

# Greater New Lodge Community Magazine



Ashton Community Trust

December 2014

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

## Thousands Attend Lantern Parade & Magical Evening



Section of the crowd who took part in the Lantern Parade

The North Belfast Lantern Parade and Magical Festival took place this year on Wednesday 29th & Thursday 30th October in the Waterworks Park. During the day there was a range of activities involving street theatre performances, storytelling, drumming, music by Cool FM's Ryan A and visual art workshops. The weather was lovely which made being outdoors all the more enjoyable.

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 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 Northern Ireland and Department of Foreign Affairs.

The outreach programme for the lantern parade began in September. The various art forms offered were dance, circus skills, float making and lantern making. A total of 12 local schools, 23 community groups and 3 open workshops were held during this period. Overall there were over 1,000 young people involved in the outreach programme in preparation

for the parade.

The parade itself left Crumlin Road Gaol, went along Cliftonpark Avenue, down Cliftonville Road and up the Antrim Road into the Waterworks Park. There were approximately 850 children and adults taking part in this fabulous carnival parade along with performers from Fire Poise, Streetwise Circus, and Arts Ekta.

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Ashton Community Trust Wishes Everyone A  
Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year

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

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

Ashton Community Trust  
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.adair@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.

# Come To The Community Christmas Party

This year's Christmas Party will be on Saturday 13th December from 1.00 – 4.00 at New Lodge Youth Centre in Upper Meadow Street. Every Christmas time local community activists and volunteers in the Greater New Lodge area are busy organising activities to celebrate the festive period. Each year various events are organised within the community that allow people of all ages to come together as families, friends, and neighbours. One such event is the Annual Christmas Party organised by a collective of community and youth activists from different community groups in the area. Paul O'Neill of the Ashton Community Trust is Chairperson of the Christmas Party Steering Committee. He said "In organising this Christmas Party every year the intention is to contribute to the festive spirit and enhance the sense of community togetherness. Each year we ensure that every aspect of the Christmas Party is free of charge, including selection boxes, photo with Santa, food and refreshments etc. In this way families are not put out of pocket. People will remember that we originally held the party in St. Kevin's Hall. However after Ashton took on the management of New Lodge Youth Centre in Upper Meadow Street from the BELB, we decided to change the venue to there and it proved to be as massive a success as in previous years. Given the numbers of people that turn up things can get a bit hectic, so it is really, really important that all children are accompanied by their parents or an adult guardian. We hope that people will once again turn out in large numbers and that everyone has a great day". We would like to thank Belfast City Council, Ashton Community Trust and Newington Credit Union for their financial support for this years event.

**For Health and Safety reasons**

**ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR AN ADULT GUARDIAN.**

**Christmas Party 2014**

Ashton Community Trust

**Santa, Photo & Gift**  
**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December**  
**1pm - 4pm**

**New Lodge Youth Centre**  
**Upper Meadow Street**

**Free Family Event**  
 Christmas Masks, Face  
 Painting, Christmas  
 Decorations Make Your  
 Own Reindeer, Balloon  
 Making, Music

**Children Must Be Accompanied By An adult.**

**For further information please contact:**  
**Paul O'Neill: 028 90 74 22 55**

Ashton Community Trust, New Lodge Arts, Youth Centre, CEP, star neighbourhood centre

**Continued from Page 1**  
**See Page 4 for Photo's**

The Magical Evening in the Waterworks Park was filled with street performers, UV disco, visual arts workshops and face painting. The night would not be complete without finishing off with a fabulous fire performance from Fire Poise and a fireworks display. The whole event was an excellent example of communities working together to promote good relations and maximise the use of shared space whilst being a great showcase for the positive contribution children and young people make to our communities.

Cecilia Heron Good Relations Arts Worker for New Lodge Arts said. "We are thrilled at how our festival went this year. Over the two days we had 5,000 people attend the Waterworks Park. The one way system within the park seemed to work really well, the weather was great and everyone seemed to have an enjoyable time". The feedback has been fantastic and we are delighted with the number of schools and community groups that took part in our outreach programme." I would like to extend my thanks to our staff, artists, volunteers, schools, community pride steering group members and the participants of our North Belfast Lantern Parade and Magical Festival.

# Lantern Parade In Photographs



# Ashton Community Bursaries

The Annual Ashton Community Bursary Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday 4th of December 2014. This is the fifth year in a row that the Ashton Community Bursary Scheme has been run. The intention of the scheme is to allow the Ashton Community Trust to provide assistance to other community led projects especially where there is clear evidence of voluntary input and where resources for a group can be particularly difficult to come by. Representatives from a number of local groups will attend a ceremony at the McSweeney Centre in Henry Place where they will be presented with cheques from the Ashton Board of Directors. In total 14 groups have been granted financial assistance by the Ashton Community Trust. As in previous occasions, the groups that received awards this year have displayed a history of active volunteering in a diverse range of activities such as sport, art, music, health, housing, culture, history, remembrance, environment, safety and well being. In the past five years Ashton Community Trust has now granted a total of 65 bursaries to a wide range of groups from the local area. So far this has amounted to £30,000. John Fleming is a Director on the Board of Ashton Community Trust, "As a member of the Ashton Board it is an absolute privilege to be able to acknowledge the terrific endeavours



Some of this years Bursary recipients with Paul Roberts Ashton CEO

of the volunteers that selflessly work year in and year out on behalf of local people. These are the people that reflect the proud community spirit in the New Lodge. Through their efforts and dedication hundreds of people young and old directly benefit. We at the Ashton Community Trust are delighted to be in a position to assist these groups through providing them with some direct grant aid".

