

Neighbourhood Renewal



Department for
**Social
Development**

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Newsletter



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A Message from the new Minister for Social Development

It is with the greatest of pleasure that I write as the Minister for Social Development. I am really looking forward to working with all the people of Northern Ireland on the issues that count, particularly on the major issue of the regeneration of our most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Regeneration is a key element in terms of our social and economic future. I fully support the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy and am already very aware of the hard work involved in moving the strategy to where it is today. I applaud the effort and determination of all involved in establishing the Partnerships and working to address the agreed priorities. I want to thank you for your interest, commitment and the important work that you are doing. Many local neighbourhood agendas have now been set, others are due to be agreed very soon and while I don't underestimate the challenge that Neighbourhood Renewal presents I am determined to tackle the key causes of deprivation and disadvantage in a strategic and joined up way and make a real difference to the lives of people in Northern Ireland.

Neighbourhood Renewal's overall aim is to close the gap in the quality of life for people living in our poorest communities where despite many initiatives in the past disadvantage and deprivation stubbornly persists. I want to ensure that through Neighbourhood Renewal together we tackle the causes of deprivation and in doing so get the maximum impact from the significant resources available across Government. To do this we need to address important issues such as education, not only to raise educational standards but also to increase the educational aspirations of many communities. We need to support the development and acquisition of skills to allow our communities to fully participate and enable people to contribute to economic development and prosperity and generally improve the quality of life across all social, economic and community aspects. This means that we also need to foster a greater culture of self-help and enterprise. In this way we will effectively tackle poverty not simply manage it.

Partnership and joined up working is not an easy process, but it is the only way to make real and sustainable progress towards this end. Despite the many frustrations and obstacles which you have faced and which you will continue to face I remain confident that we can make the difference. The next few months will see real progress on the ground with all parts of Government working together with communities. I am looking forward to meeting Partnerships and visiting local neighbourhoods to discuss progress and find out what more needs to be done to ensure Neighbourhood Renewal delivers its strategic objectives and makes a real difference to people and communities.

In the meantime, I wish you well and look forward to working with you to address the challenges that lie ahead.



Margaret Ritchie MLA

Minister for Social Development

A Note from the Editor

Hello and welcome to this our third Neighbourhood Renewal Newsletter. Much has happened since our last edition.

We held our first Neighbourhood Renewal Conference in December 2006 and reflect on this on page 4. We are now planning for our second conference which will be held on Wednesday 21 November 2007 in the Hilton Hotel Templepatrick. **Don't forget to note your diary.** Further details and plans for the day will follow later on.

Meanwhile we know that Neighbourhood Partnerships have been busy finalising Action Plans. Our article on page 4. discusses how the priorities in Action Plans will be delivered and what's been happening so far.

We also have a number of stories about projects delivering real change

to communities and some articles to inform about opportunities available.

We, in the team, are expecting a new addition for the Autumn! We are looking forward to working closely with a school principal or member of a school management team from one of the schools in our Neighbourhood Renewal areas. This short term secondment, starting in September, will enable us to undertake some work which will help families, schools and communities to make linkages and work closer together. Look out for more about this in our next edition.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this newsletter and would welcome your views. If you have any, please contact us at nru@dndni.gov.uk

Happy reading

Norman

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Creative Investment in Local Community projects

by Matthew Hendry

The first awards have been made through the new £3.3 million Re-Imaging Communities Programme and 21 projects are set to begin in local communities across Northern Ireland. These projects, the first of 60-80 community-led projects expected to take place over the programme's three year pilot period – are designed to tackle the visible signs of sectarianism and racism. They will help communities in urban and rural areas to focus on broader expressions of civic and cultural identity, making a positive and lasting contribution to improved understanding and good community relations.

The Re-Imaging Communities Programme was developed in response to Government's 'Shared Future' policy. It reflects a genuinely joined-up approach, with the support of a consortium of government departments, led by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and including the Department for Social Development, OFM/DFM, the Community Relations Council, the NI Housing Executive and the International Fund for Ireland.

