Taking a stand against racism

Summary of the Housing Executive approach to tackling racist hate crime and incidents in Northern Ireland

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Contents

Executive summary...........................................................................................................................................2
Impact of Housing Executive Race Relations work.........................................................................................3
Introduction - Housing Executive’s Race Relations Policy..............................................................................4
Demographic and Statistical Analysis............................................................................................................5
Housing Executive work on prevention of racist harassment and building good race relations ............ 10
Supporting Victims ........................................................................................................................................ 16
Taking a stand against racism:

Executive summary
In recent months racist hate crime has attracted significant local political and local, national and international media attention, particularly in a few specific areas of Belfast. It is well established that the harmful impact on the individual victim, their family and the “ripple effect” on the wider community and society as a whole needs to be considered and racist hate crime tackled at every opportunity.

This report outlines the Housing Executive’s Race Relations Policy and approach, the impact of changing demographics and hate crime on social housing and the positive work the Housing Executive is doing to promote integration and good race relations and to take a stand against racism. Our approach covers three vital areas:

Prevention
- Working through the Housing Community Network to build good relations, challenge housing myths and migrants, increasing understanding of housing allocation and demographic change.
- Creating opportunities for minority and majority communities to integrate and share learning
- Offering training such as Building Relations in Communities and Ending Hate in our Communities to the Housing Community Network and staff
- Mainstream support to new tenants from Black and Minority Ethnic communities such as Sustaining Tenancies and linking to Black and Minority Ethnic Support groups.

Supporting Victims
- Encouraging staff and residents to report hate harassment and increase opportunity to record any hate related incident and identify victims.
- Supporting Victim Support Advocates (including for disability related and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender sector)
- Staff taking part in training on Hate Crime and Community Safety
- Rewriting the Hate Harassment Victim Support Pack
- Introducing innovative projects such as Supporting Tenancies for Ethnic Minorities and Assisting People and Communities with Northern Ireland Alternatives.

Improving the Multi-Agency Response
- Working with Police Service Northern Ireland and Department of Justice on the Hate Crime Delivery Group
- Working with several District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships to develop multi-agency responses (North and East Belfast)
- Represented on Belfast Migrant Worker Shadow Group, Northern Ireland Strategic Integration Partnership, East Belfast Ethnic Minority Support Group, North Belfast Ethnic Support Group etc.
• Working with a range of community based and ethnic minority groups including Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group, Refugee and Asylum Forum, Bryson Intercultural, to build closer relations and understanding of issues on the ground and within communities.

Impact of Housing Executive Race Relations work

• Improving race relations in Housing Executive areas across Northern Ireland

• Supporting both minority and majority people to deal with the changing demographics in Northern Ireland

• Supporting people to remain in their tenancies if they chose to do so following hate intimidation

• Supporting people made homeless through hate intimidation

• Informing applicants of recent tensions or incidents in their area of choice for housing to enable informed choice

• Providing information to victims of hate harassment including signposting to victim support services

• Providing practical measures such as repairs following damage to property

• Enhancing security following incidents in partnership with Department of Justice and Police Service of Northern Ireland

• Identifying areas where people feel their choice is restricted due to hate harassment and initiating good relations or race relations projects in those areas

• Partnership working on all aspects of hate harassment

• Staff can respond in a sensitive way and take action to stop racist harassment and deal with the perpetrator, taking the victims wishes into account

• Staff can refer victims to organisations which can provide further support and advice for harassment that has already occurred

• The Housing Executive is gaining a better understanding about the way harassment is affecting those living on Housing Executive estates and plan further prevention or support strategies

• The Housing Executive is working in partnership with other agencies to create an environment which encourages community cohesion and racial harmony and prevents further harassment.

• Supporting people to report low level harassment that is not a crime allows us to identify underlying trends and to spot tensions early on. This information can be used to prevent further harassment or further escalation in the local area.
Introduction - Housing Executive’s Race Relations Policy

The Housing Executive launched the Race Relations Policy in 2005 to draw together the key responsibilities which individually contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

The Housing Executive policy was in line with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Race Equality Strategy 2005-2010 which ceased operating in 2007 and a new Race Equality Strategy is currently out for consultation. The Housing Executive Policy will be reviewed in line with any future the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister strategy.

The aim of the Housing Executive Race Relations Policy 2005 was “To ensure that all Black and Minority Ethnic People in Northern Ireland can enjoy full and fair access to housing services and employment opportunities within the Housing Executive. It aims to support the promotion of good relations between and within ethnic groups and communities.”

The main Race Relations policy themes can be summarised as follows:

• Mainstreaming black and minority ethnic issues in policy development and planning.
• Racial harassment and intimidation.
• Promoting black and minority ethnic social inclusion.
• Community participation and development.
• Migrant worker issues.

Statutory Duty

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities designated for the purposes of the Act to comply with two statutory duties.

The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.

