

GREATER NEW LODGE CEP MAGAZINE



October 2014

Ashton Centre, 5 Churchill Street, Belfast BT15 2BP Tel: (028) 90742255 email: leo@ashtoncentre.com

Community Fears Over New Motorway Project

Following a presentation by the Forum for Alternative Belfast (FAB) in Clifton House on Tuesday 23rd Sept 2014, local residents have expressed grave fears that current plans for a new motorway interchange could have a devastating impact on community life. The Interchange which includes new underpasses will cut through a large swathe of Inner North Belfast and includes a road widening phase at North Queen Street.

Mark Hackett and Declan Hill of FAB argue that the design of the Interchange does not address a range of key physical and social issues and that not enough care and effort is being made to counterbalance the likely negative effects of the project for local residents and indeed for the city as a whole. In their presentation they demonstrated how in historical terms poor planning and design had resulted in severance, disconnection and exclusion for many urban communities including North Belfast. They said that unless this pattern is reversed, then further urban blight and associated social and economic ill-effects will continue to leave already deprived neighbourhoods such as the New Lodge further behind with little chance of recovery.

They stressed the importance of developing a longer term urban repair plan to physically and economically reconnect all of North Belfast into the city. However this would require vision and an interdisciplinary approach including government departments and City Council seriously engaging with local communities. FAB also provided alternative examples of how this type of motorway project had been done more sensibly and successfully in other countries and argued that with a bit more effort and common sense a better outcome could be achieved here also.

Mark Hackett said that with its new planning remit Belfast City Council had an important role to play in influencing NI Transport the body responsible for building the Interchange. He said that Council should also be assisting local residents to help offset any negative impacts. He urged residents to lobby their elected Councillors to this end.

The presentation was attended by a number of residents living in the immediate vicinity of the Interchange. They said that the proposed widening of the motorway at North Queen Street would undoubtedly have a drastic effect in terms of disruption, overshadowing, loss of light, restricted space as well as creating additional noise and environmental problems. They said they felt badly let down by the fact that to date there had been little consultation. Furthermore they had already been told that they wouldn't be entitled to any compensation or even assistance for things like sound proofing or glazed windows. Another issue of concern is that any work carried out could also impact on the memorial mural to the McGurk's Bar victim's.

Although there was no definite timeframe for commencement of the work on the Interchange the reality is that it could start before communities had a chance to prepare themselves for the consequences. It was agreed that a further public meeting was needed so that more residents and elected representatives could attend with a view to exploring how a coherent community response could be developed.

Public meeting Monday 13th of October at 7.00 pm in North Queen Street Community Centre (The RECY).



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The community magazine is compiled & supported by Ashton Community Trust

Are you aged 16-24? not in Employment, Education or Training?

If so, you may be eligible for Threshold – a programme being run by the Ashton Centre in partnership with Belfast Metropolitan College.

This is a 3 days per week, 12 week programme that will help you:

- ➔ Gain new skills
- ➔ Meet new people
- ➔ Get recognised qualifications
- ➔ Get work experience

INTERESTED?
Contact:
Eileen O'Prey
Threshold Mentor
Ashton Centre
5 Churchill Street
Belfast
BT15 2BP
028 9074 2255

Topics include:

FREE TRAVEL AND CHILDCARE PLACES
EMA also available, if eligible -
Get an extra £25 per week on top of your current benefits!
£100 Bonus on completion!

Community Contact Numbers

174 Trust - 9074 7114
 Ashton Centre - 9074 2255
 Bridge of Hope - 9074 6737
 Bridges Sewing Group - 9074 2255
 Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain - 9032 2409
 Camberwell Fold - 9096 0552
 Cancer Lifeline 9035 1999
 Carrick Hill Community Centre - 9023 1602
 Carlisle Day Centre - 9023 1227
 Cumann Cultúrtha Mhic Reachtain - 90749 688
 Employment Outreach - 9020 2440
 Glenravel Local History Project - 9032 2892
 Holy Family Primary School - 9035 1023
 Holy Family Youth Centre - 9087 5150
 Indian Community Centre - 9024 9746
 Kinder Kids Day Care - 9074 2255
 McSweeney Centre - 9032 2289
 Neighbourhood Watch - 07564 938276
 Newington Credit Union - 9035 1773
 New Lodge Arts - 9074 2255
 New Lodge Youth Centre - 9075 1358
 New Lodge Housing Forum - 9074 2399
 North Belfast Family Centre - 9024 7580
 North Queen St. Community Centre - 9032 3945
 Smile SureStart - 9075 6654
 Saint Patrick's Primary School -
 Star Neighbourhood Centre - 9074 0693
 Tar Isteach - 90746665 / 90754967

Employment & Training Services

Calling all New Lodge Residents!

Do you have the Essential Skills
for everyday life and work?

English + Maths + ICT = Essential Skills

The Ashton Centre has new English, Maths and ICT
(computer) courses starting in September in your area.

If you would like to find out more:

- ✦ phone Hilary on 90322289 or 90742255
- ✦ email hilary.odair@ashtoncentre.com
- ✦ call in person at the Ashton Centre

COURSES ARE
LOCAL
AND
FREE

The Ashton Centre,
5 Churchill Street,
Belfast BT15 2BP

BRIDGES SEWING

Mon - Fri 1.00pm - 3.00pm
 Curtain Making, Formal Dresses,
 Alterations Etc.

Ashton Centre
 5 Churchill Street
 Belfast, BT15 2BP
 Tel: 90742255

DISCLAIMER: Reasonable care is taken to ensure that the articles in the CEP Magazine are up-to-date and as accurate as possible, as of the time of publication, but no responsibility can be taken by Ashton Community Trust for any errors or omissions contained herein. Furthermore, responsibility for any losses, damages or distress resulting from adherence to any information made available through this magazine is not the responsibility of the Ashton Community Trust. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ashton Community Trust.

NORTH BELFAST LANTERN PARADE AND MAGICAL FESTIVAL

Now in it's fifth year the North Belfast Lantern Parade and Magical Festival will take place on Thursday 30th October 2014.

The North Belfast Lantern Parade is part of the North Belfast Community Pride Programme which is funded through OFMDFM's Good Relations Programme and led by Ashton Community Trust. This programme is delivered by New Lodge Arts (A Project of Ashton Community Trust) and supported by a steering group of various North Belfast based youth and community organisations. Other funders for this project include Belfast City Council, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and Department of Foreign Affairs.

Cecilia Heron Good Relations Arts Worker said. "This year promises to be bigger and better than ever. This event is well established in North Belfast and is an annual event that families look forward to attending. We plan to hold activities in our Magical Garden section in the Waterworks Park on Wednesday 29th & Thursday 30th October 12noon – 4pm. This will be free and activities will include lantern making, street art performances and much more.

The main Magical evening event will take place on Thursday 30th October 6pm – 9pm in the Waterworks Park. Like last year the event will be ticketed. Tickets for the magical evening will cost £1 each and are available from the following: Ashton Centre 5 Churchill Street, Belfast, BT15 2BP, tel: 90742255, Greater Whitewell Community Surgery 878 Shore Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7DQ, tel: 90859911 or at The Vine Centre 193 Crumlin Road, Belfast BT14 7AA, tel: 90351020. Tickets will go on sale on Monday 6th October. The one way system will also operate within the Waterworks Park this year too.

If you have a group that wish to make lanterns to take part in the parade and/or make larger art pieces to go on display in the Waterworks Park then please contact me via email at cecilia.heron@ashtoncentre.com with suitable dates/times/age group etc and I will arrange".

CHILDREN IN NEED

If you have a group of young people aged 4 – 25 who would be interested in 12 hours of arts based activity then please contact Cecilia Heron at New Lodge Arts on 90742255 or via email cecilia.heron@ashtoncentre.com. Previous participants took part in visual arts, dance, drama, music and circus skills workshops.

NORTH BELFAST CHRISTMAS PANTO

Now in it's third year auditions for our Christmas Panto will take place the week commencing Monday 20th October 2014. Auditions will be held in six North Belfast venues. Check out our face book page for further information or contact Cecilia Heron at New Lodge Arts on 90742255 or via email cecilia.heron@ashtoncentre.com.



*North Belfast
Lantern Parade &
Magical Festival*

Magical Garden activities will take place in the Waterworks Park on Wednesday 29th & Thursday 30th October 12 - 4pm.