The groups that will receive bursaries this year are:

- Belfast Kronk Boxing Club
- Community Christmas Party

Committee

- Dockers ABC
- Families at The Waterworks
- Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee
- Newington ABC
- New Lodge Commemoration Committee.
- New Lodge Housing Forum
- North Belfast United FC
- O'Neill Allsopp Memorial Flute Band
- Pearses GAC
- Saint Patrick's FC
- Saint Patrick's Parent Teacher Association
- Star ABC

## Anti Bullying! Tar Isteach Youth Lead the Way

Tar Isteach Youth Group organised an Anti-Bullying Conference on Wednesday 19th of November as part of Anti-Bullying Week 2014. The event took place at the Landsdowne Hotel and was attended by over 100 people. Schools from across Belfast were represented. The conference was organised by young people for young people and the key aim was to get the important message out there that bullying is wrong. The speaker's panel included Anthony Lowry and Anastasia Edwards (Tar Isteach) politicians Gerry Kelly (Sinn Fein) and Brian Kingston (DUP) and Lee Kane and Gillian Cuthbert from the Anti Bullying Network. Tar Isteach Youth has been in the forefront for many years now in leading and promoting organised activities on the theme of Anti-Bullying.



# Tar Isteach Conducts Research Project as Funding Crisis Looms

Tar Isteach Republican Ex-Prisoner support organisation is currently involved in carrying out a major research study in North Belfast with the support of the International Red Cross and Queens University. The purpose of the survey is to learn more about the present day health and well-being of republican ex-prisoners, their future needs as they grow older and the continuing impact of imprisonment and armed conflict on their lives. It is hoped that the understanding gained from this study can be used to assist political ex-prisoners in accessing services and supports. The research is entering into its closing stages and a final report will be ready by early 2015. However, at the same time as Tar Isteach carries out this important work the project faces the very real threat of having to close its doors due to the lack of available funding. Tar Isteach is funded through the European Peace 3 programme which comes to an end next March.

In the past decade Tar Isteach has been involved in a number of studies that have explored the legal, social, economic and personal difficulties faced by former prisoners. These studies have shown that the effects of conflict related imprisonment can remain with a person for life and even become greater as time goes on. Some of the continuing challenges facing ex-prisoners and their families include difficulties securing employment, poverty, social and family break up and dislocation, damage to physical and mental health resulting in long term psychological harm, problems of addiction and isolation, barriers on travel, insurance, credit, fostering and so on. This is reinforced by the ongoing criminalisation stigma and associated legal barriers that continue to prevent them from achieving full and equal citizenship rights.

As well as research, lobbying and campaigning on political ex-prisoner issues Tar Isteach, since 1998, has provided a range of services including counselling, welfare rights, training and education, employment placements, youth development and community volunteering opportunities. It is also an integral element of local community development networks including Greater New Lodge Community Empowerment Partnership and North Belfast Advice Partnership. Although its primary focus is on political ex-prisoners, Tar Isteach operates an open door policy that allows its services to be accessed by other needy people from the wider community. Recently it has been to the forefront in anti-poverty campaigning including very public opposition to the current welfare cuts strategy of the Tory led government.

Tommy Quigley is manager of Tar Isteach, "Despite the peace process and Good Friday Agreement a blatant pattern of discrimination has continued unabated against the political ex-prisoner community. Our political detractors have tried to justify this by insisting that republican ex-prisoners are criminals. However the reality tells a different story. As we all know the Republican men and women that were imprisoned were responding to the dire circumstances that they found themselves in and that were created by a violently oppressive political regime. Otherwise the vast majority would never have seen the inside of a jail. The British criminalisation strategy was eventually defeated through prison struggle, people power and ultimately by the Hunger Strikes. The Republican prisoners were clearly political. This is underpinned by the fact that they were released as part of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA).



**Some Tar Isteach Staff and Management Committee members**

Before the GFA we estimate that over 2,000 republicans went through the jails from North Belfast alone. In areas like the New Lodge, Ardoyne and the Bone it would be very hard to find a family that wasn't affected. Republican Ex-Prisoners are an organic element of their local communities and the respect in which they are held is evidenced by the fact that many are in leadership positions in civil and community life, not to mention as political representatives. So when politicians continue to criminalise us they are in fact stigmatising entire communities, undermining the peace process and snubbing internationally recognised principles of conflict resolution. Any genuine conflict transformation process that seeks to positively learn from the past and progress towards a better more inclusive and socially just society would strive to more effectively address the obstacles affecting former prisoners and combatants and make adequate resources available to do so. Unfortunately this has not been the case and the continuing hardships affecting ex-prisoners and their families remain a much neglected and unresolved legacy of the conflict.

Today we are increasingly dealing with ex-prisoners who are struggling with poverty, isolation and health issues. In fact in recent weeks 4 local republican ex-prisoners from the New Lodge have died of cancer. Each of these men was in Long Kesh in 1974 when the camp was burned and cancer inducing CR gas was used against them. Furthermore we are consistently receiving requests for assistance from former prisoners who are encountering barriers in relation to travel, access to services and employment. For example some that had recently completed door supervision training with Tar Isteach have been refused their SIA licences because of their republican ex-prisoner status. The depressing reality is that without projects like Tar Isteach then the republican ex-prisoner community will have no one left to turn to for support. Sadly unless the financial resources are made available before the end of March 2015 then Tar Isteach which has done so much to serve its community and to cement and support the peace process will have to wind up its services and close its doors".