The second duty, the Good Relations duty, requires that public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

Additionally the Housing Executive operates under the provisions of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 and amendments. These outlaw discrimination on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin and include the Irish Traveller community.
Demographic and Statistical Analysis

The Housing Executive Equality Unit has produced eight annual mapping reports which analyse Black and Minority Ethnic and migrant worker households across Northern Ireland. The reports to date have been used widely by staff and outside organisations including Councils and the Equality Commission. The core aim of this project is to track the current Black and Minority Ethnic and migrant worker populations by Housing Executive Local Office/Local Government District, and to continue to develop and improve our understanding of the flow of migrant workers in Northern Ireland and identify issues relating to or impacting on housing.

Migrant workers started to come to live and work in Northern Ireland in significant numbers in 2000 and 2001 due to low rates of unemployment and skills and labour shortages. These were initially filled mainly by Portuguese migrant workers in South Tyrone and Filipino nurses in the health service across Northern Ireland.

The expansion of the European Union in 2004 enabled A8 nationals (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) to move to work in Northern Ireland under the Workers Registration Scheme and subsequently former A2 nationals (Bulgaria and Romania) to have a right to reside from 1 January 2014.

Estimating the number of Black and Minority Ethnic and migrant workers and their families living in Northern Ireland is difficult to measure accurately. The situation is complicated by the fact that citizens of the 27 European Union member states and citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland have the right to move freely into and out of Northern Ireland without their details being recorded. There are however a number of sources of information that give an indication of the number of migrant workers living in Northern Ireland.

The 2011 Census shows:

- A growth in the Northern Ireland population by 7% from 1,685,300 on census day 2001 to 1,810,900 on census day 2011.

- 98.2% of the NI population is ‘white’. The greatest number of people from another ethnic group live in Belfast (3.6%) and Castlereagh (2.9%). The largest other ethnic group is ‘Chinese’ making up 0.3% of the population. It should be noted that the majority of European migrants to Northern Ireland would be included in the ‘white’ ethnic group.

- The breakdown of ‘country of birth’ shows that prior to the 2004 expansion 9,703 or 0.5% of the population was made up of people born in European Union countries, outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. On 2011 Census day 35,704 or 2% of the total population living in Northern Ireland were born in an EU accession country and have moved to Northern Ireland from 2004 on.

- Main types of passports held other than UK, Republic of Ireland or No Passport includes European Union countries (39,527 or 2.2% of the population), Middle East and Asia (9,189 or 0.5% of the population) and North America and Caribbean (5,989 or 0.3% of the population).

- 61,884 (or 3.4% of the total population) had a national identity other than British, Irish, Northern Irish, English, Scottish or Welsh. The highest proportions of other national identities were found in Dungannon (9.6%), Craigavon (6.4%) and Belfast (5.1%).
Main languages spoken other than English included Polish (17,731 or 1% of the total population) and Lithuanian (6,250 or 0.4% of the total population).

**Other Key Indicators:**

- **Total Net External Migration to Northern Ireland from Mid 2005 to Mid 2012**

![Graph showing migration trends](image)

- National Insurance Number Applications made by non UK or Republic of Ireland nationals in Northern Ireland peaked at 21,472 in 2007/08. The number has since fallen annually to 9,991 in 09/10, 9,944 in 2010/11, 9,134 in 2011/12 and falling further to 8,188 in 2012/13.

- Schools Census data shows 6,481 newcomers to primary schools and 2,518 newcomers to post primary schools in 2012. These figures show an increase of 15.1% for primary schools and 1.5% for post primary schools compared to the previous year. “Newcomer” is a term used by DENI from 2009 replacing “English as an additional language”.

- The Big Word language support was provided in 25 District Offices with a total of 871 calls made between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2013 compared to 777 calls by 28 District Offices between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2012. The service was also used by the Customer Service Units on 1,910 occasions over the one year period with the majority of calls (1,867) being in Belfast Customer Service Unit.

**Key findings from the Housing Executive 2013 Survey of Local Offices (2014 figures are currently in preparation)**

- 1,671 migrant worker households applied for social housing in the one year period to 31st July 2013. This is a decrease by 12% compared to 1,894 migrant worker households that applied in the year to
31st July 2012. At 31st July 2013 main nationalities included Lithuanian (492), Polish (475) and Portuguese (169) nationals.

- At 31st March 2013 areas with highest numbers of Black and minority ethnic applicants on the waiting list for social housing include Belfast (482), Dungannon (88) and Bangor (69).

- 254 migrant worker households were allocated housing in the year to 31st July 2013. This is a slight fall on the number of allocations in the year to 31st July 2012 (272). Main nationalities include Polish (78), Lithuanian (44) and Portuguese (25) households.

- Areas with highest numbers of allocations to Black and minority ethnic applicants in the year to 31st March 2013 include Belfast (67), Dungannon (9), Bangor (8) and Newtownards (8).

- Breakdown of the Estimated Number of Allocations to Migrant Worker Households by Main Nationalities

![Bar chart showing allocations by nationality over years]

- 1,032 migrant worker households were tenants on 31st July 2013. This is an increase of 13% on the previous year (914). Main nationalities at 31st July 2013 included Polish (337), Lithuanian (209) and Portuguese (157) migrant worker households. An estimated 77% of migrant worker households were families and 23% single person households. Main districts included Dungannon (190), Portadown (165), and Lurgan/Brownlow (126).

