

New Lodge Youth Centre Going From Strength to Strength

Paul Roberts (Chief Executive Ashton Community Trust), Katrina Newell (Youth Centre Manager) with staff, volunteers and young people at the New Lodge Youth Centre



In 2012 the management of New Lodge Youth Centre in Upper Meadow Street was officially handed over by the Belfast Education and Library Board to Ashton Community Trust and since then it has continued to grow from strength to strength. The Youth Centre has positively progressed since coming under community control is exemplified in a recent report released by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Following a thorough inspection of the Centre that focussed on the quality of:

- Achievements and Standards
- Provision for Learning
- Leadership and Management
- Self-Evaluation Leading to Improvement

The ETI stated that, "The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement".

See full story in Centre pages.

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Arts Management Training Programme



Training Session New Lodge Arts

New Lodge Arts have recently collaborated with the MAC Arts Centre in St Anne's Square to design and deliver a training programme for the young people's Event Management Team. The 12 week programme teaches the young people the different elements and aspects involved with Arts Management. Each week the group attend a workshop or session with a member of the MAC staff, who is usually a specialist in the specific area being focused on that week. Some examples of the topics covered weekly are; Front of House, Tour Guide Skills, Programming, Publicity & Marketing and much more. The programme has been running for 4 weeks and the young people are learning loads and thoroughly enjoying the sessions.

The main outcome of the programme is to train each individuals in the skills of Arts Management and the planning and running of events. The MAC believe that there is a possibility for job and volunteering opportunities at the end of this 12 week programme for all group members, which would be an excellent achievement.

Ideally, New Lodge Arts would like to run this programme annually with different groups of young people that are interested in this type of work. Watch this space!

New Lodge Arts is a project of the Ashton Community Trust.

Weekend Suicide Intervention Service

Saturday and Sunday 10.00 am – 4.00pm

**Telephone and Face to Face Support
07516187447**

Other Useful Out of Hours Contacts

- Lifeline 24 hour Helpline 0808 808 8000
- Samaritans 24 hour 08457 909090
- GP 028 90 744447
- Social Services 028 90565444

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
 Edmund Rice Primary School - 9035 1206
 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
 Star Of The Sea Primary School - 9035 1478
 Star Neighbourhood Centre - 9074 0693
 Tar Isteach - 90746665 / 90754967

Belfast Community Acupuncture at Newington Credit Union

Affordable Acupuncture is now on your doorstep.
Belfast Community Acupuncture have opened an Acupuncture Clinic at Newington Credit Union. The clinic runs from 2.30pm to 7.30pm on Mondays.

For further information or an appointment call Mary on 07505371535, or visit our website www.belfastcommunityacupuncture.com

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Family First - Community Family Support Programme

Ashton Community Trust has started a new project aimed at supporting families in North Belfast. The Community Family Support Programme is an initiative designed to help families make positive decisions to enhance and improve their everyday lives.

The programme supports families through developing their capacity to reach their full potential. The initiative also aims to prevent young people falling into the NEET (not in education, employment or training) category and help other young people who find themselves in this situation to re-engage with education, training or employment.

During the 26 week programme families receive help from professionally qualified family support workers to address the health, social, economic, educational, employment and training issues that impact on their daily lives.

The programme is delivered by community family support organisations in the heart of the community.

What support will families receive?

Family support workers engage and consult with parents of children and young people to promote early intervention and high quality parenting and to identify solutions to address their specific needs.

Support provided on the programme is directly matched to the expressed needs of the families and may include help with:

- Parenting and life skills, encouraging better relationships within families, childcare, role models and caring responsibilities.
- Improving children's attendance and performance at school
- Encouraging young people to take a positive direction in life and reach their full potential. Motivating young people to enter education, employment and training.
- Healthy living.
- Stress management
- Prevention of alcohol or drug misuse and help in overcoming current misuse.
- Money management
- Benefit advice
- Reducing isolation
- Support with domestic abuse
- Housing issues
- Support with behavioural issues.
- Improving self confidence, motivation.
- Accessing suitable education, employment and training opportunities.
- Developing skills to find work, creating a CV, job-searching and preparation for job interviews.

Community Family Support Programme (CFSP)

The family support programme works in partnership with specialist support organisations to get family members the

help they need.

The programme has a structured Family Learning Component to enhance family life skills.

This Learning Component helps address issues that families are faced within their daily lives e.g. Family values, changing behaviour, anger management drug and alcohol misuse, speaking and listening etc.

How can a family participate on the programme?

Entry onto the programme is voluntary and referrals can be made by contacting: Ashton Community Trust directly or through a third party.

Family profiles

The family will:

Live in North Belfast.

Have a child or children between the ages of 14 and 18.

Additionally, families will have another family member that is unemployed – this may be a parent or an older sibling living at the same address!

Or The family will:

Live in North Belfast

Consist of a parent aged between 16 and 24, whom is not in employment, education or training.

If you are interested in taking part in this programme or want to find out more information contact:

Jeanette Burns on 028 90 742255

Or Email: jeanette.burns@ashtoncentre.com

Ashton Community Trust
5 Churchill Street, Belfast, BT15 2BP

Ashton Family Support



New Neighbourhood Renewal Coordinator for Inner North Belfast

A New Neighbourhood Renewal Coordinator for Inner North Belfast has recently been appointed. The new Co-ordinator is Gerard Rosato and he will be responsible for covering communities in the whole of Inner North Belfast. Gerard will be based in the Ashton Centre.

As well as New Lodge and Duncairn, Gerard will also be working with community and voluntary groups that are based in Carrick Hill, Newington, Mount Vernon, Tigers Bay and the Shore Road. Gerard's main role will be to review the current Inner North Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan and to offer support to the Inner North Neighbourhood Partnership and its associated sub groups, i.e.

- Health and Well Being
- Children and Young People
- Physical and Economic
- Social and Community

Gerard will also be working closely with the various community and voluntary organisations of North Belfast as well as statutory agencies with the aim of promoting greater collaboration between voluntary and community organisations.

Over the coming weeks he will be out and about in the Inner North area meeting up with the various community and voluntary groups that are active in the area.

Neighbourhood Renewal and Local Government Reform

Neighbourhood Renewal first emerged as a government strategy in 2004 aimed at tackling the worst levels of disadvantage and deprivation in 36 designated areas across the North of Ireland. In North Belfast there are a number of Neighbourhood Renewal areas that have established partnerships. These partnerships are;

- Ballysillan/Upper Ardoyne
- Crumlin/Ardoyne
- Inner North
- Ligoniel
- Rathcoole

The membership of the Partnerships is made up of



representatives from local community and voluntary groups, churches, statutory agencies, and government departments. However under the Review of Public Administration (RPA), responsibility for community development is set to pass from central to local government in 2015. This will include funding and other areas of responsibility such as Neighbourhood Renewal. In principle this is aimed at transforming the way that councils and other organisations engage with local communities. A major feature of this transformation will be Community Planning with the intention being to encourage greater citizen participation, create more effective service delivery and generally improve the quality of life at neighbourhood level. If appropriately applied and implemented, new local area action plans can become powerful tools that enable local communities to ensure that their voice is heard and their needs properly identified and addressed.

The next Local Government elections are due in May of this year. With greater powers than ever being transferred to Councils, deciding what candidate you vote for as your local Councillor will be more important than ever.

Ashton Food Donation Drive

A number of community groups within Inner North Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership organised a Donation Day for 27th February 2014 in order to provide Storehouse Charity with food items to be distributed to people in need. As part of this initiative the Ashton Community Trust organised a donation drive with its own staff. Kinder Kids Childcare which is run by Ashton also organised a similar initiative with the parents of their children. As a result a very significant amount of food was donated. Christine McKeown Head of Childcare said, "I would like to thank all of our parents for this. When we put this alongside the amount of donations from all the staff at Ashton it shows a great spirit of generosity and thought for others".