# The Truth about the Misuse of Prescription Drugs

The following article has been provided to us by the Forum for Action Against Substance Abuse (FASA). FASA works closely with the Greater New Lodge Safer Streets Committee

Some medications have psychoactive (mind-altering) properties and, because of that, are sometimes abused—that is, taken for reasons or in ways or amounts not intended by a doctor, or taken by someone other than the person for whom they are prescribed. In fact, prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are, after cannabis and alcohol, the most commonly abused substances.

More localised stats from FASA below also reflect that prescription drugs are becoming more issue with clients from across the agency.

The classes of prescription drugs most commonly abused are:

- Opioid pain relievers such as fentanyl, OxyContin or codeine, tramadol
- Stimulants for treating Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), such as Adderall, Concerta, or Ritalin;
- Central nervous system Depressants for relieving anxiety, such as benzodiazepines like Valium/Diazepam (Yellows/Blues) or Xanax. LYRICA has become more popular in recent times also.
- The most commonly abused OTC drugs are cough and cold remedies containing dextromethorphan and Paracetamol

People often think that prescription and OTC drugs are safer than illicit drugs, but that's only true when they are taken exactly as prescribed and for the purpose intended. When abused, prescription and OTC drugs can be addictive and put abusers at risk for other adverse health effects, including overdose—especially when taken along with other drugs or alcohol.

## How Are Prescription Drugs Abused?

Prescription and OTC drugs may be abused in one or more of the following ways:

- Taking a medication that has been prescribed for somebody else. Unaware of the dangers of sharing medications, people often unknowingly contribute to this form of abuse by sharing their unused pain relievers with their family members. Most teenagers who abuse prescription drugs are given them for free by a friend or relative.
- Taking a drug in a higher quantity or in another manner than prescribed. Most prescription drugs are dispensed orally in tablets, but abusers sometimes crush the tablets and snort or inject the powder. This hastens the entry of the drug into the bloodstream and the brain and amplifies its effects.
- Taking a drug for another purpose than prescribed. All of the drug types mentioned can produce pleasurable effects at sufficient quantities, so taking them for the purpose of getting high is one of the main reasons people abuse them.
- Not all prescription drugs available in communities are prescribed by your GP, there is a large “black market” of prescription drugs available by local drug dealers. No one knows the chemical makeup of these copied pills usually produced in foreign countries such as China, India, Thailand and parts of Eastern Europe.

What Are the Other Health Effects of Prescription and OTC Drugs?

Stimulants can have strong effects on the cardiovascular system. Taking high doses of a stimulant can dangerously raise body temperature and cause irregular heartbeat or even heart failure or seizures. Also, taking some stimulants in high doses or repeatedly can lead to hostility or feelings of paranoia.

Central nervous system (CNS) depressants slow down brain activity and can cause sleepiness and loss of coordination. Continued use can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms if discontinuing use.

Opioids can produce drowsiness, cause constipation, and—depending upon the amount taken—depress breathing. The latter effect makes opioids particularly dangerous, especially when they are snorted or injected or combined with other drugs or alcohol. More people die from overdoses of prescription drugs than from all other drugs combined, including heroin and cocaine. The table below shows the number of drug deaths in Northern Ireland during 2013. Over all 124 people died due to prescription drugs compared to 38 people who died from illicit drugs.

## Learn More

If you are someone you know may be struggling with misuse of prescription drugs contact your GP or you can also get advice from:

FASA – 90803040

Addiction NI – 90664434

Community Addiction Team – 90566057

Dunlewey Substance Advice Centre – 90611162

You can also dispose of any unwanted or unused prescription or illegal drugs via the RAPID bins located at North Queen Street GP surgery, Grove Health and Wellbeing Centre or Oldpark CO-OP.

## 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 - 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)



## Cross community group learn peace building lessons in Berlin

Participants from Ashton Community Trust's 'Exploring the Past Together for a Better Future' programme have completed a successful study-visit to Berlin, looking at the themes of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

The project, 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" initiatives together for this unique opportunity to visit the once scarred and divided Berlin.

During the visit the delegation connected with the Berghof Foundation and heard from renowned academic Beatrix Austin whose expertise centres on conflict transformation. This relationship with the Berghof Foundation is set to be further strengthened when Ms Austin addresses an end of project conference Ashton is hosting in the Europa Hotel on November 26.

Speaking about the recent visit to Berlin Bridge of Hope's Legacy Coordinator Niall Ó Donnghaile said:

"This was a jam packed schedule that focused on assessing the cost and legacy of division. The exploratory visit to Berlin offered us all the unique opportunity to reflect on the history of brutal conflict and division, but also



Bridge of Hope staff with participants in Berlin

to take hope from and hear practical examples of how to move beyond such conflict.

"Our delegation was made up of participants from both communities who themselves have suffered as a result of the conflict here at home. All of them have played a key role in helping to build our peace.

"While there we had the opportunity to visit many historic sites of interest as well as many scenes of conflict and memorials to those who lost their lives. "In particular, the opportunity to meet

with renowned academic Beatrix Austin from the Berghof Foundation allowed our group to come together in a respectful fashion and carry out practical exercises that looked at key themes of conflict, misunderstanding, mistrust but most importantly shared values and views.