*Main Event 6 - 9pm Thursday 30th October
Waterworks Park - Ticket Only.*

Tickets on sale for £1 each available from:

- Ashton Centre, 5 Churchill Street
- Greencastle Surgery 878 Shore Road
- The Vine Centre 193 Crumlin Road

Contact Cecilia Heron
New Lodge Arts on 02890742255
cecilia.heron@ashtoncentre.com

NEW LODGE ARTS Ashton Community Trust

Logos for various partners including Children in Need, NCCP, and Tudor Trust are visible at the bottom of the poster.

A World Connected – A Lighthouse event for World Suicide Prevention Day

On Tuesday 9th September Lighthouse hosted their A World Connected event for World Suicide Prevention Day at McCrory Church in Duncairn Gardens. WSPD is an opportunity for everyone to focus attention on the unacceptable number of individuals who end their lives by suicide, through promotion of understanding about suicide and highlighting prevention activities. The Lighthouse event was a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility and a celebration of the rich diversity found within our community. Suicide can affect us all but notably a feeling of isolation can surround those who are considered 'minorities' in the community in which they reside. The event stressed the importance of letting individuals know that irrespective of race, religion or sexual orientation there is support to be found. Lighthouse received an amazing turnout from all sections of the community as they came together to tackle suicide and promote a message of tolerance and respect.

Reception

Lighthouse

187 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GF

Phone: 02890 755070

Email: reception@lighthouseireland.org

Website: www.lighthouseireland.org



**Arts Academy
Classes**
New members welcome
£1 per class

Mondays

Junior Drama (P4-P7) 3.30pm - 5pm New Lodge Youth Centre
Fancy Feet (Nursery-P1) 5.30pm-6.30pm Macrory Church Hall
Fancy Feet (P2-P4) 6.30pm-7.30pm Macrory Church Hall
Pop Video Dance (P5-P7) 7.30pm-8.30pm Macrory Church Hall

Tuesdays

Tiny's Visual Arts (P1-P3) 3.30pm - 5pm New Lodge Youth Centre
Adult Art Class (11am -2pm) Culture Shop, Ashton Centre
Junior Art Class (P4-P7) 3.30pm-5pm Culture Shop, Ashton Centre
XS Hip Hop (1st-3rd Year) 6pm-7pm Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre
Drama (1st-3rd Year) 7.00pm-8.30pm Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre
XL Hip Hop (4th-6th Year) 7pm-8pm Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre
Drama (4th-6th Year) 8pm-9.30pm Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre

Wednesdays

Junior Art Class (P4-P7) 3.30pm-5pm New Lodge Youth Centre

Thursdays

Ballet (Nursery-P1) 3pm-3.45pm The Recy
Ballet (P2-P5) 3.45pm-4.30pm The Recy

Contact Anne Delaney, New Lodge Arts on 028 90742255 for more info.
You can register your child at the beginning of class.



Bridge of Hope Training

COURSE DETAILS:

- SWAN** - is a one day workshop that focuses on your Strengths, Weaknesses, Ambitions and Needs. It helps you to understand your own nature, to accept yourself as you are. This workshop involves observing your strengths, weaknesses, ambitions and needs. This course also looks at ways to improve how you deal with stress including breathing techniques and practical skills to improve the way you communicate.

- EMPOWER ME**— is a one day workshop that aims to encourage you to make changes in your life to create positive, proactive and lasting changes improved self-awareness increased self confidence and a greater Insight into the future. The workshop includes assessing where you are at in your life and ways to improve motivation and set goals to work towards.

- CONFIDENCE BUILDING**— is a one day workshop that will help you to increase confidence and self-esteem, identify negative beliefs and transform them into positive attitudes. This workshop will help you to take back control of your life and thoughts and make you an all-round more confident and assertive person.

- COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP**— is a one day workshop that focuses on the way you communicate not only with others but also with yourself. It aims to help you get your message across faster and more effectively.

Training Course	Date
SWAN	18th October 2014
Confidence Building Workshop	27th October 2014
Empower Me	1st November 2014
Empower Me	8th November 2014
Communication Workshop	10th November 2014
Confidence Building Workshop	24th November 2014
SWAN	6th December 2014

All training courses will take place over one full day and will be held at the McSweeney Centre @ Henry Place – If you would like to enrol or require any additional information please contact Mary Stanton on 028 9032 2289

Ashton Community Bursaries 2014

This is the 5th year of the Annual Ashton Bursary Awards. The purpose of the Bursary Awards Scheme is to allow the Ashton Community Trust to use some of its resources to provide assistance to other community led projects especially where there is clear evidence of voluntary input and where resources for a group are scarce. To date 53 bursaries have been granted to local groups involved in activities such as sport, art, music, health, housing, culture, history, remembrance, safety and well being. In providing financial support Ashton Community Trust is recognising the fantastic efforts of those directly involved in voluntary action on the ground and who reflect the great community spirit here in the New Lodge. To be eligible for the bursary, groups must meet the following criteria;



Bursary recipients from last year

- **Is inclusive and non party political**
- **Is working in the Greater New Lodge area**
- **Is meeting local needs and providing local services**
- **Has modest resources and would find it difficult in accessing funding**

If you have received a grant in the past you must provide some detail about how this was used for the benefit of the local community.

Maximum grant available is £500
Total grant fund available is £5,000

For a Bursary application form contact Paul O'Neill or Louise Curley at the Ashton Centre 5 Churchill Street. BT15 2BP Phone 90 742255

Application Closing Date Friday 7th November 2014

New Training and Employment Manager at the Ashton Centre

The Ashton Community Trust is pleased to announce the appointment of Diarmuid Moore as the new Operations Manager in its Training and Employment Department. Diarmuid commenced work with the Ashton at the start of September. Diarmuid is extremely experienced having previously worked for 17 years at the Worker's Education Association where he was responsible for a range of adult and community education projects. He has also worked as a Community Relations Officer and a Volunteer Manager. Diarmuid lives in North Belfast and has three children.



New Lodge Youth Centre Job Club Services

Every Monday 10 -12pm

- Lemis Employment Programme
- Are You Unemployed?
- In Receipt Of Benefits/not Claiming
- On JSA More Than A Year
- Live In North Belfast

We Are Offering

- One To One Support And Advice
- CV Skills
- Job Search
- Help Filling In Job Application Forms
- Interview Skills
- Free Training Subject To Availability
- Benefits Advice

CONTACT MAIREAD (02890 742255)

Community Expresses Anger Over Bonfires and Anti Social Behaviour

Two public meetings called by Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee and attended by hundreds of residents took place on July 28th and August 4th at North Queen Street Community Centre (The Recy). The meetings were held to discuss the issue of bonfires and associated vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the Victoria Barracks area. At the first of these meetings the Safer Streets Committee outlined the efforts they had made over the past two years to try to deal with this issue. This included a reminder that a community survey conducted in 2013 had shown overwhelming community opposition to the bonfires. Various members of the audience expressed anger as to why those involved in the bonfires were simply being allowed to get away with tormenting residents and destroying the area. The Belfast City Council, the Housing Executive and the PSNI were invited to the second of the public meetings. Once again residents used the opportunity to express their anger and frustration at the situation. Each of the agencies present explained their position but were repeatedly criticised for not doing enough. Promises were then given by the statutory authorities that they would increase their efforts to try and resolve the situation. However residents and community activists told them that this wasn't good enough and pressed for a guarantee that no bonfire would be allowed this year. Although bonfire materials were subsequently confiscated on a number of occasions, some bonfire wood was not removed. This was because the contractor hired to do the job refused at the last minute due to personal safety concerns. A bonfire did eventually take place on Victoria Parade on the Friday night the 8th of August. As in previous years the bonfires were accompanied by heavy drinking, drug taking and some fights. However the bonfire was smaller and for that matter quieter than previous years.

Residents Clean Up Unwanted Graffiti



As an accompaniment to the bonfire and vandalism in the Victoria Barracks area there was an escalation of graffiti painting with slogans such as, 'Welcome to the Jungle' and 'Up the Hoods' appearing on a number of walls. A community clean up had been organised as part of the local Festival Programme but this had to be cancelled due to torrential rain. However a number of local residents from the area then approached community workers and volunteered to remove the graffiti themselves. The local CEP supplied these residents with paint and rollers. Within a short period of time there was a noticeable improvement in the visual appearance of the area with most of the graffiti being removed. Community Development Coordinator with the Ashton Community Trust Paul O'Neill said, "I think that what has happened recently in relation to bonfires and anti- social behaviour has brought matters to a head. Many residents are now saying enough is enough and some have decided on direct action to have the area cleaned up. I think this type of self help mentality is most welcome and should be applauded. If there are residents in other parts of the New Lodge who wish to take similar action, we in the CEP will provide them with support".