Christine McKeown, Paul Roberts and Paul O'Neill with some of the food collected

Belfast Mayor Mairtin O'Muilleoir visits the Ashton Fab Lab

Thursday 6th of February saw the Ashton Community Trust play host to Belfast's 'First Citizen', Mayor Mairtin O'Muilleoir, as he visited its prestigious Fab Lab. The Mayor was given a tour of the Fab Lab by Ashton staff and was also able to witness at first hand a visiting group of pupils from 'Gaelscoil Scoil An Droichid' in South Belfast and young men from ACT's SWEET programme designing and making their own podcast as part of the new digital revolution. During the visit the Mayor presented the project with a City Council Commendation Certificate. As a result of his visit Mairtin wrote the following piece on his NewBelfast.Com Blog



Mayor Mairtin O'Muilleoir Presents Commendation Certificate to Paul O'Neill of Ashton Community Trust

Mayors Blog

For some time, I have thought that the word 'disadvantaged' when applied to entire communities across Belfast doesn't adequately capture the verve, spirit and genius of the people I encounter at the coalface of change in our working class neighbourhoods.

But it wasn't until I visited the magnificent Cedar Foundation, a can-do charity working with those with physical disabilities, that I found out that smarter people than me had already recognised that issue — and come up with the solution. Indeed, at Cedar, which held its annual fundraiser in the Ramada Hotel last night, their mission is to focus on the 'ability' in 'disability'. And you only have to be in the same room as Cedar ambassadors Jean Daly, the Antrim Rose of Tralee, and her tennis ace partner Stafford Lynn to understand that

"it's not about the wheelchair, stupid!" I am in their debt for bringing me to that understanding.

Similarly, you can't capture the genius of the people of the New Lodge in North Belfast — who survived the worst of our years of darkness — by branding them as disadvantaged. Indeed, this week, I witnessed the advantage in this ebullient community when I visited the Fab Lab, a hub of tech education, innovation and creativity linked to the original Fab Lab in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, probably the world's greatest centre of tech innovation.

There isn't a leading tech company or science department in any university in Ireland which wouldn't give it's eye-tooth for this Fab Lab but here it is ensconced in the heart of a working class community. And that's not the only advantage this proud community has because the Fab Lab itself is hosted by the Ashton Centre, a groundbreaking not-for-profit organisation set up by 450 local people who bought founders share in the enterprise back in 1988.

Today the Ashton Centre, across six buildings in North Belfast, is among the greatest community enterprises



Mayor chats to young pupils at the Fab Lab

in Europe. Advantage New Lodge, methinks. The icing on the cake for me was that the pupils of South Belfast Gaelscoil Scoil an Droichid were being shown how to use the 3-D printers when I called in to present a Commendation Certificate to the Fab Lab. Bilingual young children 'test-driving' revolutionary technology tells you all you need to know about this city on the rise.

Drop In Days at the Fab Lab Fridays and Saturdays are Drop In days @ Fablab Belfast!

Call in and chat to staff to see what you can make in the Lab, from crafts to furniture through to electronics. Drop in is for everyone, regardless of your skill level or ability. You'll also meet lots of other friendly people making their own projects which will maybe even inspire your own! So join us in FabLab and become part of the newest digital revolution!
<http://www.fablabni.com/centre/fablab-belfast>

Clifton Street Cemetery

Here in the New Lodge we have on our door step one of the most significant historical sites in the country, Clifton Street Cemetery which sits in Henry Place facing the McSweeney Centre. In this famous graveyard you will find the burial places of a fascinating mix of people from the Belfast of the 18th and 19th centuries. It is here that paupers share their final resting places with revolutionary figures from the United Irish Movement, leading lights from the business and industrial sectors of the time, members of the medical and science professions, the British military as well as figures from a range of other sectors and vocations. The site also holds a mass grave that contains the remains of 7,000 people, victims of the 1845-50 Famine. Indeed the McSweeney Centre situated in Henry Place and which is run by the Ashton Centre was named after one of the children that died in the Famine, 5 year old Mary McSweeney. Those radical republicans from the United Irish movement that lay buried in the cemetery include,

The Reverend William Steele Dickson a radical Presbyterian, believed to be a commander of the United Irishmen in Co Down. He was arrested in Ballynahinch on 5 June 1798 and although not charged with any offence, was imprisoned, first on a prison ship in Belfast Lough and later transferred to Fort George in the north of Scotland. In 1812 he published his "A Narrative of the Confinement and Exile of William Steel Dickson, DD". In 1815 he resigned from his congregation and retired to Belfast where he died on December 1824.

Dr. William Drennan was a physician, poet, educationalist and political radical. He was the son of the minister of the first Presbyterian Church in Rosemary Street Belfast. Drennan was convinced of the need for Catholic emancipation and radical parliamentary reform. A founder of the Society of United Irishmen, he introduced the seminal idea of uniting Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter. He is also credited with having been one of the earliest advocates of inoculation against smallpox, and of hand washing to prevent the spread of infection. Drennan was a leading intellectual and writer believed to have coined the expression, "The Emerald Isle". He died in 1820.

Born into a wealthy Presbyterian business family **Henry Joy McCracken** and his equally famous sister **Mary Ann McCracken** are to be found at the



*Champion of the Oppressed
Mary Ann McCracken*

top wall of the graveyard. Mary Ann was one of the few women members of the United Irish organisation. She was deeply committed to radical social reform including workers rights and women's equality. She was a fearless champion of the poor and to the forefront of the abolitionist or anti-slavery movement. She died in July 1866 at the age of 96.

Henry Joy McCracken, the charismatic young leader of the United Irish attack on the British military garrison in Antrim in June 1798 was captured and hanged on the 17th July 1798, at the Market House, Cornmarket Belfast. He was originally buried in the old Corporation Church Graveyard, present day St. Georges. His remains were removed by the Irish Nationalist politician Francis Joseph Biggar and taken to his sister's graveyard in the early 1900s.

Friends of Clifton St. Cemetery

Joe Baker is a well known local historian and a member of the Board of Trustees with the Ashton Community Trust. He

has been investigating and writing about Clifton Street Cemetery for about 20 years now. As well as conducting tours of the cemetery Joe has relentlessly campaigned for Belfast City Council to take seriously its upkeep. In recent months he has helped set up a new group called the 'Friends of Clifton St. Cemetery'. He said, "The purpose of this new group is to help intensify the work of improving the condition of the cemetery and promoting greater awareness and accessibility to the wider community. In historical terms the significance of the Cemetery cannot be overstated. While many people are probably aware that Henry Joy McCracken is buried here there isn't the same realisation that the cemetery has a huge range of other historically significant features. Besides the mass famine grave, there are rich merchants, politicians, actors and inventors. There is even an American diplomat and an escaped American slave. This site simply breathes history and is a cultural treasure that should be appreciated, valued and respected by all".



The Society of United Irishmen

Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee



Big Increase In Burglaries Be on your guard!

The Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee meets regularly with a range of statutory agencies in relation to issues of community safety. As part of this process the Committee requests regular updates from the neighbourhood police about the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. The Safer Streets Committee are aware of a serious upsurge in burglaries and house break ins and requested a report on this from the PSNI. The following is a written report received from Brian Caskey (PSNI Sergeant) Neighbourhood Policing Team.