Joan Dempster, Head of the Programme unit at the Arts Council, says, "This programme places creative regeneration at the heart of our local community neighbourhoods. It will help all communities to replace existing murals and divisive emblems with positive, bridge-building art, creating a more welcoming environment for everyone."

The Re-Imaging Communities Programme will support a wide range of community-led projects, offering support up to £15,000 for small projects and up to £50,000 for larger-scale projects. There are community development workers on hand to help develop organisations in those areas who find it hard to access this type of funding.

Any local community group with an idea that fits with their local council's Good Relations Strategy can apply for funding. Projects that have the support of another public authority will also be considered.



Lincoln Court Arts Council Friendship Mosaic

Local community groups interested in finding out more about the Re-Imaging Communities Programme should contact the Arts Council on Tel: (028) 9038 5200.

The Social Economy in Ballykeel – Thursday's the best day of all!

By Ian Roberts

Ballykeel Environmental Action Team.

About two years ago, Bill Dewar, a local from Ballykeel thought that by cutting grass and doing a little gardening for the elderly residents he would be making a small contribution to the environment and helping the local residents. As sometimes happens with a small project like this, Bill discussed his plans with a few friends and before he knew what had happened, he had a five year Business Plan and was running a small successful business – Ballykeel Environmental Action Team (B.E.A.T. (NI) Ltd).

Initially, Bill planned for a couple of people to cut grass and do light gardening. However, word of the good work and reasonable prices spread and with the help of Peace II funding, the business grew until now there are 4 full time workers and one part time administrator. In addition there are 2 trainees from a Jobskills programme provided with placements and 2 school boys come and help out every Thursday. By doing this work, the trainees are able to build on their skills which in turn will give them the confidence to get full time permanent employment.

Staff salaries for the core workers are paid by DSD, however, it is hoped that in time, the enterprise will become more self sufficient as the business grows. Currently B.E.A.T.(NI) Ltd has grass cutting and general ground maintenance contracts with Ballykeel and Ballee Primary Schools and the local Pentecostal church. In addition, B.E.A.T (NI) LTD have worked with the Ulster Wildlife Trust and using a B&Q grant of £500 to assist the local primary schools to do a flower bed project and general tidy up of some waste ground and complete a bulb planting exercise.

Word of this successful social enterprise has spread far beyond Ballykeel and now B.E.A.T (NI) LTD has diversified into painting and decorating, doing some minor non technical repairs to houses, pathways and fence construction. B.E.A.T (NI) LTD has now started to take on work from outside the Ballykeel area and offer free estimates.

During the initial period of trading March 2004 to March 2005, (13 months) some 405 jobs were completed, during the second period April 2005 to March 2006 (12 months), 390 services were delivered.



B.E.A.T (NI) workers

Reflections on the First Regional Conference on Neighbourhood Renewal

It might seem like a lifetime ago, however it was only 9 months ago when we all braved the weather and headed to Armagh for the first Neighbourhood Renewal Regional Conference. We'd like to indulge ourselves by looking back a little and letting you know about our plans for our second conference later this year.

The purpose of the conference in December 2006 was to provide Neighbourhood Partnerships with the opportunity to network, share experiences and best practice while working in neighbourhood regeneration.

Stephen Gibson from Cordale Housing Association, and Archie Thomson from Renton Community Association in Glasgow, gave a thought provoking presentation



Conference Pictures



entitled "Making things happen at local level, the Scottish experience". They illustrated that success is possible with a partnership approach between Government and the community in an area very similar to those targeted in Northern Ireland through Neighbourhood Renewal.

