more explicitly named in creating a different context for the debate on planning and good relations.

- In this respect political leadership is essential not just at a rhetorical or strategic level but when it comes to the implementation of policies such as housing, contested sites and how good relations is deployed to support the implementation of Council functions.

- This in turn is linked to skills development for practitioners, politicians, programme managers and policy makers. A stronger culture of social learning that involves respecting

the knowledge and competencies of others in an interdisciplinary context is required to advance practice.

- This will aid the delivery of good relations objectives in the city by targeting interface areas; areas at risk; mixed residential neighbourhoods; and shared public realm. The criteria approach set out here highlights the need for site specific responses and pilots (say modelled on the Housing Executive's shared scheme in Enniskillen) could provide a way of testing and developing these across the city.

- We also need to adopt a wider definition of mixing in that sustainable communities will work with a mix of different people, services and facilities and not just through sanitised control over religious mixing. Ultimately, they should operate as naturally functioning shared places where people are motivated to come and stay.

- Connectivity and mobility is a critical area of policy development and programme delivery and here more innovative and creative attempts to open Belfast, make it more cohesive and better connected to new growth sites are essential.

- Change needs to be measured and monitored with research approaches that capture real integration across places in Belfast.

Glossary

Term	Explanation
Spatial Planning	A new approach that takes a wider view of the social, economic, community and environmental drivers of spatial change.
Sustainable Communities	This is the emerging priority for planning policy in England which highlights the need for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to the management of people and place.
Egan Review	Sir John Egan looked at the skills that will be needed to develop sustainable communities within and between land use professions.
Affordability	There is a growing problem, mainly due to house price increase and weak supply of social housing, of people not being able to afford their own housing in Northern Ireland.
Gentrification	The process whereby new housing developments attached higher income groups to mid and central cities often displacing indigenous populations.
Gated Communities	There is an increasing tendency for many private sector housing developments to defend their 'territory' with walls, gates and related security paraphernalia.
Twin Speed City	The economic shifts that are seen in modern cities whereby some places and people are doing well in high value-added growth sectors, whilst others have not been touched by post-conflict growth.
Territoriality	The process of mental mapping whereby people feel more secure in places that they feel an attachment to by say religion, political opinion and increasingly, by social class.
BMAP	The draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, which sets the planning and development context for the greater city to 2015.
RDS	The Regional Development Strategy is the main physical plan for Northern Ireland and sets the context for BMAP. It contains Strategic Planning Guidelines including a commitment to *community cohesion* in the region.

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Annex I: In-depth Interviews

Name		Organisation
Thomas Bell	-	Turley Associates, Belfast
Sandra Buchan	-	North Belfast Community Action Unit OFMDFM
Jean Brown	-	Stewartstown and Lenadoon Interface Group
Jane Cheshire	-	British Urban Regeneration Association
Renee Crawford	-	Stewartstown and Lenadoon Interface Group
Michael Doherty	-	Stewartstown and Lenadoon Interface Group
Susan Doherty	-	Strabane Local Strategy Partnership
Michael Donnelly	-	DSD Belfast Regeneration Office
Emer Husbands	-	Belfast City Council, Policy and Performance Management
Will Glendinning	-	Diversity Challenges
Jennifer Hawthorne	-	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Andrew Kennedy	-	BURA training programme and NIHE
Angus Kerr	-	DOE, Planning Service
Lisa Martin	-	BCC Economic Development
Sharon McNicol	-	Belfast City Council, Policy and Performance Management
Marie-Thérèse McGivern	-	BCC Development Department
Tina McMillan	-	North Belfast Community Transport
Paddy O'Donnell	-	Stewartstown and Lenadoon Interface Group
Ciaran Shannon	-	URBAN II Programme Management Executive
Peter Shirlow	-	Community Empowerment Partnerships (CEPs) and QUB
Frankie Smith	-	BCC Development Department
Ken Sterrett	-	QUB and Northgate Comprehensive Development Area
Catherine Taggart	-	Belfast City Council Community Services
Gerry Tubritt	-	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
Siobhan Watson	-	BCC Strategic Neighbourhood Area Programme
Elaine Wilksinson	-	DSD Belfast Regeneration Office