PSNI Update To Community February 2014

In recent weeks we have witnessed an increase in burglary offences and theft of motorbikes. Premises and houses have been targeted during the night with many properties accessed via rear doors and windows. We are continuing to work to identify the offenders and increase police patrols in the area and we have been greatly helped by many reports of suspicious activity. We would urge the community to continue to report any concerns in the area to police or the Safer Streets Committee so we can reduce offences and support residents by offering practical crime prevention advice supported by our partners in the Housing Executive and Belfast City Council.

Motorbikes have been stolen and used by offenders in the local area. Again we have recovered many of the bikes after community support and a number of persons have been arrested. We are continuing to look at all enforcement measures to catch and deter offenders.

Please be aware of any attempt to sell stolen property in the area and if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Police on 0845600 8000 for advice. You can contact your Neighbourhood Policing Team for the area at York Road PSNI Station. Your officers are Sergeant Brian Caskey, Constable Stuart Jones, Const Mark Jackson and Const Derek Patterson. Contact details for the officers and Team are on the PSNI web page. Find us on face book and e-mail NPTYorkRoad@psni.pnn.police.uk.

Crime prevention advice can also be accessed. Together we can build on the partnership working which is continuing to make the area safer for all residents
Sergeant Brian Caskey 07764638464



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

**Are you seeking employment and interested in gaining
Welding Skills to enhance job prospects in this area?**

The Ashton Centre's Progress to Employment Project is running a **FREE** course to help unemployed people from North Belfast seeking training and employment within a welding environment.

Credited Welding Training (EN ISO 9606)

MIG Welding

MAG Welding

Oxy-acetylene Welding

Possible job opportunities on successful completion of training

Interested Individuals will be interviewed for this training on

13th March 2014 (as limited places available) and if selected

training will take place:

24th - 28th March 2014.

For further information please contact Arlene on: 028 90742255,
or email arlene@ashtoncentre.com






Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee

If you are the victim or the witness of crime, drug dealing or anti social behaviour you can contact the number below. If no one is there to answer always leave a message on the voice mail.
Remember If You Don't Report Then We Can't help You. Do Not Suffer In Silence



GREATER NEW LODGE Safer Streets Committee
Making the community Safer

Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee - 0756 493 8276
Another community number you can ring is, Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI) - 028 90 753043

If possible provide the following details;

- Your name and contact number (If you feel comfortable doing so)
- The nature and location of the offence
- The date and time of the offence
- The name/details of the offender (If known)

NORTH BELFAST CHRISTMAS PANTO



Auditions for the second North Belfast Christmas Panto took place in October 2013. Auditions were held in 7 North Belfast venues to a total of 35 participants. Cecilia Heron Good Relations Arts Worker for New Lodge Arts said. "The talent was extremely high and after much consideration the artistic team decided on putting 26 young people through to rehearsals. Two performances were held to a sellout audience on Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th December in St Kevin's Hall. Our young people worked extremely hard with a fantastic artistic team to bring a high quality and affordable panto to North Belfast. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the performance and really interacted with our budding stars. Feedback we have received has been very positive and that there is a real need to continue with projects like this. I am very proud of each young person for fully committing to this project."

What is the Threshold Programme?

Threshold is a programme where young people between the ages of 16 and 24 can experience different career options during a 12 week period. Taster sessions are offered to help young people make informed choices about possible career paths. It combines one-to-one support and small group activities, delivered by a dedicated team.

What will I get?

- Preparation for employment (CV and interview skills)
- Mentor Support
- Personal Development
- Training tailored to your needs
- Work experience
- A recognised qualification
- Childcare expenses paid
- Travel expenses paid
- Daily meal allowance

New Programmes available in Construction, Painting and Decorating, Tiling, General Skills, Beauty Therapy, Conflict Resolution & Playwork

How many weeks does Threshold run for?

Twelve weeks!

How many days per week will I have to work?

The Threshold Programme runs three days per week – normally a Tuesday, Wednesday and a Thursday from 10am to 3pm.

Will my benefits be affected?

Benefits are not affected by the Threshold Programme; in fact if you are eligible for Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), you could receive an extra £25 per week. (Criteria apply)

For more information contact: Donnchadh Murphy on 028 90 742255

Or email: Donnchadh.murphy@ashtoncentre.com



Electoral Identification Clinic at the Ashton Centre



Electoral Identity Card




This leaflet provides information about the Electoral Identity Card and explains how to apply for one

What is the Electoral Identity Card?

The Electoral Identity Card is one of the forms of photographic identification which you must produce to prove your identity when you vote at elections in Northern Ireland.

The other forms of acceptable identification are:

- A Northern Ireland or Great Britain driving licence with your photograph
- A passport issued by the United Kingdom or any other Member State of the European Community
- A Translink 60+ SmartPass
- A Translink Senior SmartPass
- A Translink Blind Person's SmartPass
- A Translink War Disabled SmartPass

What else can the card be used for?

The Electoral Identity Card is accepted as proof of identity or age by:

- Banks and building societies when opening a bank account
- UK Airlines (for domestic flights to and from Northern Ireland)
- Pubs and clubs
- Off-licences and retailers selling alcohol and tobacco

How do I apply for a card?

Applications may be made either by post or in person at an Area Electoral Office. To obtain a card you must be listed on the Electoral Register, or have applied to be registered.

APPLICATIONS BY POST:

To get an application form please contact us by phone or email and

An Electoral Identification Clinic will be held on Wednesday 26th March 2014 from 6 .00 pm – 8.00 pm in the Ashton Centre. This event is being organised by the Electoral Office.

INFORMATION ON FOOD BANKS/FOOD PARCELS

Food Banks

13 million people live below the poverty line in modern day Britain. Every day people go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. In 2011-12 Food Banks fed 128,687 people 100% more than the previous year. Rising costs of food and fuel combined with static income, high unemployment and changes to benefits are causing more and more people to come to food banks for help.

Why do people need emergency food?

Today many people struggle to feed themselves and their families. Redundancy, illness, benefit delay, domestic violence, debt, family breakdown and paying for the additional costs of heating during winter are just some of the reasons why people go hungry.

What's in a Food Box?

Each food box contains a minimum of three days nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food.

The Storehouse Project

A number of community groups in the Greater New Lodge area are working with the Storehouse Charity to address some of the very real hardships that people face in relation to putting food on the table. With this initiative, groups based here in the New Lodge including the Ashton Community Trust, the Star Neighbourhood Centre and Tar Isteach are able to directly refer local people. Anyone contacting us must come to complete a very basic referral form, which they then take to the Storehouse. All requests will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Community Contact Details for Greater New Lodge

Ashton Community Trust- Christine McKeown, Paul O'Neill. Phone 028 90 742255

Star Neighbourhood Centre- Maria McCafferty, Marisa Conroy. Phone 028 90 740693

Tar Isteach - Agnes Frazer, Kathy Stanton. Phone 028 90 746664 (5)

The Storehouse Project is at 17 Castle Arcade. This is the street at the side of British Home Stores in Belfast which can be accessed off High Street or Calendar Street.

Opening hours: Monday 10.00-12.30pm, Wed 1-00 3.30pm and Fri 6.00-7.30pm

Things Storehouse Does Not Do

- They are not a drop-in with direct access
- They do not provide on-site meals
- They do not provide counseling or any form of advice service (although they will attempt to signpost)



Oxfam say Austerity Creating 'More Unequal Society'

The government has been urged to row back on austerity measures which are affecting Northern Ireland disproportionately and creating a more unequal society, a charity has said. New research by Oxfam indicated that 22% of people are now living in poverty. The charity said cuts were pushing vulnerable families to their limits. Jim Clarken of Oxfam Ireland urged the UK government and NI Executive to "row back" on deep-cutting economic policies. "We are now facing hardships our grandparents faced," he said. "Over the course of five years, £4billion in cuts will have been delivered in Northern Ireland - the biggest since World War II. Austerity measures, which are hitting women and young people particularly hard, are making Northern Ireland even more of an unequal society".