Their presentation was followed by useful tips on good practice in developing Action Plans from Henry Johnston and Declan O'Hare, Directors of the Regional Development and North West Development Offices respectively whilst Charles Lamberton from TRIAX, provided the audience with an interesting front line perspective of implementing Neighbourhood Renewal in the North West. Maggie Andrews from the Inner East Belfast Partnership then described the difference that Neighbourhood Renewal has made to the residents of that area and outlined the challenge of engaging with the community and Government.

Finally, the then Minister for Social Development, David Hanson braved flight delays and traffic jams to deliver the

keynote address. He described the uniqueness of Neighbourhood Renewal and the benefits of working in partnership with community, voluntary, public, private and political representatives to deliver action plans which tackle the core causes of deprivation in Northern Ireland. He set the scene for the future and called on the audience of community, statutory and locally elected representatives to exact real and sustainable improvements in their areas.

For further information on the last conference visit the Neighbourhood Renewal Website at <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk> and watch out for details of our forthcoming conference planned for 21 November 2007 in the Hilton Hotel Templepatrick. **Get the date in your diary now!**

Making it Happen – Action Plans

The aim of Neighbourhood Renewal is to tackle the core causes of deprivation to close the gap between the quality of life for those living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas with the rest of Northern Ireland. If this is to be achieved we must move away from short term funding to longer term strategic plans for delivery.

Neighbourhood Action Plans have now been developed for the majority of Neighbourhood Renewal areas so we have moved from the planning to the implementation stage.

Once accepted, Action Plans become the "Agenda for Action" for areas and DSD Development Office staff will liaise with statutory partners to develop a pro-active and collaborative response to

locally identified needs. For Belfast, The Belfast Strategy Group has been established. This brings together key statutory providers to consider a coordinated response to the Action Plans for the Neighbourhood Renewal areas in the city.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme Group in the North West is considering how best to meet the priorities of the areas there and because our Regional Development Offices deals with towns and cities across Northern Ireland, the statutory responses there are being negotiated more locally.

These measures will enable statutory bodies to determine the best methods of responding to those

needs and priorities identified in Action Plans in a coordinated and collaborative way.

While all this is going on, arrangements are in place to make sure those services identified as a priority for neighbourhoods within Action Plans are maintained.

What are the key priorities for areas emerging from the Action Plans?

Every Neighbourhood Renewal area has issues and concerns unique to them, however there are many common themes emerging from Action Plans mainly centred around:-

- Improving educational attainment and opportunities,
- Providing opportunities for economic activity and employment,

- Providing opportunities to obtain or improve the level of qualifications,
- Increasing health awareness and reducing long term illness,
- Tackling physical dereliction,
- Tackling anti social behaviour, and
- Building community capacity and civic leadership

These priorities cannot be delivered by statutory bodies or communities in isolation. It is through working in partnership that neighbourhoods will receive both public and community services which work together to improve the quality of life for all those living in our Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

Building Partnerships in the North West

We are very proud of our staff so we make no apologies for replicating part of an article published in the Belfast Telegraph about Paul McNaught a Neighbourhood Renewal Manager within the North West Development Office. The article focuses on a typical working week for Paul.

A Week in the Life

– Paul McNaught, Neighbourhood Renewal Manager.

Neighbourhood Renewal is the Government's main strategy for tackling deprivation in the most disadvantaged communities across Northern Ireland. I help to deliver this strategy within the North West of Northern Ireland, specifically within Derry, Strabane and Limavady. Six Neighbourhood Partnerships (four in Derry and one each in Limavady and Strabane) have been formed consisting of statutory sector, community sector and political representatives. I am currently working with each Neighbourhood Partnership to develop Action Plans that will meet the priority needs of residents within the six Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Part of this role consists of developing and funding projects that will provide services to tackle the root causes of deprivation.

Monday: As with most Monday mornings, I keep time free to open and action e-mails as well as to deal with outstanding paperwork. A lunchtime meeting with the Director of Conservation Volunteers NI is followed by a trip to Limavady for a meeting of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

Tuesday: In the morning, I take part on a site visit to playing fields within the Greater Shantallow area of Derry to listen to proposals for their development. That afternoon I prepare a brief presentation on Neighbourhood Renewal which I then deliver to Derry City Council's Regional Services Committee.