Republican Ex-Prisoners Speak Out Against Bonfires



In addition to the public meetings that were held, over 100 local Republican Ex-Prisoners signed a petition calling for the bonfires to stop. On Tuesday August 5th a large number of Ex-Prisoners and local residents walked through parts of the Victoria Barracks area and delivered copies of the petition. In a statement issued through Tar Isteach Republican Ex-Prisoner project the ex-prisoners stated, "There are those who wish to dress these bonfire events up as a 'Commemoration of Internment'. They try to exploit those men and women that were imprisoned without trial as a justification for trashing the area. There is also a suggestion that these bonfires are in support of Republicans in Maghaberry Prison. We acknowledge the right of all people to highlight issues of concern about human rights. As Ex-Prisoners ourselves we understand what it is like to suffer hardship and violent abuse. We are totally opposed to the abuse of human rights by anyone and the misuse or manipulation of the legal system to unjustly incarcerate anyone. We support the judicial and human rights of prisoners and every support should be given to all that suffer discrimination and injustice. But it should be noted and stressed that these bonfires are not appropriate or representative of anyone's rights and demands. They are unwanted and unnecessary. In fact they are an abuse of the democratically expressed rights of local residents to live in peace, quiet and safety. We call on those responsible for these bonfires to STOP NOW!"



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

LEMIS PROGRAM

Are you unemployed and living in North Belfast?

Help is available with:

- Improving Employment Skills,
- CV's, Jobsearch,
- Application Forms
- Interview Techniques

Free training available, some of this training includes:
Childcare, Computer training and more.

For further information contact 02890742255 and speak to a LEMIS advisor

Victoria Barracks Exhibition Great Success



Most of us are well aware that this year marks the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, which led to the deaths of many millions. However very few of us are aware of the impact this had on our local community. To highlight this the Glenravel Local History Project along with the Recy Young Women's Group staged a massive photographic exhibition on the history of Victoria Barracks and its role in the Great War. This was held in the Recy in August, a building which has historic importance not only in our area but also Belfast and indeed the whole of Ireland. This building is the sole survivor of the original Victoria Barracks (the officers houses were built in the 1930's) and it was for this reason why the photographic exhibition was held here.

It was from this barrack that many thousands of local men were given basic training to go and fight in the horrific trenches of the Western Front, with many of them never to return and many others to arrive back with dreadful life changing injuries. Naturally many of these came from the New Lodge area and when we look at the casualty lists we see men who lived in streets ranging from Hillman Street right across to Stanhope Street and from Dawson Street right down to York Street and all the streets in between.

On display at the exhibition were hundreds of photographs showing the history of the barracks itself and even family photographs of those who lost their lives. The scheme, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, included an excellent booklet, which explained the Barrack areas military and post military history.

Joe Baker, one of the organisers of the exhibition, explained the reasons behind staging it. "Many of the young people involved in this scheme know they live in an area called 'The Barrack' but don't know how it got this name. The purpose of this was to let them explore the history of their own immediate area and the impact it had on world history."

The history they have explored has been well balanced and has included trips to various sites throughout Dublin relating to the 1916 uprising and the Imperial War Museum in London. Next year the young people plan to visit the actual trenches where so many died in this horrific conflict.

If you missed the exhibition this time around it will be staged again as part of the local community festival next August. Booklets are still available by contacting the Recy on 90323945

North Belfast

Social
Enterprise



Business Clinic's

Make an appointment on:

028 95 609 521, 028 95 609 522 or via

email: nbsehub@ashtoncentre.com or just

drop into the HUB at 52 York Street, Belfast
BT15 1AS

Visit our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/NorthBelfastSEHUB



Ashton Community Trust



Northern Ireland
Executive

www.northernireland.gov.uk

DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE

"This project is funded by the Northern Ireland Executive's Delivering Social Change fund."

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!!

Would you like to volunteer with New Lodge Arts at this year's NORTH BELFAST LANTERN PARADE & MAGICAL FESTIVAL?

Or know anyone who would?
(Volunteers must be aged 16+)

The event will take place:
Wednesday 30th - Thursday 31st October 2014
@ The Crumlin Road Gaol & Waterworks Park
6-8pm

This will be a great opportunity and experience for anyone involved. All necessary training will be provided for volunteers prior to the event. Volunteers will need to be committed on the evening of the 30th October and for at least two training evenings on the weeks leading up to the event.

TO APPLY or for more information please contact Orla Hawkins on orla.hawkins@ashtoncentre.com or 02890742255 or simply call into New Lodge Arts Office (Lepper Street)

The Duncairn Centre For Culture & Arts

We are delighted to announce that our Autumn events programme is now available. Offering a wide range of arts and cultural events including: concerts, craft classes, workshops, drama, art exhibitions and lots more.

We hope you'll find something of interest and that we'll get a chance to meet you very soon at Belfast's most beautiful venue.

We believe that it's the coolest music venue this side of anywhere! Don't believe us? Then come see for yourself.

To view the full programme of events simply visit the website www.theduncairn.com OR call in to pick up a copy.

FREE CREATIVE WRITING SESSIONS with playwright **BRENDA MURPHY**

Greenshoots Productions are offering the following **FREE** sessions at The Duncairn:

PRE SHOW

Monday 6th October, 1pm - 3pm

Monday 13th October, 1pm - 3pm

POST SHOW

Monday 3rd November, 1pm - 3pm

We are seeking female participants to take part in our Belfast City Council Good Relations Programme complimenting the production of *Two Sore Legs*. We are inviting women to join acclaimed Belfast playwright Brenda Murphy in her creative writing and storytelling sessions. Brenda will discuss her experience as a playwright and how she draws inspiration for story telling from everyday life – with her terrific sense of humour and approach to life these sessions are sure to entertain and inspire. The group will work together on two sessions prior to seeing the show and have a final session with Brenda after the show. Places on these sessions are limited – book early to avoid disappointment.



Learner Access & Engagement Programme

We offer the following courses, all accredited by City & Guilds and OCR...

Entry Level in using ICT (Computers)
(18 weeks x 3 hours)
Beginners

Essential Skills Maths, English & ICT (Computers)
(18 weeks x 3hrs)
Equivalent to GCSE Grades

ES Levels 1 & 2

Groups of 10 - 12 learners to take place in various outreach centres within your local community

Classes Ongoing Enrol Now

If you are interested contact:
Corinna McErlean, Ashton Centre
T. (028) 90 74 22 55
or email corinna@ashtoncentre.com





Ashton Community Trust

Employment & Training Services

Unemployed?

Tired of looking for work in the same places?

Let North Belfast Works help you.

North Belfast Works offers a one to one mentoring service focused on meeting the needs of the individual. We can work with anyone who is not currently employed and living in North Belfast. We will help to develop your current skill set or indeed learn new skills to equip you for a job in the sector of your choice.

What can we offer?

- One to one mentoring
- Support, advice & guidance
- Short accredited training courses (examples of these are forklift license, SIA license, CSR card, Retail & customer service, Personal development, Lifeguard qualification etc)
- Help with job searches & job applications
- CV building
- Help with interview skills

If you are under 25 call Brian on 028 90 742255 or email brian.wells@ashoncentre.com

If you are over 25 call Donnchadh on 028 90 742255 or email donnchadh.murphy@ashoncentre.com
You can also call in person at the Ashton Centre and ask for Brian or Donnchadh.

New Lodge Arts Go International!



A group of young adults from New Lodge Arts recently went to Meppel, Holland to take part in an international improvised theatre project. The project involved groups from 5 other countries from across Europe; France, Germany, Latvia, Holland & Sweden. The project brought together 54 young adults and their leaders. The group visited local people in their homes, businesses and on the street to interview them about their lives and find out their stories and together they comprised pieces of improvised theatre using the people of Meppel's stories. The group performed a number of times in front of different audiences, each time getting a great reception. Local newspapers also published a piece about this. The New Lodge Arts participants had an excellent time meeting people from different cultures and also learned a lot about improvised theatre. We hope to take part in more international projects like this in the future or maybe even host one here in Belfast one day.

The Equality Can't Wait campaign at the service of those who need it most

Recently, following a successful housing rights clinic at the New Lodge Youth Centre, more north Belfast residents have taken a stand to be counted as part of the Equality Can't Wait campaign for a time bound, resourced strategy to tackle religious inequality in housing impacting Catholics.

Each of the residents and their families are living with intolerable conditions; in housing not fit for purpose or have spent years on the waiting list without being made an offer of a suitable home.