Oxfam research

- One in every four working households living in poverty
- People are going to food banks to get essentials
- 25% of those working in NI do not make a living wage
- The lowest earners have lost 38% of disposable income

"The UK Government's proposed welfare reforms will particularly disadvantage already vulnerable sectors of our community, such as those with disabilities and mental illness."

The charity's research suggested that 25% of those working here do not even make a living wage. It said the lowest earners have lost 38% of their disposable net income as a direct result of austerity policies. Mr Clarken said the UK Government policy does not work in Northern Ireland due to its special context as one of the UK's most disadvantaged regions and the high dependence on public spending. He said the charity's new report offered fairer and more sustainable ways of financing "more progressive policies".

"There are alternatives to austerity," he said. "We're calling on the UK and NI governments to champion a new economic and social model that invests in people and pursues fair taxation. Governments could raise billions for public services, such as health and education, by increasing tax on the wealthiest, and also cracking down on tax loopholes and avoidance schemes".

Irish Language Seminar at 174 Trust



On Friday 14th of February, well known New Lodge man Joe Doherty organised a seminar at the newly opened 174 Culture and Arts Centre, entitled, "Is the Irish language relevant in modern society"? Joe works with Coiste na nIarchimí which is a national umbrella organisation for Republican Ex-Prisoners, he is also a member of Tar Isteach. The seminar at the 174 Trust was very well attended by educationalists and community activists from across Belfast. At the introduction stage the Rev. Bill Shaw, Presbyterian Minister and Director at the 174 Trust took the opportunity to welcome people to the new Centre for Arts and Culture and described it as a resource for the whole community in North Belfast and beyond. The seminar came at a time of controversy following recent remarks by George Chittick, the Orange Order's Belfast County Grand Master. Speaking recently at a loyalist protest in north Belfast, Mr Chittick said: "A word of warning to Protestants who go to learn Irish... it's part of the republican agenda."

Speakers at the seminar included Linda Ervine who is Irish language development worker at the East Belfast Mission. A former teacher at the Ashfield Girls' High School, Linda has promoted the Irish language extensively within Unionist communities. Linda sees the language as universal and belonging to all communities and says that she opposes any politicisation of it. During her presentation, Hidden History: Protestants and the Irish language Linda repeatedly underlined the need to tackle ignorance, negativity and misperceptions within communities about issues of culture and identity including the Irish language. She argued that those for example that play or sing the so called 'Famine Song' perhaps do not realise that many from the Protestant community also died in the Famine.

Iain Mac'Phearsain works with the Ulster of University and was born in Canada. For ten years he lived in Sleat on the Isle of Skye where he was a lecturer in the Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Iain spoke at length about the history of the Gaelic language in Scotland and presented a film that very movingly conveyed some of the effects of immigration and dislocation on those from Gaelic speaking communities. Last but not least Doctor Art Hughes another native of the New Lodge, Lecturer at Ulster University and Chair of the McCracken Cultural Society conducted a very interesting presentation on the historical journey of the Irish language including the devastating impact of the Famine and the subsequent decline of Gaelic as the first language in Ireland.

World Class Cultural Arts Centre for North Belfast

March 3rd 2014 saw the opening of North Belfast's very own world-class cultural arts venue when the doors finally opened at 174 Trust's £3.5m Duncairn Centre for Culture & Arts. www.theduncairn.com

The former Presbyterian church, located on Duncairn Avenue, Antrim Road, has been transformed into a new state-of-the-art facility rivaling anything on the island.

With a 170 seater theatre/performance space, conference facilities, artist studios, exhibition area and café, the Trust will provide the platform to develop arts and culture for all members of the North Belfast community.

Trust Director Rev Bill Shaw said: "It has been 13 years in the making and it's thrilling to see the final result. We have what we believe to be a beautiful and world class venue and we are extremely excited by the prospect of bringing some of the world's finest artists, musicians and actors here to North Belfast."

For more than 30 years the 174 Trust has been to the forefront of building community relations across the north of the city and with the opening of the new centre it aims to create a shared cultural hub to encourage and develop community cohesion through creativity and engagement with the arts.

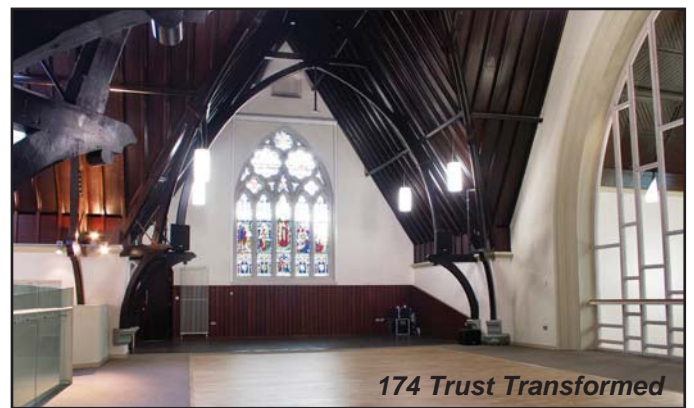
It is the Trusts aim that the facility is for the benefit to everyone in the community. The new café/bistro will open seven days a week and everyone is guaranteed great food, amazing coffees and a very, very warm welcome.

This amazing facility will be available to hire from early 2014. If you are planning a conference, concert, drama, maybe fancy trying your hand at arts, crafts or learning a musical instrument simply contact 174 Trust.



Tel: 028 90 747114
e-mail: reception@174trust.org

For further information contact:
Rev Bill Shaw 90 747114
bill@174trust.org
OR ray@174trust.org



Ashton Community Trust Calling All Employers



Are you an employer seeking to employ someone on a part/full time basis?

Would you like to receive a wage subsidy until end March 2014?

We can help find you employees that meet your criteria and also pay half the wages for 24/30 hours a week so technically you are only paying for 12/15 hours per week. The North Belfast Works programme is designed to help employers and employees, we still have places left so get in touch to find out more and find your next team member

Simply call Lorraine/Conor on 028 9074 2255 or you can email us:

lorraine.black@ashtoncentre.com
conor.hamilton@ashtoncentre.com



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

THE WOMEN'S TRAINING PROJECT AT THE ASHTON CENTRE
IS OFFERING **FREE TRAINING TO UNEMPLOYED WOMEN LIVING IN NORTH BELFAST FROM APRIL 2013**

INTERESTED? CALL TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

**QCF LEVEL 2 CHILDREN'S CARE,
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Taking names for April 2014 Enrolment

Training is subject to change.

CALL TRACYOR GEMMA ON **028 90751934**

OR EMAIL: tracy.mcwhinney@ashtoncentre.com
Gemma.ralston@ashtoncentre.com



Supported by the Northern Ireland Executive through the Department for Social Development

EVENTS FOR ALL GROTTO

Friday 13th December saw Santa and his reindeer return to Duncairn Gardens for a day full of fun and festive activities. One of the organisers Cecilia Heron said. "We are overwhelmed by the turnout to our annual event this year. An audience of 600 people came through the doors of Macrory Church. The children loved getting their photograph taken with Santa in his grotto and some even got to sit on his Reindeer. There was plenty to keep everyone entertained including Christmas arts and crafts, cookie decorating, music, face painting and lots of refreshments. This event was aimed at promoting good relations and was totally free. If you attended this event and have not collected your child's photograph then please call into New Lodge Arts office or phone Cecilia Heron on 90742255 to arrange collection.