Wednesday: The first half of the day is taken up by a Neighbourhood Partnership meeting for the Waterside area of the city. After lunch my diary is free so I begin work on tendering for a consultant to carry out an Economic Appraisal for a potential Irish Language centre.

Thursday: Thursday morning is spent discussing with the Press Office, arrangements for a Press Release and photoshoot to publicise the award of funding to a telephone helpline service for older and vulnerable people. The afternoon is then spent further developing an Action Plan for the Greater Shantallow area in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Partnership.

Friday: The week ends with a day out of the office. First it's a trip to Strabane for the Neighbourhood Partnership meeting. Then it's onward to Omagh for a meeting of the Programme Management Board of the Southern and Western Education and Library Boards' Extended School initiative – a scheme that provides funding to allow schools to extend their educational programmes outside of normal school hours.

Highs of the Job: The work I do is generally enjoyable, particularly as it involves travelling around quite a bit. There is also the sense of satisfaction that can be gained from seeing a project from start to finish and the positive impact it has on the lives of local people. A further benefit is engaging with characters from all walks of life and backgrounds.

Lows of the Job: The lows of the job can all be summed up in one word, bureaucracy. While I'm aware of the need to be accountable for the public purse it is sometimes frustrating the amount of checks and balances that need to be carried out in order to deliver projects.



*Paul McNaught
in front of
Derry's Guild Hall*

Neighbourhood Renewal's First Information Day

The importance of providing up-to-date relevant information is key to the effective delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal and the reason behind the first of a series of Information Days for DSD staff working in Development Offices across Northern Ireland.

The aim of these sessions is to help staff make linkages with providers, initiatives and programmes which are already available through statutory and other partners and which could prove useful to Neighbourhood Renewal areas. Neighbourhood Renewal presents new challenges to DSD staff and therefore it is important to offer the support to help build strong networks and increase awareness of best practice and relevant initiatives being delivered by Government and beyond.

During our first day, presentations were delivered by John News and Jayne Moore of Sport NI, who provided background to the work of Sport NI highlighting the advantages of becoming involved in sport in terms of physical and mental health, motivation etc and the importance of linking Neighbourhood Action Plans with plans for sporting facilities and funding opportunities provided by Sport NI in Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

John Caldwell from the Department for Education (DE) then delivered a presentation on plans for school improvement, whilst Caroline Karayannis from DE's Regional Training Unit spoke about the need to establish and maintain linkages between schools providing extended services and Neighbourhood Partnerships. This session was completed by a presentation delivered by Johnny Smith and Janice Clarke the Extended Schools Co-ordinators from Belfast Model School for Girls and Belfast Boys Model School respectively who are delivering extensive extended services at their schools and working effectively with the Neighbourhood Partnerships in their area. These presentations clearly highlighted the opportunities for schools and communities when they work together to deliver enhanced services to communities.

The lovely surroundings in Malone House created a colourful backdrop on a hot summers day (I know its hard to believe, but its true!!) for a networking lunch with a refreshing presentation delivered following lunch on the training opportunities available through WomensTec to prepare women and young girls for opportunities in the building and construction industry.

All in all, feedback on the day has been very positive and plans are in place to deliver a further information session on 25th September. Meanwhile if you have any ideas for inclusion for any further sessions, please contact David Rooney in the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (david.rooney@dsdni.gov.uk).

The Give and Take Scheme

by Paddy Mooney
Include Youth



Young lady getting experience on work placement in a bicycle shop

Include Youth (formerly NIITA) was formed in 1979 to enhance the services provided to young people who were in or leaving care or at risk of entering the Juvenile Justice System. It extends across the areas of social care, criminal justice and education. This allows for the enhancement of services and practice across Northern Ireland when working with young people at risk of social exclusion.