"Already participants are keen to regroup and reflect on how they move forward after taking part in the visit and this is something that Bridge of Hope will be helping to facilitate in the coming period."

# Bridge of Hope Training



- **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 ourselves as we 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 to get your message across faster and more effectively.

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 90 32 22 89

# Make your home warmer this winter and get help reducing fuel bills!



Ashton Community Trust and Bryson Energy are in discussions to explore ideas on tackling fuel poverty in our community. The following article provides some energy advice.

## Bryson Energy Advice Line

Living in a cold damp home can have significant impacts on our health and well being, particularly the health of our children. The Bryson Energy Advice Line is here to help and offers advice and support to all families in NI on making homes warmer and reducing fuel bills.

Energy saving tips for your home including advice on fuel budgeting, payment awareness and electricity tariffs is available to all households in Northern Ireland.

If you are an owner occupier or privately rent your home you may also qualify for a Home Energy Improvement scheme. These schemes offer measures such as loft insulation and top up, cavity wall insulation and possibly a new central heating system. The schemes are free if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit or on a low income.

For advice on reducing energy costs or to find out if you qualify for a home energy improvement scheme call the Bryson Energy Advice Line on 0800 1422 865  
Please Quote New Health Routes to our advisor





### 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  
 Hip Hop Dance (1st-6th Year) 7pm-8pm Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre  
 Drama (1st-3rd Year) 8pm-9pm 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.









## JUMP-START YOUR CAREER!

**FREE ENGLISH, MATHS & ICT (COMPUTERS) CLASSES AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA**

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](mailto:jenny.sweeney@ashtoncentre.com)





# New Motorway Interchange Public Meeting



A public meeting was held in North Queen Street Community Centre (The RECY) on Monday night the 13th of October to discuss community concerns about plans for a new motorway interchange which will run through Inner North Belfast including a road widening phase at North Queen Street. The meeting was chaired by Paul O'Neill of the Ashton Community Trust and included a presentation from Mark Hackett of the Forum for Alternative Belfast (FAB). In his presentation Mark Hackett described the potential impacts that the new motorway construction could have on the physical and social life of the local community. He also provided some possible design alternatives that could help alleviate at least some of the potential problems. He explained that although final decisions had not been made and no firm date had been set for the commencement of works it was nevertheless important that the local community understood the potential implications and got organised in order to offset or minimise any negative effects and achieve the best possible outcome.

## Local Concerns

Residents attending the meeting expressed a number of concerns including the inevitable disruption that would be caused. Other potential problems that were identified included overshadowing, loss of light, loss of space and intrusion on their homes, increased noise levels and environmental problems including additional air pollution, possible flooding hazards to nearby streets and traffic flow.

## McGurks Bar

Relatives of the victims of the McGurk's Bar massacre also expressed worries about the future of the memorial mural at the site and said that it was important that the memorial is protected. Elected representatives Gerry Kelly MLA and Councillor JJ Magee also spoke at the meeting and assured residents of their full support. It was agreed that a working committee be set up to identify and list concerns and organise a plan of action including arranging meetings with any relevant statutory authorities. The meeting concluded with a show

of hands from anyone wishing to sit on the working committee. As a result a number of local people will sit on the committee.

## Working Committee Meeting

The working committee held its first meeting on Wednesday 5th November at North Queen Street Play Centre and twelve people attended. At the meeting it was agreed to request that the Cross Departmental Group of Statutory Agencies who have the key responsibility for the project, including Road Service, DSD and BCC should come and meet with the committee and provide a presentation about the planned works. The meeting also listed the main issues and concerns of residents that should be open for discussion at any such meeting. It was agreed that this might not be the final list of concerns as other issues may emerge once we receive more clarity about what is actually planned. It was agreed that residents must be kept up to date with any developments. This will be done through leaflets, word of mouth and via this community magazine.

**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.

# North Belfast Social Enterprise HUB Launched

Ashton Community Trust hosted the official launch of the North Belfast Social Enterprise Hub at their premises, 52 York Street on Friday 24th October 2014.

The North Belfast Social Enterprise Hub to help boost social enterprise business start-up in the area.

Based on York Street, the new facility which is a two year pilot project is designed to help foster and develop the creative talents and business intelligence of the local enterprising population.

The projects takes business plans at all levels of developments and matches them with mentors within the hub who have expertise in specific fields.

Business will also be given full use of the hubs many facilities including hot desking facilities, manned workspace and services such as grant tracker, an information library, conference/training facilities and market research.

Ashton's Chief Executive Paul Roberts said: "At the heart of this new endeavour is the local community. The Delivering Social Change framework, which funds this project, was set up by the Northern Ireland Executive to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

"In a period of deep economic uncertainty, our indigenous start-ups still have real potential to develop and grow. The aim behind the establishment of these hubs is to help tackle the lack of local employment by encouraging business start-up within local communities. It will also help to address the issue of local dereliction by instilling new life into once vacant buildings.

"Within the hub we will be able to offer hot desking facilities, manned workspace and services such as grant tracker, an information library, conference/training facilities and market research.

"The Hub will allow a great opportunity for the community sector to demonstrate the benefits of social enterprises, help to increase economic growth and provide a clear insight for Government into the benefits and potential for further developing the social-enterprise sector going forward."