They have taken action by gathering photographic and documentary evidence of how their human rights are being denied. They are now demanding answers from decision makers in the Stormont Executive and the Housing Executive.

The issue of religious inequality in housing was a factor in both the beginnings of the recent conflict and the palpable sense of inequality and injustice which fuelled it for decades. It is a festering sore, a reminder of sectarianised decision making which denies people's needs and rights on the basis of nothing other than their religious background.

This festering sore in our society should have been comprehensively dealt with as part of the political agreements that emerged from the peace process, which promised that equality would be the bedrock of all future decision making. That was the promise and the new law of the land 15 years ago.

However, the truth is that if you are a Catholic in north Belfast experiencing housing inequality it has not made one bit of difference to your circumstances. The consistent denials by the Minister for Social Development, Nelson McCausland MLA, and the failure to hold the Department for Social Development to account in the Assembly and at the Executive table are compounding the problem.

Many of the mothers who have written to the Minister for Social Development and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive as part of the Equality Can't Wait campaign were toddlers when the Good Friday Agreement was signed.

15 years later they watch their own toddlers' health decline while they experience the hard end of the long standing inequality impacting people waiting to be housed in the New



MLA's sign pledge on Housing Equality

Lodge, Ardoyne, Cliftonville and more – areas where there are large Catholic populations and a dire need for new housing.

If you are a mother of three who has been on the waiting list for five years, living in costly temporary accommodation plagued with damp and mould impacting your children's health, and feeling abandoned and ignored, you would be forgiven for giving up.

But these residents have not.

In the last year, whilst fighting their own personal housing battles, residents involved with the campaign have also fought a bigger battle for democratic accountability to benefit their families, friends and neighbours.

In the last 12 months alone the Equality Can't Wait residents group have engaged with the Children's Commissioner, who in turn condemned what she saw and said: 'it is not good enough in the 21st Century for children to have to live in this type of inappropriate accommodation with all the associated risks'.

They then brought the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Housing to North Belfast, who in turn publicly voiced her concerns with the government's failure to address the problem and supported the residents' call for a time bound, resourced strategy in her final report.

They then launched powerful research conducted across 260 homes in the New Lodge and Pilot Street areas with evidence of widespread systemic problems and the devastating impact this

has on people's health and wellbeing.

They held an event in Stormont in May and secured written pledges 'to do all in my power to tackle the problem' from 49 MLA's including 5 Executive Ministers. Meanwhile the Minister for Social Development has refused to meet them, denied their problems and experiences, and attempted to mask the inequality by tinkering with statistics.

A time bound, resourced strategy to tackle religious inequality in housing in north Belfast will not come about unless the MLA's and Ministers, who pledged to do all in their power, make it a priority act at the Executive level.

Since May, there have been many opportunities. There will be more, and residents need those MLA pledges translated into real action.

But the group are not relying solely on politicians to solve their problems and now they are putting their expertise in campaigning for change at the disposal of other residents through housing clinics.

If you or anyone you know is affected by poor housing and long waiting lists and feel like you are being ignored by decision makers. Get in touch. Maybe the Equality Can't Wait campaign can help you to stand up and be counted.

For more information go to www.pprproject.org or contact:

Sean Brady PPR Project. sean@pprproject.org (02890 313315)

What's Happening At The FabLab

Drum Making

This September FabLab ran a fun drum building workshop where you got to use both digital and traditional craft. The workshop was lead by Rohan Young and the FabLab team. 10 people attended, all leaving with a beautiful Bodhran which was created by hand and decorated using both the laser and Vinyl cutter. Why not come down to FabLab on one of our open days and find out what else you can make?

Due to the popularity of this workshop we will be running a further parent and children Bodhran making workshop in association with New Lodge Arts

Parent and Children Bodhran Making Workshop

Saturday 1st November @ Fablab

North Belfast Lantern Parade

FabLab will be working with local young people to design a special feature for the 2014 Lantern Parade. Working with New Lodge Arts, a group of local young people will use the equipment and design software in FabLab to create a special centre piece for the parade that can be enjoyed by everyone – watch this space!

Programme

We have many exciting ways to get involved in FabLab Belfast, below:

Parents and Children Craft Workshops

Fablab will be hosting a series of workshops leading up to Halloween and Christmas, which will encourage young people to come with their parents to make themed objects using a wide range of digital equipment. No prior experience is necessary as the friendly Fablab staff will help you make your ghostly ghouls or smiley santas !! Due to popularity we only have limited spaces available.

To book your place in one of these events contact Patrick on 02890 755412 or email: patrick.ohare@ashtoncentre.com

Halloween Workshops

Saturday 25th October 10.00 – 1.00

Tuesday 28th October 6.00 – 8.00

Christmas Workshops

Saturday 13th December 10.00 – 1.00

Tuesday 16th December 6.00 – 8.00

In July the team from FabLab Belfast attended the 10th international FabLab conference in Barcelona. The team gave presentations on the cross community peace building work of the FabLab Belfast, and the role being played by digital social innovation and it's educational impact. This platform was shared with different FabLabs from around the world including Israel, Egypt, Ukraine, USA, Barcelona and London.

This conference enabled ACT's FabLab to promote their work on a global stage and create international connections between other FabLabs and community spaces. At the conference were over 300 Labs from every continent as



Drum Making Workshop

well as City Councils, academic institutions and business (Google, Airbus, Nike) all of who are watching how FabLabs are beginning to change the way we can use technology to create better product and better societies.

Dublin Maker Faire

Belfast FabLab joined with our colleagues from Nerve Centre Derry to take a FabLab demonstration to Trinity College Dublin. This was to promote the digital maker revolution across Ireland. There were a mixture of workshops for people attending the event and lots of opportunity for people across Ireland to find out about the work of Ashton Centre FabLab. We are looking forward to collaborating with groups from Drogheda and Dundalk and building an Ireland wide network of makers! For further information contact: 02890755412

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- Want to be able to help your children with their homework?
- Would you like to improve your Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Skills?
- Want to improve your career prospect and build your confidence?

For more information please contact Jenny Sweeney on:
 Tel. (028) 9074 2255 or Mob. 075 9776 1621
 Email. jenny.sweeney@ashtoncentre.com

Ashton Community Trust
 Employment & Training Services

nrc
 northern regional college

DEL
 Department for Employment and Learning
www.delni.gov.uk

Greater New Lodge Summer

A new committee made up of representatives from community groups within the Greater New Lodge CEP came together to deliver a programme of events this year. The Summer Events programme which took place in August brought local people of all ages together to enjoy the fun. The programme included street parties, workshops, presentations, discussions, photo exhibitions, art, music, health, sports, quiz and talent events, tours and a new mural for the area. Paul O'Neill of the Ashton Community Trust who had responsibility for coordinating the programme said, "Thanks to the input of a range of local groups and community volunteers the programme was a great success. Although financial resources were limited we were able to put together a memorable programme that appealed to people of all ages. We will build on this experience and work hard to make next year's programme even better. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank everyone involved in organising, funding and participating in the programme".



er Events Programme 2014



Girdwood Update

Community groups from the neighbourhoods surrounding Girdwood have continued to engage in discussions with Belfast City Council and a range of statutory departments to explore the best ways to develop the former British military site. These discussions are being conducted through a mechanism called the Girdwood Forum.

Community Hub

The main work of the Forum in recent times has concentrated on the development of the Community Hub being built by Belfast City Council and which is due to open in June 2015. According to the City Council the Community Hub when completed will include a gym and wellbeing area, youth space, multi-purpose rooms and an outdoor piazza (gathering place or square) with seating, as well as a range of other facilities. There will also be classrooms in the Hub for Belfast Metropolitan College to run their education and training programmes.

The Wider Site

There is also a focus on the development of the wider site. This includes how the site may be best managed, what other projects and facilities will be placed there, how the site might look in order to create an open, accessible and shared space and how and when to remove or replace the so called 'peace walls' around the perimeter. The Department for Social Development (DSD) currently has responsibility for the wider site however following the Local Government Reform process the ownership of the site will eventually transfer to Council who would then have responsibility for the management, operation and maintenance of the site. At this stage DSD has already begun work on the roads, paths, landscaping and other services needed to access the site.

Girdwood Park. Other Projects

Several other developments are planned to regenerate other parts of Girdwood. These are also led by DSD and include, a multi-sports pitch for Soccer, Rugby and Gaelic games, an indoor sports facility and mixed use space for business units. These proposals are all at various stages of development. Apex Housing Association is also building 60 new social housing units at Kinnaird Street, and land has also been set aside for housing units at the Cliftonpark Avenue end of the site.