- 705 applications were received from migrant workers applying as homeless in the one year period to 31st July 2013. This is a slight fall on the 754 applications made by households applying as homeless in the previous year. Main nationalities applying as homeless included Polish (211), Lithuanian (145) and Portuguese (87).
• 345 migrant worker households were awarded full duty applicant status in the year to 31st July 2013. This is similar to the 343 households awarded full duty applicant status in the previous year. Main nationalities included Polish (87), Lithuanian (72), and Portuguese (34).

• At 31st July 2013 there were 508 migrant worker households that had been awarded full duty applicant status on the waiting list for social housing.

• Between 1st August 2012 and 31st July 2013 there were 1,411 recorded applications for Housing Benefit from migrant worker households. Main districts included Newry (182), Dungannon (181), South & East Belfast (178) and Portadown (156).

Key findings from Local Office Case Studies:
• Difficulties for migrant workers and their families in terms of affordability in the private rented sector in Northern Ireland remain and as a result migrant workers are continuing to turn to the social rented sector.

• Migrant workers and their families are well informed about how to access social housing by talking to friends and family and also through well-established advice and support services.

• Cases of intimidation and tensions still remain in a small number of areas, however in most areas migrant workers are fully integrated and are living throughout the community and not just in particular areas.

• Senior Housing Officers have identified that in some districts migrant worker tenants are applying for transfers to what they perceive to be better quality accommodation. Some migrant worker tenant households are also applying to buy their homes as they have been tenants for over five years.

• Some districts have also noticed a fall in the number of migrant workers coming to the district office. For example in Lurgan many of the migrant worker households on high points have now been housed and the main reasons for contact are now regarding repairs and housing benefits queries.

• The pilot sustained tenancy scheme in Newry District proved successful in helping tenants, including migrant workers, to access furniture for their new homes. This helped to breach what had previously been a main barrier for migrant workers and their families accessing NIHE accommodation. This has since been initiated in South and East Belfast.

Houses in Multiple Occupation
The number of Houses in Multiple Occupation’s identified as migrant worker accommodation in Northern Ireland increased from 490 in the year to 31st March 2009 to 528 in the year to 31st March 2010, 569 in the year to 31st March 2011 and 610 in the year to 31st March 2012. The number of migrant workers in Houses in Multiple Occupation’s has fallen by 39 to 571 in the year to 31st March 2013. According to the Regional Houses in Multiple Occupation Manager, the reason for the fall may be related to the migrant worker community becoming more settled with fewer single people as families join them or they form families and move out of Houses in Multiple Occupation accommodation.
Incidents and crimes recorded by the police in Northern Ireland with a racist, homophobic, sectarian, disability, faith/religion or transphobic motivation: 2012/13 and 2013/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Total number of incidents recorded</th>
<th>Total number of crimes recorded</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012/13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobic</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>280</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sectarian</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>1,284</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>107</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transphobic</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PSNI Racist Incidents and Crimes in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2013/14

| Racist motivations: incidents and crimes 2004/05 to 2013/14 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Racist incidents| 813     | 936     | 1,047   | 976     | 990     | 1,038   | 842     | 696     | 750     | 982     |
| Racist crimes   | 634     | 746     | 861     | 757     | 771     | 712     | 531     | 458     | 470     | 691     |
Housing Executive work on prevention of racist harassment and building good race relations

Working with our communities
The Housing Executive has always recognised that our good relations and race relations strategy is best delivered through community led initiatives and the promotion of intercultural dialogue at a local level and we have worked closely with the Housing Community Network over many years.

These examples give just a taste of the creativity that Community groups have used to develop ways to encourage interaction and to build trust and respect.

The benefits for each community depend on the stage they were at on their journey towards embracing diversity. Some were just starting out and had only begun to welcome new residents in the past few years and have developed projects to begin dialogue and others have over 40 years of experience living happily with Black and minority ethnic neighbours and wish to deepen already established relationships.

Shared Race Relations Charter
The Shared Race Relations Charter, prepared by our Inter Community Network was first launched in 2008 and all 35 District Offices and over 340 District Housing Community Groups then signed up to its principles and worked hard to put the minimum standards in place.

Projects have included District Office Open days, multi-cultural celebrations and festivals including dance, music and food, training courses, competitions, sports and visits and some of these are featured here and in the “Sharing the Learning” video (at www.nihe.gov.uk).

The Shared Race Relations Charter aimed:

- To give a clear and strong message that the Housing Executive and Community Groups will not tolerate hate crime in any form on its estates and will take appropriate action to effectively address and eradicate hate crime motivated by someone’s Ethnicity, Race, Nationality, Faith or Belief.
- To promote good relations between all communities in Northern Ireland including Black & Minority Ethnic and Migrant Worker communities
- To promote a ‘safe environment’ within and around our estates where all residents, can live in peace and quiet, free from harassment, intimidation and anti-social behaviour
- To encourage victims and witnesses to report incidents to relevant agencies and support groups
- To actively encourage Black & Minority Ethnic and Migrant Worker individuals to participate in community life and in the Housing Community Network.