Hub Manager Ciara Rea said that a programme of community engagement with local groups in North Belfast had already proven shown the potential for the future of the project.

"There are so many opportunities that are becoming available now in North Belfast for regeneration and employment. The whole community plan is changing in North Belfast and the hub is an opportunity for people to avail of free support and get ready for that change," she said.



*Martin Mc Minn (DSD), Ciaran O Kane (Invest NI), Ethna Mc Namee (Invest NI), Ciara Rea (NB Social Enterprise Hub Manager) & Paul Roberts (Chief Executive Ashton Community Trust)*



## Business Clinic's

**Make an appointment on:**  
**028 95 609 521, 028 95 609 522 or via**  
**email: [nbsehub@ashtoncentre.com](mailto:nbsehub@ashtoncentre.com) or just**  
**drop into the HUB at 52 York Street, Belfast**  
**BT15 1AS**  
**Visit our Facebook page:**  
**[www.facebook.com/NorthBelfastSEHUB](http://www.facebook.com/NorthBelfastSEHUB)**

  
**Ashton Community Trust**

  
**Northern Ireland Executive**  
[www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)  
**DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE**

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

# New Lodge Youth

## The Youth Facilitation programme

We recently were nominated for two awards and won one at the PCSP awards in the Belfast City Hall. It was a fantastic evening although it was unfortunate that not the whole group could attend due to group restrictions.

These young people have worked tirelessly over the past two years to improve their community, building and maintaining relationships and their own facilitation skills.

This group were never shy about addressing issues that were important to them and other young people within the community and also successfully dispelled a lot of myths surrounding a range of issues.

I think I speak on behalf of the whole staff team including Louise and myself that the rest of the staff at the New Lodge Youth Centre congratulates this group on their achievements. We would also like to thank our external facilitators for their hard work and dedication to this programme.



## Hate Crime Awareness Programme

This programme has been successfully running for six weeks. This group have been looking at a wide range of issues raising awareness of ethnic minorities, sectarianism, disability, sexual orientation, sexism and faith.

Within this short time the group have hosted a group from North Dublin highlighting the troubles that Northern Ireland faced and the reconciliation we still face. The world united football team is made up of ethnic minorities, who happily provided a session on racism in Northern Ireland.

The Rainbow project also offered their services by hosting a session on homophobia.

These young people need to be commended for the controversial topics they want to address.

Rebecca and I are proud of these young people and we are aware that there are a lot of external organisations that make this programme possible.

## Youth Centre Opening Times:

### New Lodge Youth Centre Drop-in Opening Times:

Monday - Thursday	6 - 7pm	5 - 7 years
Monday - Thursday	7 - 8.30pm	8 - 11 years
(primary school age)		
Monday - Thursday	8.30 - 10pm	11-17 years
(secondary school age)		
Friday	7 - 8.30pm	11 - 13 years
Friday	8.30 - 10pm	14 - 17 years
Sunday	6 - 9pm	14 - 17 years

Please note, there will be no Saturday drop-in sessions until the New Year due to programmes taking place on Saturdays.

### Free Tuition for Year 6 towards 'Transfer Test'

The transfer support programme takes place on Monday and Wednesday afternoons 4 - 5.30 pm, and Friday afternoon 3.15 - 4.45 pm for young people in year 6 and 7.

### Free Tuition for GCSE Maths

GCSE Maths support is provided in New Lodge Youth Centre on Monday and Wednesday afternoons 4 - 5.30 pm and Friday afternoon 3.15 - 4.45 pm.

## Unite Against Hate

I was fortunate to be invited to this seminar, I decided to bring along three of my young volunteers as they are an important part of the anti hate crime programme. I believe that there is no better voice other than the voice of a young person. This was the first time these young people were given the opportunity to be advocates for their community.



# h Centre

Project of Ashton Community Trust

## Youth Forum

The New Lodge Youth Centre has welcomed their new Youth Forum made up of 10 young people that frequent the club. They will be involved in decision making and planning, organising and running events for both the club and local community. They will also be taking part in accredited personal and social development training. These will include peer mentoring, drugs and alcohol awareness and even youth work courses. They meet on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to discuss current issues surrounding the club and local community. If any groups, organisations or youth forums would be interested in tying in with the youth forum for any projects or events please contact Louise D on 02890 751358.



Hi this is a list of dates and times for New Lodge Youth Centres Winter Wonder Land.

The big hall will be transformed into a Winter Village, with Santa's Grotto, Santa's Sledge, gifts and pictures taken.

On Saturday 13th the centre will be open for the Annual New Lodge Community Christmas Party.

On Monday the 15th December the centre will be open for schools and nurseries from 11.00 am until 4.00 pm. Louise Dolan will go into the schools with our youth forum to provide information on this.

On Tuesday the 16th the centre will be open for the community, parents, children from 11.00 am until 4.00 pm. This is a drop in and everyone is welcome.

On Wednesday the 17th we will have a Pensioners Christmas Dinner cooked and served by the young people. This will start at 2.00 pm and includes Bingo, Ballots and a performance by New Lodge Arts.

On Wednesday night the 17th the junior members of the Youth Centre will have their Christmas Party / Disco.

On Thursday night the 18th the senior members will have a Christmas Party/ Disco.

