

BUILDING GOOD RELATIONS THROUGH HOUSING



Housing
Executive



Building Good Relations through housing

For 50 years the Housing Executive, our staff and tenants have lived through tough and challenging times. Helping our tenants to feel safe, connected and involved is vital to building vibrant communities.

We know a difference can be made when local people are supported to work with others in a spirit of neighbourliness. We are committed to continuing to help our neighbourhoods become stronger, safer and united.

Through our varied work we aim to build community confidence, increase awareness of and respect for diversity, increase dialogue within and between communities and ensure all our work is relevant and meeting real needs.

We work closely with our external colleagues, particularly, the PSNI, local Councils, DOJ and DFC. As well as internal colleagues, specifically, our Good Relations Officers, Local Offices, Community Involvement, Social Enterprise and Community Safety Units.

This booklet provides details on a range of projects and programmes we have supported across Northern Ireland with testimonials from those involved. Hopefully the stories and experiences demonstrate how we can help you to help your community be the best it can be.

Mission Statement

To work in partnership to ensure that everyone has access to a good affordable home in a safe and healthy community.

What does Community Cohesion mean to the Housing Executive?

- Creating a common vision and sense of belonging.
- Valuing and appreciating people from different backgrounds and circumstances.
- Providing similar life opportunities for people from different backgrounds.
- Developing strong, positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.
- Brokering good relations between groups and communities.

Our work is spread across five main themes

- Communities in Transition
- Race Relations
- Interfaces
- Flags, emblems and sectional symbols
- Segregation and integration

Our Core Values

**Making a difference through
Fairness, Passion and Expertise.**



LIMESTONE UTD 'MY COMMUNITY'

North Belfast

The Project

'My Community' engaged with young people from two interface communities in North Belfast. The project used sport as a natural setting for young people to open up with one another and form positive relations regardless of their backgrounds.

Throughout the course of the project, participants had the opportunity to play in teams with participants they did not know coming into the project. They then took part in coaching sessions and group discussions.

All these components of the project helped solidify relations among the young people.

In 2019, group sessions took place with young people from Tigers Bay and Newington. They were focused on culture, with participants sharing their personal experiences and personal stories including growing up in different countries, along with the positive and negative experiences of moving to Northern Ireland. This promoted openness and helped everyone to understand

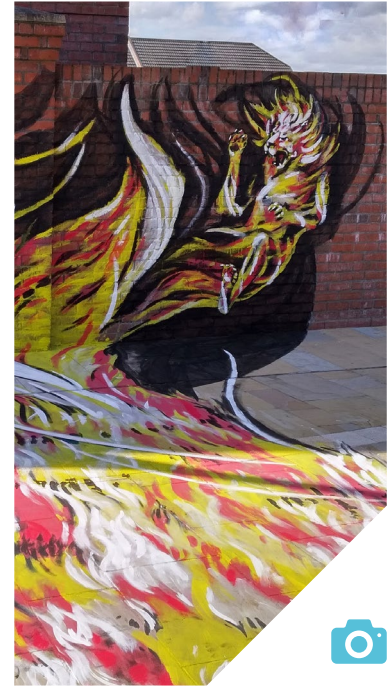
how much of an impact the behaviour of one community towards another can potentially have on an individual. At the end of the sessions, all the participants were keen to learn more about one another and their experiences.

Making a Difference

The 'My Community' project continues to help break down barriers between communities in this area. This project was extremely successful and helped build long term relationships through sport within our communities. The Housing Executive is proud to be able to support such invaluable work.

"It was great to bring so many people from diverse communities together, to meet and develop friendships with young people living in interface communities. We celebrated sameness and difference, I have no doubt of the positive impact this project had on all the participants. We will continue to build on this success in the forthcoming months and years."

Brian, Limestone United



CHALK ART FESTIVAL

South & East Belfast

The Project

The Chalk Arts Festival was an innovative project completed in partnership between TEO Urban Villages Initiative and Ballymac Friendship Trust. Its aim was to bring international artists from all over the world together, to do a series of chalk art works in the Inner East area of Ballymacarrett.

The festival took place in late June 2019 and finished 5th July 2019. The community in Ballymacarrett invited international artists to become involved in helping express their cultural celebrations through an International Chalk Art festival.

This project was the first of its kind to be held in Northern Ireland. The artists involved came from; Italy, France, Holland and Venezuela.

They were tasked with creating images young people in the area could resonate with. The young people had opportunities to engage in workshops with the artists regarding their content, as well as other interactive arts activities.