The Shared Race Relations Charter set out 8 areas where a community could develop initiatives to help make the community more inclusive and where people can live together and in the peaceful enjoyment of their homes. The 8 areas are: Access to Information, Recognition of Racism, Equality of access to Services, Community Participation, Community Safety, Partnership Working, Appreciation of Cultural Diversity and Social Inclusion Activities.
Award for Bridging Cultures 2010

The Shared Race Relations Charter was recognised at a UK level as being a leading best practice example of how to bridge cultures. The Housing Executive was joint public sector winner, with the Avon & Somerset Constabulary, of the UK Award for Bridging Cultures in 2010 for this work supporting intercultural dialogue. The Charter has been promoted across the UK as a good practice example.

Ranjit Sondhi, CBE, chairman of the Institute for Community Cohesion’s Award for Bridging Cultures judging panel said:

“The judges welcomed the bottom up rather than top down approach of this project which uses existing community and support structures. It demonstrated a good example of partnership working between communities and the Housing Executive. It also had a clear and strategic approach matched by real impact on the ground”.

Examples of Race Relations projects supported by the Housing Executive

There is a wide range of work carried out which helps newcomers, from any ethnicity, to settle into a community. There is work done through the Housing Community Network such as the Race Relations Charter and fund, the Welcome Pack and local initiatives to provide support and some of the work over the past 5 years is highlighted below. These examples give just a taste of the creativity that Community groups have used to develop ways to encourage interaction and to build trust and respect over the past few years.

The Building Relationships in Communities programme, Shared Neighbourhoods and Shared Communities projects all also included an element of welcoming and sharing with minority ethnic neighbours including the voluntary Shared Neighbourhood Agreement. In BRIC alone 118 members of staff received Good Relations training.

Community groups have visited cultural events like the Festival of Colours and MELA

Some groups decided that rather than try to organise an event themselves it would be better (and easier) to provide transport to a major annual multicultural celebration – in this case the HOLI - the traditional Hindu Festival of Colours. In February 2012 Rathgill Youth Group and Whitehill Residents Groups from Bangor and Annadale and Hayward Residents Association in Belfast brought almost 100 people to the King’s Hall event where thousands of festival goers joined together to mark the arrival of spring and celebrate the new cultural diversity of Belfast.

In April 2013 groups from Annadale and Haywood, Millisle, Eastend and Bowtown in Ards and the DeWind/Cherryvalley Association were all supported to take part.

Linda Hutchinson, Race Relations Officer in the Housing Executive explained: “We recognise that our communities are adapting to the changing diversity in Northern Ireland and we want to support them to build better race relations in a range of ways. Events like this are a great opportunity for our tenants to celebrate being part of an increasingly culturally diverse society.”

11
One group who attended (Benbradagh) commented – “We held an ethnicity workshop a couple of weeks later which included the group who attended this trip and some children who did not. Whilst discussing what people think about other races and cultures being part of our community there was a noticeably more favourable response from the children who attended “Holi.” When questioned about why it was important to be accepting of other races, the consensus from this group was that it is positive and enjoyable to be able to experience different types of music, food, clothing and dance and that it can make our community a more interesting place to be.”

The Mela (meaning to meet) took place at Belfast’s Botanic Gardens. The event included music, dance, food, fashion, street theatre, circus and carnival from across the globe, all presented in a high energy, vivid and vibrant day out. Brookfield Community Association attended in 2012, Redburn Loughview in 2013 and busses have also been funded in 2014 from Coleraine.

**Bulgarian Craft and Music Programme**

This project aimed to provide an opportunity for the young people in Cline Road Community Association to experience Bulgarian music, craft and food as there are Bulgarian residents living in the estate. The group wanted to encourage mutual respect and understanding and this was a very successful evening for all involved.

**Celebrate cultures**

In May 2010 a Celebrating Cultures and Communities evening was organised by Banbridge Housing Community Network and included Indian, Irish and Ulster Scot dancers, cuisine from around the world and face painters and balloon modellers for the younger members of the community. At the event people had the chance to meet with District Housing Community Network members, who had photographs and information about their work on notice boards and how to participate.

Dancers who took part in the Banbridge event.

**Chinese New Year**

The Newtownards District Housing Community Network made a financial contribution towards the cost of staging an event by Ards Borough Council to mark the start of the Chinese New Year – the ‘Year of the Tiger’ to reach out to the Chinese Community and make information available to members of the Chinese Community.

The Mayor of Ards, Cllr. William Montgomery commented: ‘Ards has had a large Chinese Community for many years and in recent times we have also welcomed other ethnic minority groups to our area so it’s important that we learn about and celebrate other cultures. This event gives the Council and other public sector agencies an opportunity to forge stronger links with ethnic minority communities. The agencies can also address some of the practical difficulties which people encounter such as the language barrier when trying to access services or to meet the requirements of business regulations’.
Training
An example of training available is Ending Hate in our Communities. One community group asked for this after some long standing Black and minority ethnic residents were subjected to hate incidents in the neighbouring area and they wished to explore ways to support the victims, show that the majority of people abhorred such actions and stop this spreading within their community.