## Survive the Ice Age – inter Cultural Winter Youth Exchange in Switzerland

During November two staff from New Lodge Youth Centre, Mary Madine and Shannen O Connor, travelled to Berne in Switzerland for an Advanced Planning Visit for the Inter Cultural Winter Youth Exchange that will take place in February 2015. Other international project partners include Youth Work Kerzers (Switzerland), Stichting Improbatt (Netherlands) and Education and Society Enterprises MIFALO (Israel). Young people from New Lodge Youth Centre and The Hub, Shore Road, will work with young people from these organisations to explore a winter week in the Swiss mountains with snow activities such as igloo building and snow hiking. While exploring challenges of working together in a new environment, they will also learn that all young people have their dreams and goals in life as well they all can contribute to a future togetherness regardless of cultural differences. Through nature experiences, group activities, cooking, theatre games and music as well as individual exercises such as meditation and reflection, participants will explore inter cultural cooperation, new friendships and overcome stereotypes.

**Mary Madine Youth Leader in Charge**

## Outdoor Cinema Show



A new and very popular addition to the menu of activities now available at New Lodge Youth Centre is the introduction of an out-door cinema show. This was organised by New Lodge Arts. The picture above shows local young people enjoying the cinema show at the Centre earlier this year. This is just another example of the creativity and innovation being demonstrated by our staff and our young people.



**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

## Macrory Church Halls Make It 'Yours' Community Consultation

A consultation took place at the New Lodge Youth Centre on Tuesday 18th November 7.00-9.00 pm on the development of the "Inspire Centre" (currently Macrory Hall on Duncairn Gardens) for residents and community workers from the Greater New Lodge. There were three focus groups - community workers/ youth workers, residents and young people.

The event was organised on a drop in basis and allowed for a broad conversation. Discussion focussed on plans for the building and how people could get actively involved. There was also an exchange of ideas on the kind of programmes and activities that should be delivered in the Inspire Centre. Richard Higginson and Michelle McGrath from Macrory Fortwilliam Presbyterian Church who own the building, were also interested in hearing opinions about how the space at the centre could be best utilised, made more accessible, what it might look like and how it should feel. The general view from participants at the consultation was that the Inspire Centre should be an open, welcoming and safe venue for the entire community to come together, including people from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. It was explained that initial work to the centre includes a new welcoming entrance at Hillman Street, new windows/shutters at Hillman Street, new toilets and gas heating system, new fire exit and disabled access ramp.



One of the three focus groups



**Ashton Community Trust**  
Employment & Training Services

## Learner Access & Engagement Programme

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



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



**ES Levels 1 & 2**  
Essential Skills  
Maths, English & ICT (Computers)  
(18 weeks x 3 hours)  
Equivalent to GCSE Grades

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 for North Belfast  
Jenny Sweeney for Newtownabbey  
T. (028) 90 74 22 55 or  
email [corinna@ashtoncentre.com](mailto:corinna@ashtoncentre.com) or  
[jenny.sweeney@ashtoncentre.com](mailto:jenny.sweeney@ashtoncentre.com)









—The New Lodge Schools' Cluster—  
*Promoting Partnership in the Community*



Dear Parents/Guardians,

You have been Invited to our  
*Christmas Coffee Morning*

Defrost yourself with a glass of mulled wine and mince pie with us. Relax after those crazy shopping trips! Check out your Parents Room & what we have to offer.

See you there!

**Date:** Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December

**Time:** 9.00am - 11.00am

**Venue:** Parents Room (St. Patrick's Senior Site)

Susie Hunt - Parent Support Officer  
Address: 9-25 Pim Street, Belfast, BT15 2BN  
Phone: 07964941510 / 02890351206 Email: [newlodgeschoolscluster@hotmail.com](mailto:newlodgeschoolscluster@hotmail.com)  
Also check out Facebook: #New Lodge Schools Cluster

# Mental Health Blog

McStravick Institute of Coaching – A local Social Enterprise bringing Training, both Personal and Business Development through method of Coaching and Action Learning to everyone for Health, Education and Business.



Many people ask – “What is Coaching? Life Coaching or Business Coaching. Basically, it takes a person to the next stage in life or business and it creates mental fitness”

McStravick Institute want to provide a regular blog, and some helpful tips which can promote positive mental health. In that way, we reach a wider and larger audience. This is a programme of reading material and blogs for you based on “The i way of Thinking” from McStravick Institute and as we enjoy building a relationship with our clients, we hope you enjoy the first in our series.....

## Series 1 - Life Tips from McStravick Institute.....

1) **Always be positive and look for what's best and meaningful in every situation.** Focusing on the “the power of positive thinking” will serve you well in so many ways....

2) **Make mistakes – sometimes it's the only way to learn.** We can be so wrapped up in our own thoughts, beliefs and everything “should” centre around “our world”, it takes us to make a mistake to wake up to reality. It may be a costly mistake, in a materialistic or a non-materialistic way, but you will learn from it.

3) **Be nice, respectful and always maintain your integrity...** I have always reminded myself that the only thing that matters in life is integrity. It's nice to be nice and people will remember “you” as the person you are rather than any negative circumstances they shared with you.

4) **Count your blessings.** Appreciate and be grateful for what you have. Don't focus on what you don't have. That will only make you feel worse and weak and that's a non –resourceful state!

5) **Remember family and friends are part of “who you are”.** They are there for you no matter what. Don't forget to spend time with them.