Ashton Community Trust
Employment & Training Services

Learner Access Engagement Programme

- ARE YOU OVER 19 YEARS OF AGE?
- DO NOT HOLD MORE THAN 1 LEVEL 2 QUALIFICATION?
- NOT ON ANY OTHER FUNDED COURSE?
- UNEMPLOYED?

We are now offering the following courses, all accredited by City & Guilds, OCR, CPCAB



Entry Level In Using ICT
(18 weeks x 2.5 hours)
Beginners



Introduction To
Counselling Skills
(18 Weeks x 2 hours)



Essential Skills Maths,
English & ICT
ES Levels 1 & 2
(equivalent to GCSE Grades)
(18 Weeks x 3 hours)

**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 McErlan, Ashton Centre,
028 90 74 22 55
or email: corinna@ashtoncentre.com



New Lodge Youth Centre Highly Praised

In March 2012 the management of the New Lodge Youth Centre in Upper Meadow Street, locally known as the Grey Gables, was officially handed over by the Belfast Education and Library Board to the Ashton Community Trust (ACT). The decision by ACT to take over management was based on the need to improve usage by local young people, increase programme delivery and maximise the overall potential. The local CEP supported this move and consultation meetings were held with parents, young people and the wider community.

Since March 2012 the Ashton Community Trust's decision to take on this responsibility has been totally vindicated as the Youth Centre has grown from strength to strength. This successful transition has been underlined by the release of a recent 'Inspectorate Report' from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). The ETI provides inspection services for government departments such as the Department of Education, Department for Training and Learning and Department of Culture Arts and Leisure. Following an intensive inspection by ETI in 2013, New Lodge Youth Centre passed with flying colours. The inspection focused on,

- The quality of the young people's achievements and standards
- The quality of the provision for learning
- The quality of the leadership and management
- The quality of processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement

In its report the ETI made the following comments, "In the areas inspected, the quality of the overall provision is very good. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement". The Report also stated, "The management at all levels have a clear and realistic strategic vision, which has led to the continuous improvement of the centre".

The ETI Report praised the range, quality, appropriateness and wide variety of programmes and activities provided. Some of the areas of work that were pinpointed by the ETI

New Lodge Youth Centre Opening Hours: Term Time Evening and Weekend Opening Times:

Day	5 – 7 years	8 – 11 years	Secondary School
Monday	6 – 7pm	7 – 8.30pm	8.30 – 10pm
Tuesday	6 – 7pm	7 – 8.30pm	8.30 – 10pm
Wednesday	6 – 7pm	7 – 8.30pm	8.30 – 10pm
Thursday	6 – 7pm	7 – 8.30pm	8.30 – 10pm
Friday			7 – 10pm
Saturday			2 – 5pm
Sunday			6 – 9pm

for special mention were, creative thinking skills, drama, arts and crafts, issue-based group work, cultural awareness, community relations, healthy lifestyles, positive behaviour and the 'Mind Your Mate' and 'Amazing Buddies' programmes. The report also stated that projects were well organised and were producing tangible and clear outcomes for the young people including the development of leadership and life skills, personal development and increased self esteem. In addition the young people were able to participate in the running of the centre in a way that was inclusive and which reflected their needs and issues.

The ETI Report further remarked, "The young people highlight the supportive and long-standing relationships that they have with their youth workers. In addition, they spoke positively about their learning experiences; and informed the inspection team that they feel safe in the centre and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being. There is a consistent and effective focus on promoting positive behaviours throughout the centre. The recently developed positive behaviour programme for younger children and their parents is beginning to impact positively".

Katrina Newell is the manager of the New Lodge Youth Centre and she said, "To receive this kind of report is very gratifying and is a welcome recognition of the huge effort and great work carried out by everyone here at the Youth Centre. Our general approach is one that is based on consultation and agreement between the staff, and volunteers the young people and the active participation of parents. However we know there is no room for complacency and there is scope for further improvement. Therefore we will continue to constantly review, develop and advance our practice over the coming months and years".



There are also a range of activities provided after school during term time by both New Lodge Arts and New Lodge Youth Centre. Places for these activities are limited.

Monday: 3.30 – 5pm: 5 – 7 years + 8 – 11 years
 Tuesday: 3.30 – 5pm: 5 – 7 years
 Wednesday: 3.30 – 5pm: 8 – 11 years
 Thursday: 3.30 – 5pm: 8 – 11 years



REGENERATION OF GIRDWOOD PARK SITE



Ashton Community Trust has just received this latest update from Belfast City Council on the ongoing development of the Girdwood Park site. Please see map above.

Belfast Council Update on Girdwood

Work is beginning on a number of developments to regenerate the former army barracks site at Girdwood Park in North Belfast.

DETAILS:

- Belfast City Council will start work in March 2014 to develop a Community Hub at the heart of the site, delivering first class leisure and community facilities – including part of the Belfast Metropolitan College campus. The Community Hub has received £9.5m from the EU Peace III fund
- The Department for Social Development will deliver the services, roads and landscaping to ensure safe and shared access and movement in the site.
- Apex Housing Association will start work in March 2014 to provide 60 new social housing units

FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE:

- Detailed plans are being drawn up for a multi-sports pitch on the site for Gaelic games, soccer & rugby. Subject to funding approval this facility will be open at the same time as the Community Hub.
- The plan for Girdwood Park also includes an indoor sports facility and mixed use space. Work is expected to begin on these elements at a later phase, following the completion of the Community Hub.

ONGOING CONSULTATION:

The Department for Social Development and Belfast City Council are working with the Girdwood Community Forum to engage community groups and residents in the development of Girdwood Park. To find out more please:

- Visit the Belfast City Council Girdwood page www.belfastcity.gov.uk/business/regeneration/girdwood
- Call 02890 918775 or 02890 277650 to speak to someone directly about the project

Contact your local community group for further information on the Community Forum.

Upper Long Streets Residents Association



Dear Resident,

From Monday 13th January former homeowners have been paying rent to NIHE as the redevelopment programme pans out. This however has thrown up a few problems. The Housing Executive have been unable to contact a few people and unfortunately these residents are now in arrears, it is very important that if you have not met the Housing Executive that you contact them immediately. Other residents have received a rent card but have not used it because they have not been assessed. The advice is that the average rent is £25 for a three bedroomed house and we suggest this is what people should pay in the meantime, any money over paid will be credited to your account. The longer you leave it the deeper into arrears you will fall. One case has been brought to our attention and it may not be an isolated case. It concerns a family of foreign nationals who are in private rented accommodation and are paying their landlord rent. Landlords no longer own those houses in the affected area and residents should stop paying them, you will find you are in arrears to the Housing Executive and should take steps to retrieve any money you have paid privately since 13th January. Landlords will receive their compensation and their tenants are now Housing Executive tenants. It is hoped that these problems iron themselves out in the next few weeks and that former homeowners begin to receive their compensation soon. In the mean time anyone with problems or simply seeking advice should call at the New Lodge Housing Office – 23 New Lodge Road or phone-02890742399. Our office hours are 9am-1pm Monday to Friday

Liam Wiggins

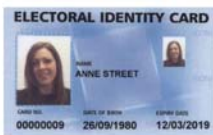
Secretary

Upper Long Streets Residents Association

Electoral Identification Clinic at the Ashton Centre



Electoral Identity Card



This leaflet provides information about the Electoral Identity Card and explains how to apply for one



What is the Electoral Identity Card?

The Electoral Identity Card is one of the forms of photographic identification which you must produce to prove your identity when you vote at elections in Northern Ireland.