The organisation manages the Give and Take project which works with young people who are finding difficulties in accessing training or employment. The scheme offers young people support through a combination of work placements, training and personal development programmes. Around 80% of

these young people have been in the care system and a high percentage of the young people have numeracy and literacy difficulties. Some of these young people are teenage parents, some are homeless and some suffer from mental health or emotional problems. Include Youth helps these young people to improve their chances of employment by increasing their self confidence, improving their social networks and offering skills training. This enables young people to get on the first rung of the ladder towards mainstream employment.

The Give and Take Scheme has been used in the past by statutory services concerned with young people in care or in trouble. However the project is now receiving enquiries from the educational welfare service, schools and local communities. Include Youth feel that the Give and Take model may work for some young people in communities where there are high levels of unemployment and feel that there is a possibility of working closely with Neighbourhood Partnerships. Include Youth have a very informative website which will give more details about their work.

www.includeyouth.org



Young man on work placement on a conservation project.

Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Safety

Getting it together

by Conal Devitt
Community Safety Unit

When I first started working in the field of community safety I found myself thinking in triangles.

One way to “slice” community safety work was to think of it in relation to (1) people (2) property and (3) places. i.e.

- who are the victims and perpetrators of crime?
- what things are being stolen? and
- where is it happening?

Perhaps the easiest of these questions to answer from the information gathered by crime recording is the “where”, particularly in relation to property crime. Hence the rise in software products that will “map” your burglary figures and produce “hot spots” which look good in presentations but are only as useful as the accuracy of the information gathered in the first place.

Nevertheless, as most domestic burglaries are reported for insurance purposes, we can begin to plan activity in relation to particular burglary hot spots.

Now, with domestic burglary we find that the property stolen and the crime victim are also in the same hot spot and research indicates that the most perpetrators of domestic burglary travel less than two miles from their home. So now that we have a fairly tight area where all this crime is going on what do we do about it?

This takes me to my second group of triangles;

- the victim,
- the offender, and
- the location.

If you take away any one of these elements then no crime can be committed, but we need to work on all three aspects. Crime prevention activity focuses on changing potential victims behaviour i.e. lock your doors and windows when you go out, get a burglar alarm; join a neighbourhood watch scheme etc. Work which addresses offenders behaviour i.e. restorative justice, drug rehabilitation, education programmes in prison is often the focus of

criminal justice agencies and work which makes “locations” less vulnerable i.e. locks, bolts, lights, CCTV etc is often the focus of the council, housing executive and/or the voluntary sector. All three strands are coordinated by a local Community Safety Partnership, implementing their localised version of the Northern Ireland Community Safety Strategy.

What has all this to do with Neighbourhood Renewal? Well, if we overlay our domestic burglary hot spots over the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal areas what do you think happens? I reckon the same result will apply if we map incidents of anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and some other types of crime, although the recording and mapping accuracy is much less reliable.

So, all across Northern Ireland, Community Safety Partnerships have done this audit, consultation and mapping and already provide a range of programmes and

projects which impact on most Neighbourhood Renewal areas. However, now that local Neighbourhood Partnerships and Action Plans are in place we must work more closely to ensure that community safety work is embedded in Neighbourhood Renewal areas. Community Safety Partnerships can benefit from a more detailed audit of the local area and from the energy and commitment of local residents on the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships to deliver their local Action Plan. However, although Neighbourhood Renewal is fundamentally about “places” we must not lose sight of the fact that residents also visit other places i.e. town and city centres, parks and open spaces etc.

By constantly focusing on people, property and places, victims, offenders and locations we can continue to think in terms of triangles without going round in circles!

Belfast Boot Camp – Are you Up for the Challenge?

Advantage NI, who work in partnership with Invest Northern Ireland to accelerate youth entrepreneurship, are on the look out for up to one hundred young people, aged 18-30, from East, West and North Belfast including the Greater Shankill and Rathcoole areas, to participate in “Business Boot Camp”, an innovative business start programme with a difference.