Local Benefits?

Although there is consensus that Girdwood should positively contribute to the wider regeneration of North Belfast, and indeed Belfast as a whole, local community representatives have consistently argued that we must get beyond the rhetoric of community benefits. It must be clearly demonstrated how local people living in nearby disadvantaged areas will practically gain from the Girdwood development in terms of real jobs, effective services and accessible facilities. To this end a number of specific working groups with strong community representation have been established. For example a Social Clauses group has begun to meet on the best way to promote the maximum amount of work and apprenticeship opportunities at a local level, both in the short term with the building of hub but in the longer term when the entire site becomes fully operational. Another working group is looking at future management options for the site to explore the possibility of maximum local community ownership of things like the Community Hub and other aspects of the

Girdwood development.

DSD Consultation

The Department for Social Development has recently commissioned Morrow Gilchrist to undertake an economic appraisal of the indoor sports and mixed use facilities proposed in the Girdwood Park Master Plan Conceptual Framework (MCF). The consultants will be expected to carry out significant stakeholder engagement and consultation to inform the development and appraisal of options for both sites. To initiate this process the consultants have asked the Department to circulate to the Community Forum a set of questions aimed at gauging opinion on the top three needs of the local area in terms of public facilities/services. Questions listed below:

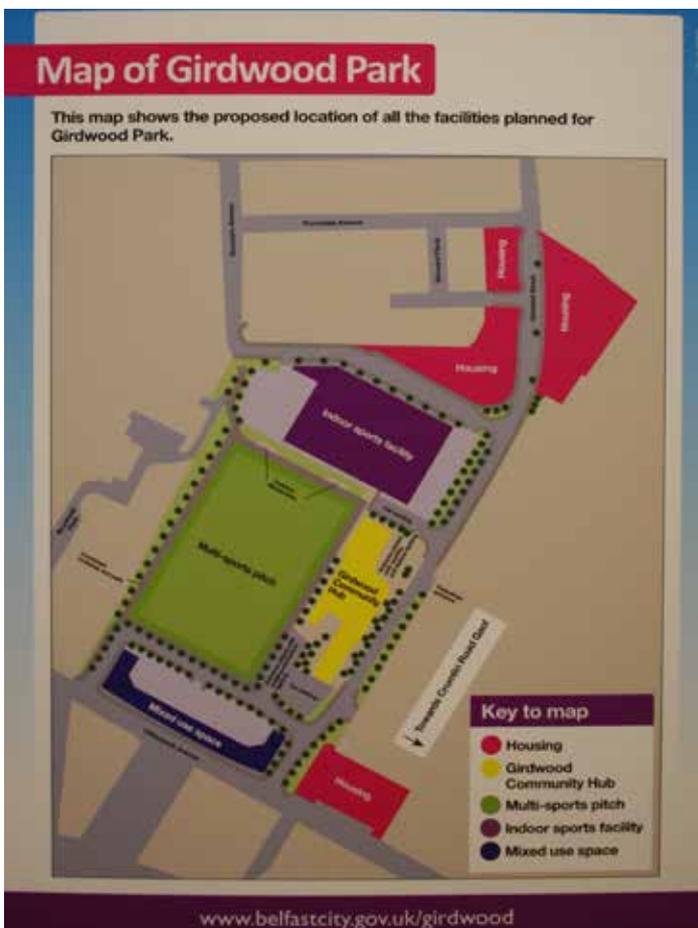
1. What are the top three needs of the local area in terms of public facilities/ services that could potentially be provided for on the Girdwood site (over and above the Community Hub, Housing and Playing Pitch already planned)? For example indoor sports facilities, business units, children's play park, outdoor gym, open space/walking/cycling trail and any other ideas.
2. In relation to your answer, why do you consider these to be the top 3 needs?
3. What use in your opinion would offer the best prospects for being shared by all sections of the community?

Answers should be forwarded to Department for Social Development Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate

4th Floor Oxford House

49-55 Chichester Street Belfast BT1 4HH

email Business.SupportUnit@dsdni.gov.uk



Urban Regeneration Community Benefits and Social Clauses



Future image of Ulster University Campus York Street

In recent years government has introduced social clauses as part of the procurement process for public sector contracts in order to create job opportunities and apprenticeships for long term unemployed people. However while sounding good in theory the training and employment made available to date has not amounted to many real jobs but has mainly taken the form of short term placements linked to government training schemes where people work for much less than minimum wage requirements. In reality government departments are applying minimalist social clause standards to their contracts therefore servicing the cheap labour requirements of private contractors.



Caral Ni Chuilin

One notable exception to this practice has been the approach of the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to

its Regional Stadium Development Programme which includes the regeneration of Ravenhill, Casement and Windsor Parks. The Minister for DCAL is New Lodge woman Caral Ni Chuilin. Undoubtedly the redevelopment of Casement Park has been controversial. Nevertheless when it comes to her social clause approach the Minister deserves credit.

In summary DCAL's social clauses directly target sectors of greatest inequality in areas of objective need

and stresses the necessity for properly paid jobs and apprenticeships with numbers specified and ring fenced. Rather than settling for minimalist standards she has clearly set the bar higher and created a precedent for social clauses to be developed into a more effective job creation mechanism. Although the evaluation to assess outcomes is incomplete, the positive intent of the Minister is obvious. Given similar political will, all government departments could apply social clauses more creatively to generate more decent jobs for the long term unemployed.

And while such training and employment focused benefits are very important there are other measures that could also be used to tackle disadvantage. For example, embedding community benefit clauses into all public procurement programmes; ensuring statutory planning arrangements in urban regeneration projects to prevent bad design, disconnection and community exclusion; providing the resources to build the capacity of community groups to more effectively engage in the planning and regeneration decision making processes.

Here in the New Lodge we currently have in close proximity a series of major construction projects already underway or at an advanced planning stage. This includes to name but some, the University of Ulster Campus, Girdwood and the new Motorway Interchange at North Queen Street. Although hailed by those in authority as evidence of progress, these projects have caused apprehension at community level. This is hardly surprising because for many

poor neighbourhoods in Belfast and elsewhere the recent experience of urban regeneration has been negative. The needs of market forces and the short term requirements of government departments rather than the socio-economic needs of communities has unfortunately been the main driver often leading to poor living environment outcomes and entrenched inequality for already poor neighbourhoods.

Yet within the community sector hope remains that a newly reformed City Council can begin to make a real difference. The Belfast based Right to Work; Right to Welfare group of unemployed people successfully lobbied Council at the start of 2014 to back a policy of ring fencing jobs for long term unemployed people through projects such as the Girdwood Hub. Time will tell if our Councillors deliver on these promises.

However with transformed community planning powers, a commitment to social clauses and a newly adopted living wage policy Council has a fresh opportunity to break from the status quo. For this to happen, all of our elected representatives must move beyond rhetoric. Like the Minister for Culture Arts and Leisure they must acknowledge by deed rather than mere words the inadequacy of previous public and market responses to the plight of the urban poor and put into operation real actions to eradicate the social deprivation that has plagued our neighbourhoods for too long.

Paul O'Neill
Ashton Community Trust



Current Childcare Vacancies

Kinderkids aims to provide the highest quality childcare in an environment that is fun, exciting, nurturing and caring.

Features of the Childcare Service include

- Fully Registered with Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
- Social Economy Project
- High Quality Play and Learning environment
- Implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Quality Assured
- Competitive Rates

Current Full & Part-time Childcare vacancies. Telephone to arrange a visit or to register a place for your child.

For further information contact Christine McKeown at the Ashton Centre on 90742255 OR via email christine@ashtoncentre.com

Ashton Community Trust

High quality Daycare and After school services in North Belfast



St Patrick's Girl Guides

Thanks to the many many people from local organisations who replied to us in June when we reached out for help to find a new home. We had several offers of premises and I am happy to confirm we are starting the new Guiding year at the Recy:)

It was great to see community groups rally around to help secure the future of Girl Guides which has been operating for 50 years in the area!

We ran a great programme of activities for young people to help them develop & reach their potential. As always we are looking for new volunteers to help us grow and meet demand - we currently have a waiting list of young people wanting to join.

Please like and share our facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/stpatsguides>

What's it like volunteering with St Patrick's Girl Guides?

- 1 - You will be part of a team who are making a difference in the lives of young people.
- 2 - You'll have fun, and feel part of a community!
- 3 - You have access to training and experiences which will enhance your CV.
- 4 - You can volunteer 2 hours a week or more - whatever suits your lifestyle.