The other forms of acceptable identification are:

- A Northern Ireland or Great Britain driving licence with your photograph
- A passport issued by the United Kingdom or any other Member State of the European Community
- A Translink 60+ SmartPass
- A Translink Senior SmartPass
- A Translink Blind Person's SmartPass
- A Translink War Disabled SmartPass

What else can the card be used for?

The Electoral Identity Card is accepted as proof of identity or age by:

- Banks and building societies when opening a bank account
- UK Airlines (for domestic flights to and from Northern Ireland)
- Pubs and clubs
- Off-licences and retailers selling alcohol and tobacco

How do I apply for a card?

Applications may be made either by post or in person at an Area Electoral Office. To obtain a card you must be listed on the Electoral Register, or have applied to be registered.

APPLICATIONS BY POST:

To get an application form please contact us by phone or email and

An Electoral Identification Clinic will be held on Wednesday 26th March 2014 from 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm in the Ashton Centre. This event is being organised by the Electoral Office. This is a good opportunity for local people that do not already have identification to obtain electoral ID cards free of charge. At election time, many people are turned away from the polls and are unable to exercise their right to vote because they do not have the proper identification. It is also the case that many people have never had things such as a drivers licence or passport and these are expensive items to obtain. The ID clinic is therefore an easy way of getting for free an accepted method of identification. All that people need to take with them is their national insurance number. It is also very important to check if you already have an electoral ID card, that it is still in date and valid, as they have an expiry date on them. You will not be able to use your present ID card, if it is out of date.

Connecting Cultures

On 31st January 30 youth workers from across Europe and the Middle East arrived in Belfast to participate on a 'Connecting Cultures' Programme, an interactive, non-formal and creative training course for intercultural work. The Programme, which ran until 6th February and was funded by the European Union and administered by the British Council, was led by Ashton Community Trust, New Lodge Youth Centre. Youth workers from 10 different countries dealing with intercultural challenges shared their experiences and explored intercultural practices and developed action plans for their communities. Countries included Ireland, United Kingdom, Kosovo, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Montenegro, Czech Republic and Switzerland, Netherlands. As part of their visit the delegation was taken on a walking tour of the New Lodge area. A local historian acted

as guide where he explained the key political, social, economic and cultural events of the past century or so. The group also visited the New Lodge Memorial Garden and were provided with an overview of the many ways in which the armed conflict had impacted on our community. Following the tour a number of the visitors said that they had found it 'absolutely fascinating' and 'extremely educational'. As part of their visit the international group were also taken by Shankill Road community workers on a tour of their area.



Social Housing Site Lost as UU Win Frederick St Car Park Appeal

In August 2013 the Department of the Environment turned down an application for a car park on Frederick Street at the new University of Ulster Campus. However following an appeal by the University this decision has been reversed by the Planning Appeals Commissioner and the car park now looks set to go ahead. This is bad news for local residents and community campaigners who had opposed the car park on the basis that the location had originally been zoned as a social housing site. Objections also centred on the visual, environmental, scale and massing impacts of the proposed structure on residents living nearby. Recently the Department for Social Development (DSD) removed the Frederick Street site from the Social Housing Development Programme, arguing that it did not fit with its public realm and regeneration strategy for the city centre. This has influenced the latest decision to give approval for the car park. Paul O'Neill of the Ashton Community Trust said, "Community confidence will be further undermined by this. Despite numerous public statements that the new campus development would benefit nearby communities, these fine words have so far not been matched by actions. The University is clearly putting its own interests first and failing to take seriously the needs and concerns of people in local neighbourhoods. In times past, physical planning and layout in Belfast was often determined by so called 'security considerations'. The general effect of this was to segregate, isolate and cut off certain neighbourhoods. Sadly 15 years into the peace process this same pattern of spatial segregation and social exclusion persists, with many recent city centre regeneration projects continuing to block out disadvantaged communities. The approach that is now being applied by the University is similar, including the building of car parks and service areas adjacent to local neighbourhoods. In this instance it is even more disheartening as it removes a much needed social housing site".

Tar Isteach Republican Ex-Prisoner Support Project

Tar Isteach serves Republican Ex-Prisoners and the wider communities of North Belfast. We work at the heart of neighbourhoods grievously affected by decades of armed conflict and multiple deprivations. We play an important role in community development, promoting peace and conflict transformation and building relationships with people from a broad spectrum of opinion in society. We are committed to equality and social justice.

We have tirelessly dedicated ourselves to providing services and assistance in response to issues of poverty, disadvantage, exclusion and isolation.

In terms of equal rights for Republican Ex-Prisoner Community not much has changed. Ex-Prisoners are still discriminated against. Academic research shows that many Ex-Prisoners continue to suffer higher levels of material disadvantage, poor emotional and physical health and socio-economic exclusion.

There has been a catastrophic failure by the British and Irish Governments to fulfil the commitments made towards Political Ex-Prisoners in the Good Friday and St Andrews Agreements.

Republican Ex-Prisoners have never been provided with adequately resourced, properly programmed support measures. Support funds have been extremely limited, piece-meal, stop-start and short term.

Discrimination against Republican Ex-Prisoners has been reinforced by the recent passing of the SPAD Bill at Stormont which was supported by Unionist politician Jim Allister. Discrimination also continues in the South of Ireland with the introduction of the Taxi Licencing Act (Leinster House 2013) which discriminates against political former prisoners..

This discrimination has been compounded by a deliberate, politically contrived dichotomy that categorises Republican Ex-Prisoners as 'perpetrators' and British State forces as 'victims' during the conflict. Meanwhile the violence of the British State, including its collusive role with Loyalist proxy gangs, is under-stated and continues to be covered up.

Republican Ex-Prisoners suffered death and injury as well as torture, beatings, systemic cruelty and other privations in the jails and interrogation centres. They have lost large numbers of relatives and loved ones to the conflict. Their families have also suffered physical injury, prejudice, discrimination, threats, intimidation, harassment, stigma, poverty, exclusion and other hardships related to conflict and imprisonment. These facts are largely ignored and are generally excluded from the discourse on the victim's issue.

The working class communities that suffered most during the armed conflict have benefited least from any socio-economic peace dividend. These neighbourhoods contain large numbers of Political Ex-Prisoners. Given their positive leadership role in these already marginalised communities, continuing discrimination against Republican Ex-Prisoners sends out a very negative and contradictory message.

In contrast huge amounts of financial remunerations and compensations have been paid out to British state forces and their agencies involved in the conflict. This does not reflect a fair or co-equal conflict resolution and resettlement process.

As Republican Ex-Prisoners our commitment to peace, equality and social justice is clear for all to see. Therefore we must ask why we, our families, children and grandchildren should continue to be marked out for discrimination 15 years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement?

As we approach new elections we would call on everyone that opposes discrimination to ask those that canvas for your vote what their position is on equality for Republican Ex-Prisoners. In particular they should be asked what they are going to do about the continuing discrimination.

As good citizens in this changing society we call for discrimination against Republican Ex-Prisoners to be brought to an end!