The funding provided a venue and catering for the training course to be delivered by the South Belfast Roundtable on Racism and the Good Relations Officer with Belfast City Council. The evaluations were very positive and the participants believed that the training should be offered to other Housing Community Network’s and that they could take forward their learning to develop further ways of addressing the issues within their area. There is a wide range of training available.

Inclusive St Patrick’s Day
Stewartstown Community Group organised an event on St Patrick’s Day 2012 to promote inclusiveness. The Community Group involved groups such as the Women’s Group, St Vincent de Paul, Stewartstown Development Association (Business), Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network, Stewartstown Historical Society Stewartstown Amateur Dramatics, Church Groups and the Gaelic Athletics Association, Brocha Pipe Band, Local Musicians.

John Rush stated “The project aimed to welcome cultural diversity which should help develop relationships of trust and friendship with those of different traditions and values by increasing awareness of other cultures and beliefs.”

Multicultural Food Fest & Family Fun Day
Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group Multicultural Food Fest & Family Fun Day aimed to bring together people from the area, Chinese Welfare Association, Roma Community Association, Belfast Islamic Centre, NICRAS and Artsekta at Shaftesbury Community and Recreation Centre in South Belfast. Belfast City Council also provided funding for this family friendly event.

The event was designed to build intercommunity relationships particularly with ethnic minority communities, to promote good relations, expels myths and to give people an opportunity meet and socialise at a family fun event. The multi-cultural St Patrick’s day event is now a highlight of the Shaftesbury Centres programme.

One element of the success of this event is the involvement of local minority ethnic groups as equal partners rather than just as participants.

Learning about another culture
Newtownards Housing Community Network decided to organise a visit to the Belfast Islamic Centre in Belfast to learn a more about the Islamic faith and the daily life of Muslims in Northern Ireland. The group were welcomed with a lovely range of foods and heard about the Islamic faith, the connections to Christianity and some of the cultural celebrations throughout the year.

The main feedback from the group was that a morning was much too short so plan for a longer event. The Ards groups are hoping to organise further opportunities to link in and may hold some women only events.
Start young
Lisanelly Regeneration Group targeted parents and toddlers in their project called: ‘Shared Future’. The aim of this project was to raise awareness of diversity and difference through an interactive Puppet Workshop called “This Land is your Land” for the early years group and also to increase parents’ knowledge of other cultures. They also purchased some multi-cultural toys, play materials, books and other resources to be offered in a constructive way to support young children to learn about culture and cultural identity.

Ashley Moore stated “Our hope would be that when the project ends we will have had lots more interest from people from other countries such as Poland and Lithuania wanting to get involved in the events and activities that are provided by GK House. In particular we are promoting our toddlers group as this gives an opportunity for parents/guardians from ethnic minority groups to meet others and share a common interest.”

Dungannon communities encouraged to “meet the neighbours”
Dungannon residents were encouraged to get to know their neighbours better at an event hosted by the Dungannon DHCN and the South Tyrone Empowerment Programme.

The information sharing event, which was held in the Youth Club in Dungannon, was intended to increase awareness of cultural diversity locally and promote good relations between residents of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. “Great work is being done in local communities to develop an awareness of the diverse groups found in a modern society like ours and the benefits that they bring. We want to encourage all residents, whatever their background, to participate fully in their local community in order to improve the quality of life for everyone in Dungannon and South Tyrone.”

The event included an exhibition of photos from the local Traveller community and a presentation highlighting the benefits and challenges presented to Fivemiletown groups who participated in the Housing Executive’s Shared Neighbourhood Programme. This initiative aimed to develop shared areas where people choose to live with others, regardless of their religion or race, in a neighbourhood that is safe and welcoming to all. Residents from Milltown, Cunninghams Lane, Fairmount Park, Annaghshee and Coalisland, as well as a number of local migrant workers attended on the day. This also emphasised that Irish Travellers are an ethnic group under Northern Ireland Race Relations legislation and are the longest standing ethnic group here.

Lower Castlereagh Community Group in East Belfast brought young groups together for a Multi-Cultural Event
Young people were encouraged and given the opportunity to interact and communicate at this centrally held event through art, dance and music. The aim was to build core relationships within the community. The Group is situated in a working class area which is witnessing this new concept of diversity. People from many ethnic origins are increasingly part of the local society and the organisers felt that the Group has the ability and responsibility to reach out to excluded citizens and begin to break down the physical and mental barriers to inclusion. The event introduced young people to new cultures and future follow on events will build on confidence to engage and embrace diversity.
Over 80 people from a wide range of local groups were provided with transport to enable them to be part of this event- Killcooley Youth Group, Tullycarnet (TAGIT Youth Group), Ballybeen (BAGIT) Youth Group, Cregagh Youth Group, Garnerville and Knocknagoney (KOG), Hollywood Youth Group, Short Strand Forum and CharterNI.