6) **Always be open to new learnings.** The learnings along the way, whether in formal education or training or just through life's lessons are there for a reason. Don't disregard them. Accept them.

7) **Take care of yourself physically.** Physical agility leads to mental agility!

8) **Teach kids how to be confident.** Let them do things for themselves and allow them to make their own decisions. The more you tell them what to do the more you disable them from becoming confident and developing their own personalities.

9) **Love yourself and others will benefit!** The warmer you are and the more open you are, the more that you will receive the same in return.

10) **Be yourself...** you are good enough as you are and where you can improve you will!

*I wish you well on your personal and professional journey.*  
Leah

[www.mcstravickinsitute.com](http://www.mcstravickinsitute.com)

## Good News On The Way For North Queen Street Park?



Local Councillor JJ Magee with North Queen Street Park Committee members

It is understood that Belfast City Council is preparing to further invest into the development of North Queen Street Park. Local Councillor JJ Magee said, “Land is at a premium in the New Lodge and it is a big struggle to find areas to develop leisure, play and sports facilities. I will be working with residents, community groups and the Council with the aim in the short term to maximise the use of land like that at North Queen St. Park. Come June 2015 of course the Girdwood complex is due to provide much needed additional sports facilities for North Belfast. Sinn Fein will continue to deliver all we can through Council and the Assembly as we work to overcome decades of inequality in areas like this”. Councillor Magee is in ongoing contact with North Queen St. Park Committee who will ensure that local residents are engaged in any decision making processes and kept informed of all potential developments in relation to the park.

# DRAWING CLASSES

For Grown-Ups

At The Culture Shop,  
Next to the  
New Lodge Arts office,  
Lepper Street, Belfast

Every Tuesday, 11am - 2pm.

Drop-in as little or as much as you want. All Welcome!

Art materials, tea, coffee and buns provided...

Free



Facilitated by Duncan Ross



# Free Essential Skills Courses In Your Area



**Hilary Adair Essential Skills tutor with some past students**

The Ashton Centre runs classes in English, Maths and ICT (Computers) throughout the North Belfast area. English, Maths and ICT are the Essential Skills needed for everyday life and employment. Do you need to get these skills?

Improved Essential Skills could help you to

- Help your children with their homework:
- Find a job
- Manage your money better
- Get more enjoyment out of reading
- Use computers for work or leisure

We can help you to find a class that suits your needs and at a time that suits you. Current classes are running until Christmas and new ones will begin in January.

So, if you would like to sign up for a class or to get more information about how we can help you get your Essential Skills, contact Debbie on 028 9074 2255 for ICT and Hilary on 028 9032 2289 for English and Maths. If you prefer, you can call in person at the Ashton Centre.

**Now is the time to act!**

**Make 2015 your year for Essential Skills!**



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


**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**



**O'Neill & Allsopp  
Memorial Flute Band  
New Lodge, Belfast  
Now Open For  
New Members**



**Are you interested in joining a Republican flute band?  
No experience necessary. All tuition & instruments will be provided.  
If you would like to know more, visit us on Facebook.**

**We practice every Thursday night in the Recy (North Queen Street Community Centre), New Lodge 7pm-9pm  
Call in and have a chat or contact us on 079 122 746 47**










# Threshold Group Residential



Participants enjoy the craic at the residential

The current Threshold group, recruited by Ashton Training and Employability, are studying Cultural diversity and Citizenship at the BMC Building in Chichester Ave. As part of their getting to know each other sessions they went on a two-night residential 29th-31st October. They stayed at Sheep View, accommodation based on the Causeway coastal route, near the Co. Antrim village of Ballintoy.

Activities included Archery, Canoeing, Rock Climbing and Abseiling as well as lots of team games, challenges and a trip to the cinema. The group thoroughly enjoyed the trip away & feedback included –

“Amazing time” “Best of craic” “I got to know people so well” and “We should’ve stayed a week!”

Threshold is currently recruiting for classes to commence in January 2015. Subjects include Employability Skills, Peer Education, Beauty Therapy & Playwork. Contact Eileen at the Ashton Centre 028 9074 2255.

# Star Neighbourhood Centre Older Peoples Group



Star Neighbourhood Centres older peoples group are looking for new members

If you are an older person and would like to take part in:

- Health & Wellbeing Projects,
- Social Events,
- Cultural and Historic Trips
- Community Events

Or would just to meet new people why not come along to the star Neighbourhood Centre on a Thursday evening or call Margaret on 90740693 for more information

## 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)

## Star Neighbourhood centre Youth Projects

Aged 11-18? Need somewhere to go on the winter nights?

Get involved in projects and gain qualifications.

- ★ Personal and social development programmes
- ★ OCN qualifications
- ★ Preparation for work
- ★ CV building
- ★ Youth Forum
- ★ Cross community
- ★ Volunteering

- ★ Trips out
- ★ Residentials
- ★ Beauty groups
- ★ Young men groups
- ★ International programmes
- ★ Arts and crafts
- ★ Intergenerational work

If you want to get involved contact the Youth Team at the Star on 90740693, drop into the centre or find us on Facebook or Twitter



# Star Neighbourhood Centre Women's Photography Group



Women from New Lodge and Tigers Bay have come together to participate in an new project.

The project aims to enable women living in an interface area to explore and offer representations of their local area through photography and to produce a photographic book.

With support from the Centre for Media Research at the University of Ulster the women will learn how to use the digital cameras provided and how to frame photos for the book.