Participants also took part in a forum theatre experience. This had the effect of turning negative images of celebrating culture into a more positive experience. From this a series of events were created.

Making a Difference

The impact of the Chalk Art Festival was Ballymac Friendship Trust and residents of Inner East area of Ballymacarrett, contributed to a wider East Festival programme of events. These included a community fun day and promoted cross community connections within South and East Belfast.



HANNAHSTOWN COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

West Belfast & Shankill

The Project

The 10th Hannahstown Annual Festival built on the success of previous years and was bigger and better than the community could have hoped.

The residents and their families look forward to the festival every year as it brings a buzz to what is usually a quiet area. Hannahstown is a rural community, nestled in the hills of West Belfast and like so many rural communities, isolation is a big issue.

The centre is seen as the hub of the community and used by all ages.

The annual community festival brought people from all backgrounds to the centre to enjoy the family atmosphere, fun and games and the event gave everyone a sense of belonging in the community.

Making a Difference

The festival is needed every year as it is a vital means for families to get together and for those in the community to make new friends and strengthen old relationships. The festival provides a connection to those living in Hannahstown and in the adjacent communities. Through projects like this, Hannahstown Community Association is improving the health and wellbeing of residents in Hannahstown and the surrounding areas.

“Hannahstown festival is a yearly event and enjoyed by all age groups of the community. It helps prevent rural isolation, through meeting up with old friends and making new ones. Everyone makes great memories at the festival and look forward to it every year. Bring on 2021.”

Alison Fegan, Centre Manager



BOXING/WELLBEING SUMMER CAMP



Lisburn & Castlereagh

The Project

Townland Boxing Club provided an outlet through a summer camp for young people. The focus of the programme was for young people to build their fitness and skills; it also provided a diversion for anyone who could be at risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour.

There has been noticeably better community interaction and engagement as a consequence of the camp. The project was based around physical training in the boxing club and in local parks when the weather permitted. The benefits went beyond exercise, for those involved; the activities were significantly helping with their physical and mental health.

There were many added bonuses of the camp, one being, it helped identify potential leaders within the local community. In the future this will have a positive impact on capacity building in the area and allow young people to become empowered and respected for their achievements in their communities.

Making a Difference

This project not only improved the lives of the young people involved, it gave all residents in the area an opportunity to come together.

As the club grows, it will create a positive social hub for so many people. Glenavy and the surrounding areas have sizeable rural populations. Community infrastructure is essential for the local population. The Housing Executive realises the importance of these locally driven projects in helping build good relations, improving confidence among our tenants and their ability to engage young people from the local community.

“This programme is for everyone in the community who perhaps feel they could use some company and a nice walk to clear their head. It has seen buy in from young and old and those in between. It is a great way to bring members of the community together.”

Carmel Quinn, Secretary



GET SET KILCOOLEY MURAL REIMAGING PROJECT

North Down & Ards

The Project

The Neighbourhood Partnership set a goal of removing a contentious mural at the entrance to Kilcooley Primary School. It was replaced with a positive image promoting education and the 'Get Set' message. This was and is used by the Neighbourhood Partnership to promote education throughout the estate.

The artist facilitated a number of workshops and consulted with residents, parents and children from Kilcooley Primary School to design a new positive image. The community involvement in this project was crucial and the involvement of the primary school made it even more special.

Making a Difference

The new mural provided a positive message within the estate and to those who may want to live here in the future. The artwork that was created, promotes shared space and shows what the community can achieve

together. The image is positive and bright for pupils and families walking to and from school. It has helped to empower young people from the area, given them a sense of ownership and created community pride in their area. The reimaging project coincided with the celebrations of the 50th birthday of Kilcooley Primary School. It was a great way to mark the positive influence of young people in the Kilcooley community.

"The artwork is 'Education Inspired' to raise the value of education. Engaging with parents, allowed us to build meaningful positive relationships and encourage ongoing parental involvement. Communication is essential to meet the needs of each child. This has many positive effects on a child's learning, with parental support instrumental in developing children's skills and confidence."

Pauline Brown,
Principal of Kilcooley Primary School & Nursery Unit



SOCIAL DISTANCING BINGO

South Area

The Project

Residents of the Edgarstown estate in Portadown had much needed joy returned to the estate, thanks to funding from the Housing Executive.

Edgarstown Residents Association (ERA) received Covid 19 emergency funding, which they used to help older people and most vulnerable tenants throughout the lockdown period. 'Distancing Bingo' was organised to get residents out of their homes and socialising with neighbours.