Cookery demonstration for the Over 50’s
This event was organised by the Chinese Welfare Association and the Belfast Islamic Centre Over 50’s Group – the Happy Palm Tree. Residents from Annadale and Rathcoole also attended and learnt about Malaysian and Chinese cookery. Some members of this group had also visited the Zoo together.

Community Welcome Packs
The Inter Community Network also developed a Community Welcome Pack to support communities who have signed the Race Relations Charter to meet the minimum standards about Access to Information.

The first Community Welcome Pack was launched in East Belfast in March 2011 at a successful health event in Connswater Shopping Centre which was organised by the East Belfast Community Development Agency.

This Community Welcome Pack is full of information about what’s going on in East Belfast and includes up to date contact numbers and addresses for local services like health, education and housing. It helps new residents, regardless of ethnic background, settle into the community and is also an invaluable tool for existing residents as it has all the information they need about East Belfast in one place.

The Welcome Pack is adaptable to each area depending on their needs and the choices of each community group and will include a directory of local services, support available and facilities.

Other Race Relations Work
Building good race relations is a two way process. The Housing Executive has also supported minority ethnic groups now living in Belfast to understand the legacy of the “Troubles” on Belfast and we have organised information visits around Belfast to show the impact of segregation. One such visit was organised by the African-Caribbean Support Organisation for Northern Ireland for their Women’s Network in December 2011.

We also recognise that community groups may require support to develop such initiatives and Supporting Communities Northern Ireland is available to help. They can provide training, advice and assistance including work on Intercultural Awareness and Race Relations. Housing Executive staff at all levels are also available to provide support including our Race Relations Officer at Head Quarters.

Looking inside as well as outside – Institutional Racism
Racism doesn’t only exist outside organisations. Whatever is happening in the general population may also be reflected in the staff of the Housing Executive so anti-racism initiatives and a strong message that racist attitudes, jokes or any form of discrimination will not be tolerated in delivered regularly to and by our staff.

The Housing Executive formally committed to support the Unite Against Hate Campaign and various national and international initiatives such as Anti-racism week.
Supporting Victims
A range of initiatives are available across Northern Ireland to enable staff to support victims of hate crime and harassment and to work to prevent, identify and deal with race relations and hate motivated issues wherever they may arise. The Housing Executive works to develop local solutions to local issues as they emerge in partnership with local communities and other agencies and bodies.

The Housing Executive aims to provide a safe environment within our estates where residents, their families and visitors can live in peace and quiet, free from the effects of harassment, intimidation and anti-social behaviour. The following information demonstrates how we support staff to help those who are experiencing or know someone who is experiencing harassment, and in particular hate harassment, intimidation or abuse on the grounds of their actual or perceived ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, political opinion or disability. More details are available in the Hate Harassment Support Pack on the NIHE website. (updated version in production)

Role of Perception
The Housing Executive, in line with the Macpherson Report into the Stephen Lawrence case, recognises an incident as a Hate Incident based on the perception of the victim or any other person.

This is not to prejudge the question of whether the perpetrator’s motive was racist etc. or not; that may have to be proved if, for instance, the individual is to be charged with a racially motivated offence. The purpose of the “perception” definition is to ensure that investigations, responses and victim support offered take full account of the possibility of a hate motivated dimension to the incident. Also statistics for such incidents can then be collected on a uniform basis to demonstrate the extent of the problem and enable solutions to be developed.

Even if the motivation is not racist etc. it is the impact on the individual victim, their family and the “ripple effect” on the wider community that also needs to be considered.

Staff are encourage to seek every opportunity to record such incidents through existing systems such as the Anti-social behaviour system or Housing management System or to contact the Race Relations Office or Community Safety if further support or guidance is required. The anti-social behaviour system has the facility to record incidents which have an element of hate under the 23 categories, specifically in relation to: ageism, homophobic abuse, sectarian abuse, racial abuse and disability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of harassment, intimidation or abuse include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assault, ranging from pushing through to physical attacks and grievous bodily harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive or insulting graffiti, posters or signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maintenance Officers/Customer Service Units/Emergency Services have been advised to complete a new pro-forma following a request to deal with any hate motivated call out to our Estates or properties (e.g. hate graffiti) and to forward this to the Area Housing Services Manager for follow up.

**Why we encourage reporting of hate incidents and crime**

By reporting hate harassment, staff and victims are helping us as we will be able to:

- Respond in a sensitive way and take action, taking the victims wishes into account
- Refer victims to organisations which can provide further support and advice for harassment that has already occurred
- Seek to take appropriate action to stop the harassment and to deal with the perpetrator
- Gain a better understanding about the way harassment is affecting those living on Housing Executive estates and so plan further prevention or support strategies
- Work in partnership with other agencies to create an environment which encourages community cohesion and racial harmony and prevents further harassment.
- Even supporting people to report low level harassment that is not a crime allows us to identify underlying trends and to spot tensions early on. This information can be used to prevent further harassment or further escalation in the local area.