Contact us today to find out more - get all the information before you decide!

St Patrick's Guides

Email: stpatsguides@yahoo.co.uk

Facebook/stpatsguides

McSweeney Community Garden



The Children from all the three Kinderkids Daycare Centres had a 'Dig In' Day during the summer. The day was a great success. The children planted a range of vegetables they had grown from seed and propagated in the Daycare. We will continue to look after the vegetables during the summer months and hope to have a good harvest come the autumn.

The children are developing an awareness of the lifecycle of plants and vegetables and beginning to realise where the food we eat comes from. This links directly to the early year's curriculum implemented within Kinderkids and 'The World Around Us' aspect of learning.

For further information about Kinderkids Daycare, contact Christine McKeown
Head of Childcare and Family Support
Ashton Community Trust Tel: 02890742255
christine.mckeown@ashtoncentre.com



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

Training & Employment Services

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For more information contact:
ICT - Debbie Tel: 028 9074 2255 or email debbie.mcquillan@ashtoncentre.com
English & Maths - Hilary Tel: 028 9032 2289 or email hilary.adair@ashtoncentre.com



Na Piarsaigh New Mural Launched



Pearses GAC and Tar Isteach join in partnership to create new mural

Patrick Pearses GAC was founded in 1951 in the St. Patrick's Parish area of Belfast, primarily because there was no GAA presence in the area. The club was named in honour of the Irish revolutionary and educationalist, Patrick Henry Pearse. Pearse believed that the Irish language was intrinsic to the identity of a nation and for himself, and other language revivalists, saving the Irish language from extinction was a cultural priority of the utmost importance. Fast forward 60 years and many of the original values are still espoused in modern times and the club retains strong links with the Irish language. The recently designed mural on the New Lodge Road embodies this as it shows Pearses players participating in a GAA match but also quotes the words from the iconic poem, *Mise Éire*, which was written by Pearse in 1912.

A downturn in fortunes in the 1990's almost seen the club go out of existence but, due to some incredibly hard-working individuals over the last ten years, the club has found itself once again at the hub of the community. In recent times, Pearses have went from strength to strength as they have risen from the ashes and youth membership continues to rise. At adult level they returned to All-County Senior Football in 2010 and this year won the Division 4 title, going through the league season unbeaten with a very young squad. At underage level they have continued to thrive with their under-16 footballers lifting the South Antrim Championship as recently as last year.

For the last year the club have been forced to play their home games away from their base at the Cricky, with St. Malachy's College and Mallusk being used for the majority of fixtures. If construction work goes as planned they will return to the Cricky in January 2016 which should be unrecognisable from the current site as it will then have a state of the art 4G playing surface and changing facilities to match. The pitch upgrade

is part of Belfast City Council's Parks and Pitches strategy and is primarily to be used for Gaelic Games.

As a local club, Pearses endeavour to provide the youth of today with the opportunity to learn and develop their national games while also giving them the chance to develop new relationships with children of their own age who they would otherwise not come into contact with. As a non-sectarian and non-political organisation, Pearses welcome everyone to their club regardless of race, religion or creed. With so many interface areas within North Belfast it is imperative that sporting organisations provide an alternative for the youth of today.

The recent period of austerity has found many GAA organisations finding it more and more difficult to keep their heads above water and the club rely on generous donations and sponsorship from their local community whilst continuing to fundraise themselves. Monthly events are held in Cassidy's Bar on the last Friday of each month, details of these and other occasions can be found by visiting the club's Facebook page or following their Twitter feed @NaPhiarsaigh. The club have recently been nominated for an award from the Lloyds Bank Community Fund, to vote for the club visit <https://lly-cf.co.uk/NKH> or alternatively you can text your free vote by texting VOTE NKH to 61119, voting closes on the 10th October.

As a club Cumann na Phiarsaigh may be sixty-three years old but they remain young at heart and are intent on continuing to build on the platform that they have created for themselves in the last few years, new members and volunteers are always welcome as they continue to do their community proud.

The new mural was made possible due to the work and support of Tar Isteach.

New Lodge Youth Centre

A Project of Ashton Community Trust

In August as part of the 'Connecting Cultures International Programme' myself along with three others from Belfast and Cork made up an Ireland contingent that took part in the 'Building Walls Breaking Walls Programme' held in the Jura Mountains, Switzerland. The programme



Sinead McKenna at the wall in the Jura Mountains

brought together young adults from Israel, Palestine, Switzerland and Ireland.

Together for eight days we worked on building a dry stone wall in the Jura Mountains and also got to explore each countries cultures, foods, traditions and also build friendships and bonds. We looked at how walls affect different countries and also how walls can be built for practical uses such as scenic purposes and to help with keeping the landscape preserved for many years.

Although this was an amazing journey home comforts were missed by us all as there was no hot water, TV or mobile connection and every morning you were

New Opening Times for New Lodge Youth Centre		
Monday	6pm to 7pm	5 to 7 year olds
	7pm to 8 30	8 to 11 year old
	8 30 to 10pm	Secondary School
Tuesday	6pm to 7pm	5 to 7 year olds
	7pm to 8 30	8 to 11 year old
	8 30 to 10pm	Secondary School
Wednesday	6pm to 7pm	5 to 7 year olds
	7pm to 8 30	8 to 11 year old
	8 30 to 10pm	Secondary School
Thursday	6pm to 7pm	5 to 7 year olds
	7pm to 8 30	8 to 11 year old
	8 30 to 10pm	Secondary School
Friday	7pm 11pm	Secondary School
Saturday	2pm to 5pm	10 to 11 years old
Sunday	6pm to 9pm	Secondary School

wakened up by cow bells as you were living in the mountains. This did not stop the smiles, laughter or singing from the whole group. I have met people I will remain friends with for years to come and look forward to working with them on this project and new projects in the future.

Sinead McKenna, Youth Support Worker, New Lodge Youth Centre

New Lodge Youth Centres Cross Border Project to Dublin

During the summer a group of 8 young men from the Centre participated in a cross border project with a group of 8 young women from Kilmore West Youth Project in Dublin. This project was based around looking at the stereotypes and perceptions that young people face within their communities.

The groups met up prior to the residential in order to get to know one another and have the chance to bond. They discussed issues that affect Dublin and Belfast and also what each city had to offer its youth. On the residential young people spent one night in Dublin. During this time they visited their partners youth centre looking at how the youth centre operated.

They also got a tour of the community were their young friends lived. This visit was educational and the experience has had a good impact on the young people.



Later the group went on a tour of Croke Park and the Cavan Centre were they had fun doing a team building exercises and activities.

The young people also completed presentations based on the programme. The experience was fantastic for both workers and young people and we all look forward to working with Kilmore West Youth Project in the future. Scott, Jamie and the Boys

Parent and Child Programme

Ashton Community Trust's Parent and Child Programme,

delivered by New Lodge Youth Centre, is now in its final stage. The programme has been extremely successful to date with children and parents taking part in a range of activities such as cookery, nutrition and physical exercise to support a healthy lifestyle. There is also transition, personal development and BAC activities like sky trek and high ropes. The programme concluded with a residential experience for parents and young people to Todds Leap . If you wish to be part of this programme with your child, contact Louise at New Lodge Youth Centre 02890751358

July Intervention Initiatives

New Lodge Youth Centre stayed open during the 12th and 13th of July to provide activities for young people during a time of tension in the area. The Centre also had a team of youth workers and 26 young people on a residential in Newcastle with BAC from the 11th to the 14th July. This residential has become very popular with outdoor pursuits, games, BBQs, and a camp fire. Young people told ghost stories, and toasted marshmallows around the camp fire enjoying the atmosphere. This is a special event that New Lodge Youth Centre organises to encourage children and young people away from the interfaces. Ten of our staff were involved in delivering this programme.



New Lodge Youth Centre Summer Scheme 2014

The Summer Scheme Programme was delivered over July and August during afternoons and evenings. Full day activities were also provided along with residentials. The dates and times were identified by staff and local community representatives as times when young people were most at risk of engaging in anti-social behavior and when there could be high levels of social unrest.

The programme, delivered over six weeks and involving 175 young people, provided 128 face to face activities

and residential opportunities. Activities included Water Sports, Arts and Crafts, Dance, Drama, Day and Night Trips, BBQs, Sports Competitions, Community Fun Days, Swimming, Bouncy Castle Party, Belfast Zoo, Adventure Playground, Cinema, Bus Excursions, Complimentary Therapies, National Play Day, Snow Tubing, BAC and Ice-Skating Residential Opportunities, to Dublin, Newcastle, Todd's Leap, Switzerland, Brazil, White Park Bay.