TAR ISTEACH NORTH BELFAST
IARCHIMÍ POBLACHTANACHA THUISCEART BHÉAL FEIRSTE

NORTH BELFAST REPUBLICAN EX-PRISONERS & FAMILY MEMBERS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 21TH OF MARCH 2014
EVERYONE WELCOME - TÁ FÁILTE ROIMH GACH DUINE
1:30PM, AT STAR NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE,
79-83 HILLMAN ST, NEW LODGE, BT15 2FS
GUEST SPEAKER IS GERRY KELLY MLA & LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

Tar Isteach is Supported by





European Union
European Regional
Development Fund
Investing in your future

Tar Isteach and Pearse's GAC Healthy Living Project

For many years now Pearse's GAC have been to the forefront in developing excellence in Gaelic Sports in the Greater New Lodge, Cavehill and Antrim Road areas of North Belfast. There have been generations of young people taught to toe tap the ball and strike the sliotar as well as build lifelong friendships. At present Pearse's GAC manage an astounding amount of young people from the North Belfast areas. Pearse's organise exercise and skill training sessions throughout the week and weekends including; juniors; under 12s, under 14s, under 16s, minors and seniors in football and hurling. They have several dedicated mentors and a hard working Management Committee who have risen to the challenge of ensuring that the national sport will not flounder or become irrelevant particularly when faced with the competition of other sports that get funded to a greater extent. In recognition of the outstanding work done by our local GAC, Tar Isteach and Pearse's have collaborated together to develop a programme for local people who would like to have their children learn about and train in the Gaelic sport. This programme is also open to any other member of the community that wishes to participate. They can do so by attending training sessions being run throughout the weekdays. These training sessions started in January 2014 and will run until September 2014. Both Pearse's and Tar Isteach believe that this provides a great way for you or a family member to keep fit and build stronger community connections around culture and sport.

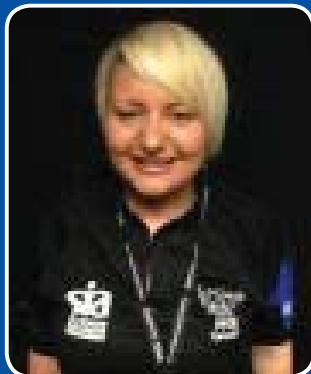
The mentors and management committee of Pearse's GAC welcome all those who wish to participate. Along with the training they will also be running a healthier lifestyle session that will help you regulate what you should eat before and after training. A qualified dietician can help you and your family achieve a more balanced and healthier lifestyle.



Tar Isteach would just like to take this opportunity to commend Pearse's GAC for working in cooperation with our project. We would also like to thank all the members of Pearse's that work so tirelessly for this community and to welcome anyone within the community to join in and get connected with Gaelic culture and sport.

Tar Isteach Management Committee

Anyone interested in taking part in the project should contact Manuel Donaghy. Go to St. Patricks Primary School any Monday night between 5.00-7.00pm



Tar Isteach Training

Door Supervision

This is a 5 day training course 9am – 3pm which includes health & safety, legal issues, first aid, drug awareness and child protection, physical intervention training and Access NI checks

Criteria: Republican ex prisoners who have had their time completed or have been released before the Good Friday agreement (April 1998) and also family members.



Fork Lift Handling

5 full day training course 8.30am until 4pm fully compliant with the standards laid out by the Health & Safety Executive in their Approved Code of Practice L117 for Operator Training.

Driving Lessons

Ten one hour lessons costing £5. per lesson. Must have provisional licence All our courses are fully funded by the European Union and are free to republican ex prisoners, family members and victims of the conflict.



For further information or to book a place contact

Ann O Neill Tel: 02890754967

Email ann@taristeach.org

244 Antrim Road, Belfast . BT15 2AR

Lighthouse

Who and what is Lighthouse?

Lighthouse is an organisation committed to the prevention of suicide and self-harm; the promotion of positive mental health and the provision of support services to families who have been bereaved by suicide. It was initially established in 2003 as a community response to a community problem – the exceptionally high incidence of suicide in North Belfast. It provides a ‘beacon of hope’ to individuals, families and communities as well as providing preventative and support services and aims to:

“save lives, offer advice and support those affected by suicide and self-harm.”

Lighthouse also works to remove the stigma associated with suicide and mental health issues through education and awareness activities which promote ‘positive mental health.’

Our Vision

A beacon of hope, saving lives and creating a brighter future.

SERVICES

Crisis Interventions

Sometimes in life we face challenges which can be overwhelming, leaving us feeling alone, depressed, hopeless, anxious or suicidal. Our crisis intervention service gives you the opportunity to speak with someone to help give you a different perspective and talk about how you feel in a safe non-judgmental environment. It is a route to access other services, both within and outside of Lighthouse, to help restore your mental health and wellbeing.

Counselling

Lighthouse continue to offer counselling to enable clients to benefit from a therapeutic process where they can work through issues impacting on their mental wellbeing, in a safe, non-judgemental environment, where clients can acknowledge and explore their thoughts and feelings

Family Support Services

Offering one to one practical and emotional support, in the aftermath of a death by suicide. Our family support worker can provide a listening ear and sensitive support to families and friends going through a very painful and distressing experience.

Hope, Heal & Help Groups

Support groups at Lighthouse provide a safe, professionally facilitated environment, where you can meet others who have been bereaved by suicide, hear their stories and share your experience. Your recovery from the loss of your loved one may well be a long and painful journey, but at Lighthouse you do not have to travel alone.

Youth Service

Providing positive mental programmes to young people in

LIGHTHOUSE



schools; youth centres and community groups through group work and adventure learning.

Complementary Therapy

Complementary therapies provide a safe place and holistic approach to enable users to let go of physical aches and pains, promote relaxation and also a space to clear and relax the mind.

Art Therapy

Self-expression, reflection and non-verbal communication can be a great tool to help a client as they begin their journey of improved self awareness through the work of art.

Befriending

Offers befriending support to individuals and families.

Advocate

Lighthouse can be a supportive voice in a time of need

Signposting

If we cannot do it, we will find another organisation that can.

LIGHTHOUSE

Advice & Support For Those Affected By Suicide & Self-harm

187 - 189 Duncairn Gardens

Belfast BT15 2GF

T: 02890 755070

OPENING HOURS

MONDAY to FRIDAY 8:30am to 5:30pm



Free Essential Skills Training Programmes available in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT

New classes starting every week
For further information please contact:

Newtownabbey Area
Laura O' Donnell
Laura@ashtoncentre.com

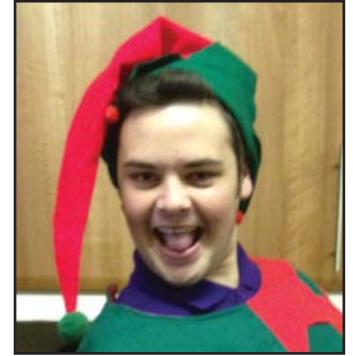
North Belfast Area
Corinna Mc Erlean
Corinna@ashtoncentre.com

Programme Coordinator
Sarah Rafter
Sarah.rafter@ashtoncentre.com



Young Persons Story, New Lodge Arts

My name is Ryan McMahon and I now work for New Lodge Arts. Let me take you back to when I first joined New Lodge Arts roughly 6 years ago. I will take you through my journey to where I am now and how it came about that I am now working in the Arts.



It was the Summer of 2008, me and my friends were bored and had nothing to do when we stumbled upon New Lodge Arts. Back then, New Lodge Arts ran the Celebrate North Belfast programme which involved dance, drama, film making etc. At the end of the week all the groups performed at St Kevin's Hall in a big showcase. I had joined the drama and I thought it was fantastic! I really enjoyed it so I was calling in and out of the New Lodge Arts office to find out what was on next. Over the next couple of years I was never out of the office taking part in various projects and that led me to come here for my work experience when I was in school. I was very taken aback at how much I loved working in the office. I loved seeing the background of New Lodge Arts and how it operated.