**Impact on housing and homelessness**

Hate harassment has a range of impacts on housing and homelessness and the Housing Executive has developed a range of approaches to deal with issues such as:

- Supporting people to remain in their tenancies if they chose to do so following hate intimidation
- Supporting people made homeless through hate intimidation
- Informing applicants of recent tensions or incidents in their area of choice for housing
- Providing information to victims of hate harassment including signposting to victim support services
- Practical measures such as repairs following damage to property
- Enhancing security following incidents in partnership with Department of Justice and PSNI
- Identifying areas where people feel their choice is restricted due to hate harassment and initiating good relations or race relations projects in those areas
- Partnership working on all aspects of hate harassment

**Support for Non Housing Executive Tenants**

Members of the general public experiencing harassment but not living in Housing Executive properties or estates may also be able to use our services such as the provision of temporary accommodation and/or advice and assistance if they are homeless or threatened with homelessness. They may also be able to get repairs under the [Hate Incident Practical Action Scheme](#) following a hate incident reported to the police.
Further Housing Executive support available to staff, tenants and victims
Staff across the organisation have been providing a range of valuable services to victims and more information about support is available on the Housing Executive website www.nihe.gov.uk

Local Offices can help if a victim has no home, is in danger of losing their home or are afraid to go home because someone has been violent, or because of threats of violence likely to be carried out. Support can range from providing safe temporary accommodation, or advice and assistance on finding somewhere else to live. Support is also available to work alongside local communities to address the tensions and help the victim remain in their home with local community support and a positive community response.

Sustaining Tenancies
As part of mainstream housing and homeless support the Sustaining Tenancies pilot in South and East Belfast is providing additional support for tenants from minority ethnic communities. This is to support them to sustain their tenancies in areas with a history or potential for racist tensions. For example this has been used recently to support allocations made through the Choice Based Letting scheme.

Assisting People and Communities project (APAC) Supporting Tenancies for Ethnic Minorities
In December 2013 the Community Cohesion Unit developed a Supporting People project in partnership with the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders Assisting People and Communities project to support people living in the community who could be at risk of being victimised or targeted because of their perceived ethnicity and to strengthen positive community responses in dealing with incidents of intimidation. Two project workers have been recruited and are working closely with the Sustaining Tenancies Scheme and local office staff.

This project STEM – Supporting Tenancies for Ethnic Minorities is available in Belfast and seeks to prevent homelessness occurring by providing intervention, at the earliest possible stage, to reduce anti-social / offending behaviour and its impact on others and to assist people to integrate successfully into their community. Referrals to the project can be made by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or Housing Associations who identify people at risk who are willing to engage with the Assisting People and Communities project.

Mediation and Community Support (MACS) Programme
Northern Ireland Alternatives have also been supported to provide a non-violent response to conflict in communities and delivers both a mediation service and community support on behalf of the Housing Executive through the Mediation and Community Support Programme. Additional funding will enable Northern Ireland Alternatives to extend their current service provision and respond to issues of hate crime and community conflict in South and East Belfast.

This project aims to help create more inclusive local environments where non indigenous residents are made to feel welcome and where everyone can have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of their community through feeling a sense of belonging, community ownership and shared identity.

This project will work collaboratively with the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders Assisting People and Communities Supporting Tenancies for Ethnic Minorities project which supports individual new minority ethnic tenants sustain their tenancies, thus providing a wraparound support for communities and individuals to address current issues in this part of the city. The project also has the full support of the Police.
Hate Incident Practical Action Scheme
If any home has been attacked because of the person’s sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, disability, religious belief or race they may be eligible for personal and home protection measures under the Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme. It is available through the Housing Executive to owner-occupiers and tenants in privately rented and Housing Executive properties. All hate incidents must be reported to the police to be eligible for support. Housing Associations can also choose to carry out Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme repairs and additional security work at their own expense. When an incident is confirmed by the police, minimum repairs can be carried out by the Housing Executive to secure the property and additional emergency measures if required.

Following further assessment by Police Crime Prevention Officers, repairs and additional measures can be carried out through Maintenance on receipt of a formal Level 2 Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme request from the police up to a value of £1,500. Higher value work can also be approved through the Steering Group. The Scheme is available 24 hours a day to provide support and reassurance to victims.

The Housing Executive funds the work on Housing Executive properties and the Department of Justice and the Police Service Northern Ireland co-fund the work on private properties. The funding is reclaimed through the Community Cohesion Unit.

The following table details the number of Housing Executive maintenance jobs raised and supported and the financial costs since the Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme was introduced in February 2007. The Housing Executive funds the public incidents and reclaims expenditure on private incidents from the Department for Justice and the Police Service Northern Ireland. Work costing over £1,500 requires special permission. The majority of cases cost under £300. To date in 2014/15 there have been 48 Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme requests and 28 are for racist incidents.