New Lodge Youth Centre and New Lodge Arts worked in partnership with the 174 Trust to deliver 'Belfast Sisters' which saw six choreographers travel from Dallas, Texas to facilitate a week long dance initiative including a public performance at the end.



The youth centre also delivered a programme with the schools helping young people come to terms with the transition from primary school to secondary school. Parents and young people said this programme was helpful and young people enjoyed it.

An evaluation with young people has shown that the summer scheme was successful and young people enjoyed the experience.



Youth Centre will be open to new members aged 8 to 18 years

Unfortunately our membership is closed to 5/7 year olds. But you can put your name on our waiting list. Contact Kelly on 02890751358.

Some of the youth centre programmes this year will be:

- Virtual Babies/Management Skills, Cross border project with Dublin, Dundalk, and Cork, Tackling Hate Crime, Cross Community Sports, Parent and Child Programmes, Connecting Cultures Programmes, History Programmes, Art, Drama, Fab Lab, Cheerleading, World War One Programme, Trips, Residentials, Life Skills, Swimming, Cookery, Road safety Cross Border Football with Dublin.

New Lodge Housing Forum News

A new housing group has been established in the multi storeys, the group, which will be called Seven Towers Residents Association (S.T.R.A.), has been formed to combat the slippage in the overall handling of the towers since the demise of the original Seven Towers Residents Group. At a recent public meeting residents voiced their opinion that the general maintenance of the blocks and the level of security has diminished in recent years and that anti-social behaviour is on the rise. Something needs to be done to reverse this situation.

This group, though in its infancy, has already been meeting the Housing Executive (H.E.) and has had a large window at the entrance to Eithne House replaced. This window had lay shattered for months and was an eyesore. We have also received an assurance from the H.E. that three more full time concierges will be transferring to the blocks very soon. We intend to meet H.E. on a regular basis. We attend to assist in the introduction of a new fob system and the installation of more technologically improved surveillance cameras. So we think you'll agree the group has certainly hit the ground running.

S.T.R.A. is in the process of being constituted and that document will be lodged with the H.E. ensuring the group will be the only group with a mandate to represent the seven towers residents. The committee, though assisted by the New Lodge Housing Forum, consists entirely of tower block residents, at the minute we have nine reps covering four towers, Eithne, Maeve, Finn and Chuchullin but would ideally like at least one rep from each block so are constantly on recruitment mode. A list of committee members is available on request, but the group can be contacted through the



Housing Forum at 23 New Lodge Road, ph. 90742399. The fact that all members reside in the blocks means that we know the problems first hand, no need to conduct endless surveys, but we still welcome input from all residents, even if you don't want to be a member of the committee your voice can still be heard we want to hear from you.

Although this committee will represent all residents the theme that has prevailed at meetings is that these are people who want to make their flat their permanent home. They want to be safe, comfortable and be in a clean, bright environment that you wouldn't be ashamed to bring visitors to. We intend to tackle controversial subjects such as absentee tenants and sub-letting which has resulted in youths living in over 35 blocks and increased anti-social behaviour, we only want the same rights afforded to residents in social housing and to be happy in our homes.

Kinderkids Big Toddle for Barnardo's

Kinderkids took part in the annual 'Big Toddle' fundraising event for Barnardo's in July. The theme this year was outer space. The children took part in art and craft activities to make costumes and hats to wear while taking part in the toddle. The children also learnt space themed songs and had space themed play in the preschool rooms, which helped staff deliver aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage in learning about 'the world around us' and helped children develop imagination and creative skills.

A big thank you must go to the Fab Lab who made space themed stickers for the children to use in their art work.

The Toddle was a great success, the children all took home sponsorship forms and we discussed why it was important to raise some money to help some children and their families at difficult times in their lives. The children developed an awareness of the importance of helping others in our community and had an understanding of charitable giving.

The preschool children in Kinderkids raised a total of £1081.30 for Barnardo's.

At the end of the 'Big Toddle' all the children who took part met at McSweeney Community Garden and had a picnic lunch and the children received medals and certificates for all the good work. Well done to everyone who took part!



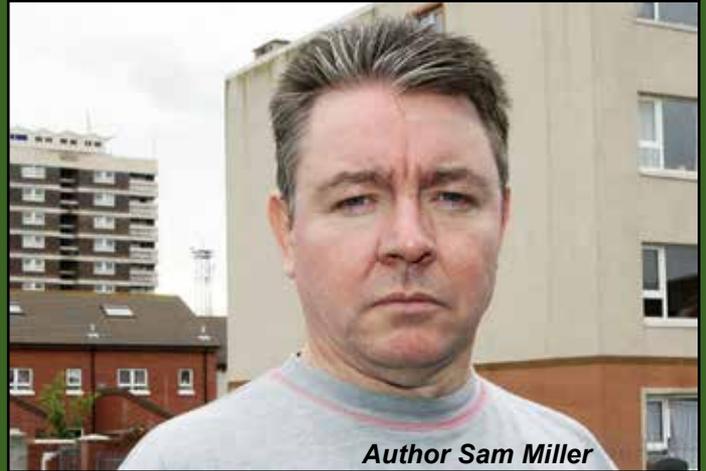
New Lodge Writer Reaps Further Critical Acclaim

Local writer and native of the New Lodge Sam Millar was one of the participants at this Year's Greater New Lodge Summer Events Programme where he spoke at the 'Scribes at the Duncairn' Event' about his motivation to become a writer and the influencing factors in his life and career.

In recent times Sam has been the subject of critical acclaim. He visited France earlier this year where his memoir 'On The Brinks' became the recipient of two major awards: Golden Balais d'or and Le Monde's Top Twenty Thrillers of 2013-14. The book was given major coverage in the French media with Le Monde dedicating four pages in its Sunday Magazine to the book and his time in prison in the cages of Long Kesh and the H-Blocks. The new edition was released in April, published by Ireland's leading publisher, The O'Brien Press. <http://www.obrien.ie/on-the-brinks> It has an extra 100 plus pages plus, this time including two chapters on the Burning of Long Kesh in 1974. Below are just some of the reviews from France and elsewhere.

"On The Brinks tells the story of [Millar] an IRA activist imprisoned in the worst jails in Ireland, prior to one of the most famous robberies in American history. If this were fiction, it would be an excellent thriller, but it's a true story, sustained by terrific writing." **Rolling Stone Magazine**

"On The Brinks is an amazing book built in two stages. Belfast firstly, then New York. Two cities for two extraordinary lives. The story of those years is terrible humiliation, torture,



Author Sam Miller

acts of barbarism, man reduced to the level of a beast. Between Nazi concentration camps and gulags, Long Kesh finds its place among these horrors." **Le Figaro**

"The life of Samuel Millar is worthy of an extraordinary film noir. And for once, the expression is not overused." **Le Parisien**

"This man {Millar} is a true force of nature...with a strong will, a spirit unswervingly tough. On The Brinks is a piece of history narrated with humour, humility and simplicity. How can such a combination be possible? Yet it is true and an incredible story of Sam Millar, the indomitable Irish. Grab a copy now." **Huffington Post**




Are you interested in working in childcare?



Do you have a childcare qualification (Minimum NVQ level 2 or equivalent) if so

Kinderkids Daycare is currently recruiting flexible workers to cover staff sickness, holidays etc.

For further information contact: Christine McKeown at the Ashton Centre, 5 Churchill Street, Belfast, BT15 2BP or telephone 02890742255



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UPSKILL TODAY!
Improve your chances of gaining employment by signing up to one of our accredited computer courses!

ASHTON COMMUNITY TRUST

Sign up to our free accredited courses & improve your chance of employment. Courses available over the summer term include:

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- **Spreadsheet Software** (8 week course)
- **Website Software** (8 week course)



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

To sign up to a course contact Debbie on: **028 9074 225**

The Bunscoil Building on Irish and Irishness

Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain (on Lancaster Street) has expressed its delight with the growing interest in the school. This year's Year 1 intake was 18 pupils - the biggest ever. The school now has 83 children - this time last year they had 61! Some of the new children came from nursery schools with no Irish. Séamas Ó Donnghaile, Principal since 2001, says, "It's all down to families valuing Irish identity, the Irish language, Irishness and their heritage. Children can only experience this truly if they know their country's language. Also, parents know that bilinguals go further in education and in employment. I do not know a single Irish-speaker who is unemployed".