Let's venture forward a couple of years. We're now at the year 2010. I had just left school to go to Tech and do my A-Levels. I lasted about 5 months before I left because I had no motivation. For about a year I done very little with my life and eventually I signed onto job seekers because I needed money. I was on Job Seekers for just over a year when they sent me out on an 8 week placement. I knew I wanted to come to New Lodge Arts and they agreed to take me on. I was shocked at what I had found out throughout the 8 weeks... Within the 8 week placement I realised that I loved working in the arts and that it is something that I am interested in. This shocked me. This shocked me because I had always said that I wouldn't want to be a youth worker but now I was considering it. I worked closely with groups of all ages and I thought to myself:

"This is not bad. I cannot believe how much I enjoy it. I want to be a youth worker"

And so when my 8 weeks was coming to an end I started to panic because I didn't want to leave. I said to Anne (The line manager at New Lodge Arts) that I loved it too much and I didn't want to leave to go back on Job seekers. Little did I know, New Lodge Arts had been in contact with Bryson Future Skills and planned to offer me a 6-month placement through the First Start initiative. I came in to work as usual on my last week planning a goodbye party for myself when they divulged the great news to me.

I looked at them in shock and tremendous joy. I started right away into my position as 'Office Assistant/Youth Worker'. I am now not on Job Seekers and making a wage doing something that I loved, something that I have loved doing for years..the arts.

I hope people read my story and take something away from it. I want people to know that how ever lost you feel in life things can get better. If someone had of told me 3 years ago I would be where I am today I would think they were being absurd. I'm very enthusiastic as to what my future holds and I can't wait to see where I end up in 5 years now that I am on a new path.

New Lodge Arts is a programme of Ashton Community Trust

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)



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




High quality Daycare and After school services in North Belfast



Course Enrolments at the Ashton Centre

At the Ashton Centre we are now delivering a new range of computer classes. Enrolment is now taking place for the following classes:

- ECDL
- Word Processing Level 1 or Level 2
- Web Design Level 1 or Level 2
- Digital Fabrication Level 1

To register your interest for any of these courses, please contact Debbie at the Ashton Centre on: 02890 742255 or Email: debbie.mcquillan@ashtoncentre.com

For 1:1 classes in Literacy or Numeracy – please contact Hilary Adair on 02890 322289 or email hilary.adair@ashtoncentre.com



Ashton Community Trust

Ashton Centre

Retail and Offices units available
Affordable Prices



5 Churchill Street, Belfast

McSweeney Centre

High Quality Finished Units & Office Space To Let Near City Centre



25-31 Henry Place, Belfast
(Off Clifton Street)

For further information contact:
Ciara Rea on (028) 90 742 255

Keep Our Area Clean

Free Bulky Item Collection

Do You Need Something Removed From Your House? Get It Lifted & Shifted.

Phone

90 270 230

Free Service From Belfast City Council

North Belfast Participation and Rights Project

Parties unite to pass REAL JOBS NOW motion at Belfast City Hall



During 2013, long term unemployed people across Belfast worked tirelessly behind the scenes to unite people on one issue – jobs. Over 2000 signatures were collected at dole offices across the city by the Right to Work: Right to Welfare (R2W) group and cross party support was secured in the endeavour to pass the 'REAL JOBS NOW' motion. They have also secured the backing of UN Special Rapporteur Magdalena Sepúlveda for their work.*

The group, which is made up entirely of unemployed people, are committed to ensuring the motion is implemented as soon as possible. R2W group member Bertie Atkinson, who is currently on the 50+ Steps Ahead 'Back to Work' programme said: "It's been a long year of campaigning and now we are seeing progress. Belfast City Council has passed our motion which means real jobs and apprenticeships being ring fenced for the people who need them most in our city."

Bertie continued: "We don't want more 'back to work' schemes which are not working, but real jobs, with real wages that provide real dignity and security for families. Now that it's Belfast City Council policy, it's time to see it implemented and we are presenting Councillors today with our proposals for implementation to speed that process up. We have done our Job - now it's time for council to do its job and deliver this initiative to bring real change to the lives of long term unemployed people and their families."

In the first motion of its kind to be brought forward by unemployed people themselves, Belfast City Council members proposed and seconded the motion in early January and ratified it at full council on (Monday 3rd February). It mandates council to use existing public monies and expenditure in a fairer and more effective way to target long term unemployment, which is a massive and growing problem in Belfast.

Long Term Unemployment has rocketed across all communities in 2013. In South and East Belfast there are approximately 1,600 people who have been out of work for over 12 months. In North and West Belfast there are around 2,900 people who have been unemployed for over 12 months.

The motion also has the endorsement of community groups and service providers based in the city's most deprived communities – including loyalist and republican ex-prisoners

groups, Irish language groups, job centres from east and west Belfast and community organisations including Ashton Community Trust.

The R2W group carried out extensive research in 2013 at dole offices across Belfast. Their findings were alarming:

- 64% of people did not get a single interview for a position despite having applied for up to 20 jobs in 6 months.
- Only 5% of people moved into employment following the Steps to Work programme.
- On the Steps to Work programme 55% said it "wasn't helpful at all" in developing work skills and 57% said it "wasn't helpful at all" in providing training and experience.

Seán Brady, development worker with the Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR) organisation who provide support to the R2W group said:

*"Now that this motion is passed Belfast City Council can start capitalising on real opportunities and there is none better to start this initiative than the recently announced £30m development at the Waterfront Hall which will create 350 jobs this summer. With at least 1 in 4 unemployed people in Belfast being long term unemployed** there is no reason why 1 in 4 jobs should not be ring-fenced for the long term unemployed at this new development. Such a move will go a long way to challenging decades of under investment in disadvantaged communities. Building on its recent commitment to tackle poverty in the city, Belfast City Council has the potential to lead the way and set an example as to how we can spend public money in a way that helps those who need it most."*

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Bridge of Hope: Piecing the Past Together



Bridge of Hope recently unveiled a unique piece of artwork that was designed by local victims and survivors and digitally recreated in Ashton's FabLab.

The Transitional Justice Grassroots Jigsaw is the result of contributions from Falls and Shankill Women's Centres and was unveiled in the office of the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) in Belfast City Centre. The jigsaw pieces reflect the women's lived experiences of the conflict as well as their hopes for the future.

The jigsaw forms part of Bridge of Hope's Transitional Justice Grassroots Programme.

Transitional Justice seeks recognition for victims and aims to promote possibilities for peace and reconciliation. Bridge of Hope's Grassroots programme has successfully engaged with individuals from Falls, Mount Vernon, New Lodge, Shankill and Tigers Bay around a range of issues such as institutional reform, prosecution, truth, reparations and reconciliation.

Speaking at the unveiling Junior Minister Jennifer McCann said: "I commend Ashton Community Trust, the Victims and Survivors Service and everyone who participated in this project.

"Peace needs partnership and community projects like this one provide a solid foundation for peace and community relations. This piece of art may be complete and the project finished, however, the relationships and new friendships forged as a result of this project will live on."

Irene Sherry, Head of Victims & Mental Health Services at Ashton Community Trust, said: "This is a unique cross community reflection of post conflict life. As a piece of many

parts, it captures many individual experiences, and 'glues' them all together as one. We see it as a wonderful piece of artwork and we are delighted that the Victims and Survivors Service are displaying this permanently in their office. Our thanks must also go to the participants who gave such heartfelt and thoughtful contributions.

"We have been exploring transitional justice with grassroots communities since 2010. Through this work we have gained a deeper understanding of what steps communities feel need to be taken to rebuild after conflict."

The VSS on behalf of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister funds the transitional justice programme which is carried out with support from Eilish Rooney at the Transitional Justice Institute and the University of Ulster.

Bridge of Hope is a programme of Ashton Community Trust



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



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