### Hate Incidents Practical Actions Scheme

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>06/07</th>
<th>07/08</th>
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<td>£17542</td>
<td>£16430</td>
<td>£11759</td>
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In Antrim staff can also access the **Antrim 4 Tier Security Scheme** through the Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

**Scheme for the purchase of Evacuated Dwellings**
The Housing Executive operates a Scheme for the purchase of Evacuated Dwellings to assist owner-occupiers who are forced to leave their dwellings because of threat or intimidation. Under the Scheme, the Housing Executive may acquire houses from owner-occupiers, where they, or any member of their households residing with them, have been threatened or intimidated. Applicants under the Scheme will be required to satisfy certain eligibility conditions. Regulations relating to Scheme for the purchase of Evacuated Dwellings are contained within Standing Orders and further details are in the Land and Property Manual.

The actual degree of intimidation is not assessed by Housing Executive staff prior to re-directing. Such queries as this will be assessed by the Police Service Northern Ireland and the Chief Constable of the Police Service Northern Ireland is responsible for certifying it is unsafe for Scheme for the purchase of Evacuated Dwellings applicants or a member of their household to continue to reside in a property as a result of threat or intimidation.

**Emergency Re-housing Grant**
Where an Applicant who was a Housing Executive, Housing Association, or Private Rented Sector tenant is re-housed in Northern Ireland following civil disturbance, bomb damage or intimidation as a result of civil disturbance; racist attack or because of an attack motivated by hostility because of an individual’s disability or sexual orientation; or as a result of an attack by a person who falls within the scope of the Housing Executive’s statutory powers to address neighbourhood nuisance or other similar forms of anti-social behaviour, they **may** be entitled to an Emergency Grant. See Housing Selection Scheme Guidance Manual for full details.

**Victim Support**
Victim Support Northern Ireland manage a team of dedicated Regional Hate Crime Advocates funded by Police Service Northern Ireland for minority ethnic, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender and Disability incident victims. The Community Cohesion Unit also supports the Disability Advocate through Leonard Cheshire and the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Advocate through Rainbow.

Their role is to contact each victim and help signpost them to other services such as legal advice, housing issues, health and psychological support. They are always willing to support Housing Executive staff with any related issues and have delivered awareness training to Community Safety staff.

Anyone who has been a victim of Hate Crime may contact Victim Support directly whether or not they report the incident to the Police Service Northern Ireland or the Housing Executive. Staff and victims can contact the Advocates directly for any advice and assistance or further information about their roles and Housing Executive staff can also provide support if victims require help with housing issues.
The specialist Victim Support Advocates currently operating across Northern Ireland include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bi-lingual advocate - Belfast and Mid-Ulster</th>
<th>Bi-lingual advocate - Northwest (excluding H district)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanna Kuberczyk</td>
<td>Agnieszka Luczak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:bilingualsupportworker@nicem.org.uk">bilingualsupportworker@nicem.org.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:bilingualsupportworker@nicem.org.uk">bilingualsupportworker@nicem.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. 028 9043 8962</td>
<td>T. 028 71 372 235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. 07827299347</td>
<td>M. 07827297119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/o NICEM</td>
<td>The Old Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Floor, Ascot House</td>
<td>Clarendon Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-31 Shaftesbury Square</td>
<td>L/Derry, BT48 7ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast, BT2 7DB</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bi-lingual advocate- H District</th>
<th>LGB&amp;T (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Advocate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Ridge</td>
<td>Natalie Corbett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ivy.ride@bief.org.uk">ivy.ride@bief.org.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:advocacy@rainbow-project.org">advocacy@rainbow-project.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. 028 2564 3605</td>
<td>T. 028 90 319030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.07525142205</td>
<td>The Rainbow Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 William Street,</td>
<td>1st Floor, 9-13 Waring Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballymena, BT43 6AW</td>
<td>Belfast, BT1 2DX</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Advocate</th>
<th>Victim Support Northern Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shane Gorman</td>
<td>Wendy Stewart T. 028 9024 4039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:Advocacy@lcdisability.org">Advocacy@lcdisability.org</a></td>
<td>Geraldine Hanna T. 028 9027 7777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. O2890 661281</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. 07827 318631</td>
<td>Hanna Stewart T.02890277767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Safe Stay Safe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Hanna.stewart@victimsupportni.org.uk">Hanna.stewart@victimsupportni.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Derryvolgie Avenue</td>
<td>Annsgate House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>70-74 Ann Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT9 6FL</td>
<td>Belfast, BT1 4EH</td>
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**Sample leaflets available**

In addition to many others the following leaflets are available through the Housing Executive website and local offices:

- **Housing Selection Scheme Booklet** also available in **Polish**
- **Housing Myths and Migrants 2014**
- **Housing and Homelessness – Who in Northern Ireland can help?**
- **Hate Incident Practical Scheme – English and Polish**
- **Hate Crime Victim Support Advocacy Service**

21
Talks, Training and Awareness raising
Talks and training have been and will continue to be delivered to local offices, Housing Community Network groups and District Policing and Community Safety partnerships on request. Issues covered include Migration Awareness, Ending Hate in our Communities and Myths and Migrants.

For further information please contact Linda.hutchinson@nihe.gov.uk