Designed to inspire and encourage the city’s next crop of young entrepreneurs and delivered by Advantage Northern Ireland in partnership with Invest Northern Ireland and Renewing Communities, the key aim of the Business Boot Camp programme, the first of its kind to be delivered in Northern Ireland, is to encourage budding young entrepreneurs from across the city to consider starting a business as a viable career option.

This summer, participants are getting the chance to spend an inspirational, fun-packed day with a number of successful, young entrepreneurs from across the country to get a true sense of what’s involved in running a business. In addition, they will complete a Business Development Workshop, to assist them in developing their business proposals.

Twelve very fortunate individuals will be selected to graduate to Boot Camp, which includes an all expenses paid trip to Canada, intensive mentoring support and a tailored start up support package.

Speaking at the launch of Business Boot Camp, Gerry Ford, Director, Advantage NI, said: “We would urge all young people who are interested in setting up their own business to get in touch with us. This programme is truly unique and will offer participants a great opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of enterprise, as well as having fun and being inspired and motivated by spending time with some of our young business owners.”

Also speaking at the launch, Graham Davis, Director of Regional Economic Development at Invest NI, said: “This is a fantastic opportunity for young people here to start their own business. The structure of the programme ensures that all of the necessary support mechanisms are in place along the way to support our young entrepreneurs and encourage them to become business leaders of the future.”

If you are under thirty and are interested in finding out more about Business Boot Camp, Advantage NI wants to hear from you, contact Aidan McCrory, Tel: 028 9093 0047 or Email: aidan@advantage-ni.com



Groundwork Northern Ireland gets ready to launch the Regeneration Resource Centre

Groundwork Northern Ireland is an independent, local, not-for-profit Trust working in partnership with local communities, key funding bodies, statutory authorities and other agencies to deliver on the four strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal policy through environmental regeneration. The Groundwork NI approach draws together community safety, capacity building and community relations into environmental regeneration, improving community cohesion within and between some of the most segregated communities across Northern Ireland and in the border region of the Republic of Ireland. With a 30 strong team including 2 outreach workers in Derry, Groundwork NI has been instrumental in delivering environmental projects in 22 of the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

The formal launch of the NI Regeneration Resource Centre is planned for September in Groundwork's Belfast offices. The centre is on Duncairn Gardens, a well-known interface in North Belfast and will be a hub for all those involved in regeneration and social development – promoting environmental, social and economic regeneration.

The newly appointed Regeneration Resource Centre Development Officer is there to promote the key services & products the Centre will offer – focusing on learning & skills programmes in the key policy areas of People & Place, A Shared Future and First Steps Towards Sustainability. A broad range of training has been planned, targeting local communities and agencies involved in environmental regeneration, including *community capacity building, community consultation, community planning, sustainable development and developing shared spaces*. Training and discussion groups around issues such as *community cohesion, cultural diversity, conflict facilitation and understanding rights* will also be available through a comprehensive Good Relations programmes schedule. The Development Officer has also been tasked with providing advice and tailor made training solutions to meet the needs of potential users of the new facility.

The new Resource Centre is also available for use by Development Office staff and community groups in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, and includes 2 flexible meeting rooms or one large conference space with a relaxed breakout area. The centre is fitted out with state of the art multi-media resources including video conferencing, enabling users to invite people from all over the world to take part in training, conferences or other events.

The Department for Social Development contributed substantial funds to the development of the Regeneration Resource Centre and it is hoped that Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships will make full use of this modern meeting and training facility, along with other groups working to build a sustainable future for all communities in Northern Ireland.

For more information about Groundwork Northern Ireland and the Regeneration Resource Centre, Please contact the Regeneration Resource Centre Development Officer at (028) 90749494 or info@groundworkni.co.uk