Residents were issued with Bingo Books and ERA staff (via microphones on the green in front of the houses) would call the bingo numbers - all maintaining a safe distance. The funding was used to help expand the support network ERA already had in place; enabling more people to volunteer to deliver hot meals and essential items to those most in need.

Making a Difference

Reducing isolation was high on the association's list of priorities. Activity/essentials packs were delivered to the most vulnerable and older people in the area. The Bingo project enabled residents to come together at an extremely difficult time. Before this event, residents did not really mix. The project allowed for that first contact with their neighbours and will lead to greater community engagement at other events.

"Social 'Distancing Bingo' is proved to be a great success. We are truly thankful for being given the chance, through the Housing Executive's Covid 19 Fund, for this event to happen"

***Phyllis Abraham, Chairperson,
Edgarstown Residents Association***



CANON'S EXCURSION - BIG DAY OUT

South Down

The Project

Downpatrick has a rich shared history of local people working together to promote positive relations in the community. To help celebrate this history, members of Stream Street Residents Association came together to transfer old 16mm film of the Canon's Excursion from the 1960s. The old film was transferred onto a digital disc so people could remember Downpatrick in the past.

The Canon's Excursion was an annual cross-community event, where people raised funds all year round to take local children to the beach in Newcastle for a big day out. The film was then shown at an event aimed at promoting the shared history of Downpatrick. The screening of the film allowed people to reflect on a shared history of community spirit and cooperation.

Making a Difference

The impact of this project has brought many positive benefits to Stream Street and the Housing Executive. The group used the project to recruit new volunteers,

young and old, to carry out a number of community clean ups in the estate. These clean ups created new relationships with the Council and other statutory providers, who are now working with the group to help keep the estate clean and tidy. The group have plans to keep growing their work to help make Stream Street a community that works together and sets examples for the next generation to make new memories of what a vibrant community looks like.

The screening of the film created an opportunity to bring old neighbours together to remember their childhoods and recall how their parents and neighbours worked all year round to celebrate the positive relations that shaped Downpatrick.

'It really brought the community together and we had a great night remembering the Canon's Excursion, reliving our childhood days of going to the Amusements and Newcastle Beach. All our parents made the sandwiches and cakes. They raised the money for bus hire and to put this event on in our community.'

John Gordon, Stream Street Residents Association



ENCHANTED ERNE

South West Area

The Project

'Enchanted Erne' engaged with children and young people from the South West region. It took place in the Buttermarket, at the heart of Enniskillen.

Activities included; a climbing wall, eastern European dance display, old fashioned games, a work shop and an open mike slot. It created greater community awareness, interaction and engagement amongst residents in the area.

The project was a huge success as it engaged so many people from the surrounding communities. It allowed friendships to be made amongst people who would not necessarily meet in ordinary everyday circumstances. The event encouraged more young people to mix with other young people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Making a Difference

The impact of this project stems from bringing young people from all sides of the community and cultures together. The event has certainly strengthened community relations in the area. Hopefully their future relations will be influenced in a positive and long lasting way. It was a welcoming celebration which will help solidify and strengthen not only cross community relations, but also make marginalised groups feel more part of their communities.

"Children's Day in the Castle Courtyard, where the heavens opened and the rain blasted us adults under whatever cover we could find, should have been a disaster, but it wasn't. A mass of children just went on dancing in the rain to the live music. Something so spontaneous was joyful to watch."

Parent of participant



UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND DIVERSITY

Mid Ulster

The Project

The young people who participated in this project gained knowledge of how Northern Ireland is governed, whilst broadening their views on the wider community which they live in.

The local residents involved in the project visited Derry/Londonderry and took a walking tour of the city walls in order to learn about the city's history and heritage. This was followed by a visit to Stormont Estate, to educate the youth about the government and its history.

Making a Difference

With the help of cohesion funding, this project has had such a positive impact. It encouraged a greater understanding of cultural heritage and the diverse political views among teenagers and residents from the area. It was extremely worthwhile for these young

people to explore views and opinions which would differ from those they would have grown up with.

This freedom for these teenagers to learn about why and how other people will ultimately hold different views from their own, will be vital for them as they grow older and perhaps enter into further education or the workplace. They will now be able to respect difference and hopefully build meaningful relationships outside of their own religious/cultural backgrounds. In addition to this, the project has eradicated graffiti and prevented offensive slogans being used in the local area.

"As the age of the participants on the educational trips covered a vast range (9-72 years old), we believe we successfully broke down age barriers between young and old. Based on the feedback I have received from the younger people, I believe there is a good possibility of more engagement with our community group."