Séamas also pointed to the fact that inspectors reported on the 'consistently very good' teaching in the Bunscoil and on the children's 'deep understanding of Irish'. Kate Clarke, one of the founding parents, said that she is very heartened by recent growth. "My own children went to the Bunscoil," she said, "and they are confident young people who are proud of the school's message. Bunscoil children are what they speak. It's that simple."

The timetable offers hurling, Gaelic football, traditional music and singing. Some of the poetry and poets studied are from Gaeltacht regions. History lessons include Mary Ann Mc Cracken (whose name we carry), a Presbyterian social reformer, who spent a lifetime fighting for the poor and disadvantaged in this part of Belfast, the educationalist Pádraig Pearse and the Great Hunger. The school places emphasis on ensuring that the role models for the children are those from Ireland's own proud story.

The school has a very strong and productive relationship with its families. The parents enjoy the 'open door' policy and all have the principal's personal mobile number to discuss matters outside of school hours.

Parents interested in giving their children the gift of bilingualism, enjoying Irish identity, learning their own history and growing in confidence can contact Séamas via sodonnghaile305@c2kni.net or 90322409 to arrange a visit to the school. "The cost of a visit is nothing for your child - the cost of not visiting is immeasurable for your child," Séamas said.

Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain in Lancaster Street is offering an introductory series of 'early bird' beginners' Irish classes for people who have faaaaaaaaar too much on each night!

If interested, email sodonnghaile@gmail.com or text 'early bird' to 07803 546 835 to register interest.

The cost is £20 for 20 classes and all proceeds go the nursery school.

Starting date is Thursday 9 October at 0745 and bring a cara (friend).

Tar Isteach Says No To Racism



Tar Isteach members with Anna Lo

For many years now the Tar Isteach Carnival Parade and Family Funday has been a familiar feature of the New Lodge Festival. Each year a particular theme is adopted to highlight issues of community and societal interest. This year, against a backdrop of a serious increase in attacks on ethnic minorities particularly in Belfast it was decided that the theme would be 'Say No to Racism'. To highlight this it was decided to invite Anna Lo as special guest and to lead off the Carnival Parade. Anna is an Alliance Party politician. She was born in Hong Kong, of Cantonese-Chinese ethnicity. She was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly for Belfast South and was the first ethnic-minority politician ever elected at a regional level here. It is well documented that Anna has been the target of racial abuse particularly from extreme loyalists. As a result she announced earlier this year that she does not intend to stand for re-election and was considering leaving here altogether. Speaking at the Funday in North Queen Street Park Anna congratulated the organisers and commented that it was extremely heartening to receive such support. She said that it was great that the children of the area were being guided in a very positive way that encouraged them to think of everyone regardless of their ethnic background as the same. Belfast writer and community activist Tim Brannigan also participated in the event. He said that by arranging events like this the New Lodge community was sending out a powerful message from grass roots level that racism was wrong and had to be opposed at every layer in society.



Tar Isteach Carnival Parade

NEW LODGE ARTS

The Big Quiz 2014'

New Lodge Arts ran their first quiz for teenagers this year as part of the Summer Events Programme 2014. The quiz was attended by more than 30 young people and was a fun, enjoyable night for all with some amazing prizes. Well done to all the lucky winners! The prizes for the lucky winners were; an overnight stay to Newcastle Co. Down, courtesy of Belfast Activity Centre (BAC), £100 prize money generously donated by Newington Credit Union, 4 complimentary cinema tickets from Movie House Cinemas (City Side Mall), a free group lunch kindly donated by Thyme Cafe. New Lodge Arts are grateful for all the donations offered, the quiz would not have been as successful without these. We would like to deliver more of these quiz events in the future for teenagers and young people of different ages. Please keep an eye out for more information on this!

New Lodge Arts Summer Street Party



As part of this year's Summer Events programme, New Lodge Arts were excited to bring back the 'Street Party'. The event took place on Saturday 9th August 2014 with an array of activity including Street Theatre, Circus Acts, Drumming, Climbing Wall, Bouncy Castles, Street Games, Music, Bulgarian Dancing, Drawing and a variety of Arts & Crafts. There really was something for everyone and it was fantastic to see the local community, young and old, united together to celebrate arts and culture.

Anne Delaney, Arts Programme & Operations Manager, New Lodge Arts was delighted with the event: 'There was a real buzz about the area during the street party – everywhere you looked, you could see people enjoying a diverse mix of activities and really enjoying themselves. A big thankyou to all the staff, volunteers, artists and performers who all made it a great success. This is definitely something we want to continue as part of our annual programme of activities!'

Summer Arts Academy



For this year's Summer Arts Academy, New Lodge Arts joined forces with Arts Ekta, Northern Ireland's leading Ethnic Arts organisations to give young people an opportunity to try some new art forms from around the world. Participants took part in a range of music, dance and art classes with a team of highly skilled artists during a week long programme held in the North Queen Street Community Centre.

The participants worked towards a performance in the Duncairn Arts & Cultural Centre on Friday 8th August 2014. The evening included Music and Dance performances by the young people and we were delighted to have the South Asian Dance Academy perform a Bollywood Dance as part of the evening.

Due to the hard work and commitment of the young people during the week, Arts Ekta invited them to perform at their Mela Festival in Botanic Gardens on Sunday 24th August 2014. This was a huge opportunity for our young people – an event that attracts over 20,000 people. The performance was a great success and the young people received huge support from the audience. DCAL Minister Caral Ni Chuilin attended and stated she was 'So proud of all the children involved in MELA & ArtsEkta. Kids from New Lodge Arts were fantastic'.



Building Bridges between Belfast and Berlin

Participants from Ashton Community Trust's "Exploring the Past for a Better Future" programme are gearing up for a unique exploratory and study visit to the German Capital in October. This programme is part of the Bridge of Hope project and is the second of these visits since 2012.

The programme, which is funded by SEUPB under the EU's PEACE III Programme, has brought people who took part in both the "Who Am I?" and "Making Sense of the Past" programmes together for what is sure to be a hugely informative experience.

Those travelling will visit historic sites of significance in terms of the conflict in Germany as well as meeting with academics from the Berghoff Foundation who specialise in post conflict studies.

This visit is an integral part of the project and it's vital that participants are given the opportunity to come together and engage with each other as well as share their experiences and expectations about this visit. The three engagement meetings allow for just that and it is clear from the latest meetings that participants are excited, engaged and more than open to learning new things.

The study-visit to Berlin allows participants to not only self-reflect on the impact of the conflict here but to also learn about conflict and indeed post-conflict scenarios within a completely different context.

This project has a proven track-record of bringing about positive grassroots engagement between communities but we also want to ensure that we maintain this work and build upon it.

The study-visit to Berlin gives those taking part the ideal opportunity to continue and more importantly develop that work.

Niall Ó Donnghaile Legacy Co-ordinator
 Bridge Of Hope
 Mc Sweeney Centre
 Ashton Community Trust
 29-31 Henry Place | Belfast | BT15 2AY

Grotto Gets A New Lease Of Life



On Monday 8th September a Rosary took place at the Grotto in the Barrack area. This was the first Rosary that had taken place there in a few years. This was well attended with around 150 people both young and old attending this symbolic service. The residents were extremely grateful to the local men who had worked tirelessly to give the Grotto a much needed makeover. One resident said "I haven't been here in years as the Grotto had got so overgrown and was very dark at night. It was very frightening. I am now over the moon that I can come back here and pray and feel safe".

Cecilia Heron Good Relations Arts Worker for New Lodge Arts said "The transformation has given the whole area a boost. It's fantastic to see that local residents are once again starting to take ownership of their area. Over recent months there has been some anti social behaviour going on particularly in the Barrack area and we are absolutely delighted at the transformation of the Grotto. It has been very uplifting to see people coming to pray peacefully now. The local men who were involved in the clean up worked extremely hard and have made sure that the Grotto is well lit at night and is accessible to all. We would like to offer our congratulations and thanks to everyone who had a hand in making this possible. I only hope now that others in the area start to draw inspiration from this and start to take on similar projects themselves".

Rosary taking place every Monday evening at 7.00 pm. All welcome!

New Lodge Oil Club
 Community Heating Oil Energy Saving Scheme



Ashton Community Trust is exploring the possibility of establishing a local Community Heating Oil Energy Saving Scheme. The basic idea is to bring people together to form a collective or club that negotiate's better/lower prices from oil dealers. However for such a scheme to work, it would require a commitment from a significant number of people to join the club and take on some responsibilities. If you are interested in joining contact the Ashton Centre on 90742255 and ask for Paul O'Neill or Louise Curley.