John Black, Committee Member



CERAMICS WITH JULIA

South Antrim

The Project

Whiteabbey Community Group developed a ceramics project before Christmas. They believed it would create the opportunity to attract new volunteers to the group and encourage interactions with members of another community.

The participants were able to develop their creative skills and make beautiful works of art. Those involved were also able to take time out of their day to unwind and make new friends.

Projects like these are vital in improving people's mental health and help make residents feel safe and connected in their communities.

Making a Difference

Whiteabbey Community Group is a cross community group who wanted to strengthen their cross community ethos. It was a great opportunity for people from both sides of the community to engage and interact with each other. This project helped bring residents together who would not ordinarily have the opportunity to socialise with one another.

We hope that this will establish strong bonds and long lasting partnerships between our communities.

"Fabulous teacher and loving the ceramic figures, they are high quality and look wonderful when painted and finished."

Bronagh King



INTERGENERATIONAL DAY IN CARNLOUGH

Mid & East Antrim

The Project

Carnlough Community Association wanted to develop a project which aimed to create a shared space, where everyone felt safe. The vision was to create a vibrant event free from discrimination. The group's volunteers led this project. They were very passionate about improving the lives of everyone in their community, while developing a day, which was a positive expression of culture.

The Intergenerational Day highlighted and commended

"It would be good if more days like this were held within our community. I thought the idea of all age groups meeting and have having a fun day, encouraged all age groups to mix. I really enjoyed this day."

Marilyn Toogood HRA

the volunteers and staff of the community association for their contribution. Their efforts helped to enrich the lives of those living within Carnlough. It also showed the commitment and dedication carried out through the generations to help their community thrive.

Making a Difference

The project brought the entire community together in a shared space which was safe and welcoming to all. Events like these create bonds among people young and old and help build respect between the different generations.

"It was a very successful day and everyone had a great time, both parents and children. Thank you to Maureen Morrow, the Mayor at the time, for her attendance at this event. Thank you to Joanne for organizing this day and enabling all age groups to come together. A big thank you to NIHE, their grant funding enabled the group to hold this Intergenerational Day."

Patricia McConnell



BALLYKELLY SUMMER FAIR

Causeway

The Project

The Ballykelly summer fair is an intergenerational project that saw local groups, young people, families and older people come together in a family style summer fun setting. The event offered inclusion and support to a diversity of communities in the Ballykelly area.

It improved engagement in the community event and will foster a sense of belonging for all those who came along. Ballykelly had the perfect day for their summer fair, held at St John's church. The event brought people from across the community together to enjoy events, hot food, music and a fun farm.

Making a Difference

This was an opportunity for all members of the community to come together and get to know each other To understand each other's cultures, make friends and promote diversity in a fun social setting.

"This was our opportunity to promote Ballykelly as an area welcoming to everyone, regardless of religious or community background."

Joanne McFarland, Tamlaghtfinlagan Parish Church



LEAFAIR PROJECT

West Area

The Project

Leafair Community Association designed a capacity-building reimagining project with local, hard to reach youth. This project transformed a local anti-social behaviour hotspot, into a local art gallery. This was designed by young people, who wanted to talk to local residents. They wanted to reinvent these generators which were previously unsightly and had no significance to the community.

The project has completely transformed the area; the artwork is powerful, meaningful and promotes a positive image for the area.

Making a Difference

Everyone in the community got involved in the project and enjoyed working with the young people. The work completed, helped improve intergenerational relations. It has allowed young people to build capacity and take part in something they valued and felt passionate about.

“We pinpointed three local generators across Galliagh that were eye sores and promoting anti-community activity. We worked with the local community to transform these into public art galleries, with art work portraying positivity, harmony and community cohesiveness”

Liam Griffin, Group Chairperson



INTERFACES

Shankill Area

The Project

The reimagining of the Peacewall at Woodvale in the Shankill area was completed in March 2020. The images are drawings of mill workers who would have been working in factories in the area. These art installations were designed by a local artist following workshops with residents. These consultations helped determine the types of images that would be used in the scheme and they are a fitting tribute to the area's culture and heritage.

Making a Difference

The type of artwork used in the project was hugely important to the Shankill area as it acknowledges the

importance of its industrial heritage as most families contained spinners or weavers, who supported the linen industry. The public realm projects that have been carried out at interface areas across the city are vital ways to rejuvenate places in need of regeneration.

"Through negotiations with the community, they realised what could be achieved through the landscaping of the area, opening up the space, removing the outdated and overgrown areas and replacing the very old, tired, ugly and ineffectual corrugated iron original gates, while still meeting their residents concerns."

Lesley Cherry, Artist

MEET THE TEAM



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