It is hoped this photography book will be presented to political representatives at both local council and Stormont assembly level as a means of visually representing and lobbying issues affecting their area.

If you would like to take part in this exciting project or for more information contact Maria or Margaret at the Star Neighbourhood Centre 90740693

**Star Neighbourhood Centre**   
79-83 Hillman Street  
New Lodge

## Youth Forum

### We're now recruiting!

Are you aged 13-18?

Do you want your voice heard in the community?

Are there any issues effecting you in your community?

Free training & Development?

If you want to get involved contact the Youth Team at the Star on 90740693, drop into the centre or find us on Facebook or Twitter

### ARE YOU IN WORK, EDUCATION OR TRAINING

The 174 Trust Afterschool Club caters for;

- Working parents (receiving tax credits)
- Parents in training/education
- Children aged 4 to 11 years old

We are conveniently located close to the City Centre offering;

- School collection service in North Belfast
- Fully qualified and experienced staff team
- Reasonable rates
- Term time, Mon to Thurs 1.30pm to 5.30pm, Friday 1.30pm to 5pm, flexible hours
- Fun filled Summer School
- Social Services registered

For further info call 90747114  
174 Trust, Duncairn Avenue,  
Belfast, BT14 6BP

## COMPUTER CLASSES

**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:

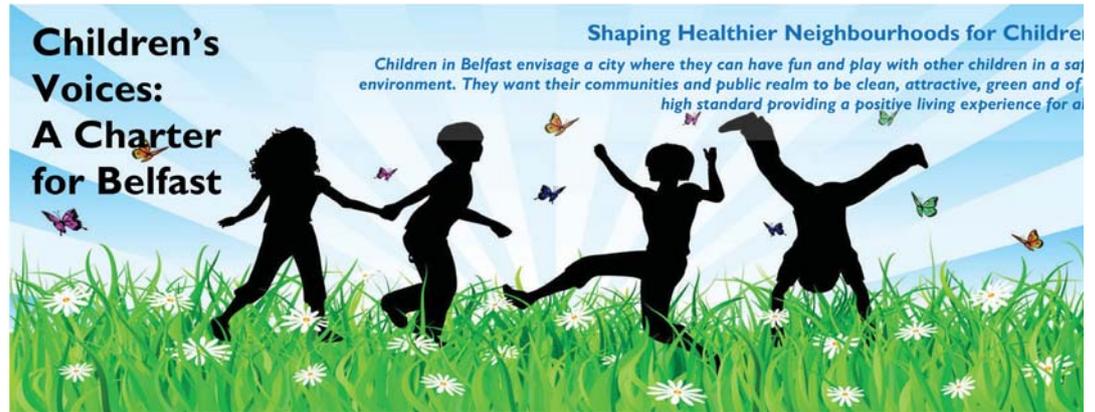
- **ECDL** (32 week course)
- **Word Processing** (8 week course)
- **Spreadsheet Software** (8 week course)
- **Website Software** (8 week course)

**Ashton Community Trust**  
Employment & Training Services

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

# New Lodge Children Have Their Say

A 'Child Friendly Places' working group which draws membership from a wide range of organisations that represent the interests of children or that have a role in improving the environment of the city of Belfast has been working together in recent times to explore ways in which to make the city more child friendly. The Ashton Community Trust has representation on this group. Earlier this year the group commissioned a survey and mapping exercise with school



children in Belfast to gather their views on the built environment. This included children from the Greater New Lodge area including the Bunscoil, St. Patricks and Holy Family. As a result the following – 'Children's Voices: A Charter' was designed.

## Green Space

Children want more green space in their areas and neighbourhoods where they live. These green spaces should be good quality, well maintained spaces where they can spend time with friends and family. Children value green space and recognise that it is important in terms of social interaction, pride in the local neighbourhood and opportunities for play and physical activity.

### Priorities identified by children:

- ⊗ Children should have easy access to nature and green spaces within walking distance from homes.
- ⊗ Green space should be attractive to children- clean, free from litter and physical hazards and located to provide informal surveillance so that children feel safe.
- ⊗ More green space should be created. In neighbourhoods lacking in this provision this could be achieved using green verges or temporary use of space awaiting development.

## Open Space

Children report feeling unwelcome in particular areas of their neighbourhoods and feel they are often seen as a nuisance by adults. Children want safe spaces where they can play and spend time with friends. This does not have to be a play park, although parks are welcome.

### Priorities identified by children:

- ⊗ Children should have opportunities for free leisure and recreation, through play areas which include street furniture and other design elements that facilitate unstructured play.
- ⊗ Parks should have features that will promote use by families with children - tea and coffee kiosks for adults, places to sit, toilet facilities and a well maintained network of paths.

## Clean and Safe Environments

### Priorities identified by children:

- ⊗ Frequent and efficient street cleansing is needed to keep streets and footpaths clean and attractive.
- ⊗ Investment is needed in actions to increase civic pride in the area - community clean up days and initiatives that engage local people, such as community gardens.
- ⊗ Safety by design should be a key principle in planning and regeneration to discourage vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

## Liveable Communities

### Priorities identified by children:

- ⊗ Disused and derelict land, houses and other buildings should be taken back into use to make neighbourhoods look more attractive and to try to combat anti-social behaviour.
- ⊗ Communities need to be more connected, walkable and safe – this should be addressed through regeneration and future planning.
- ⊗ Parks, open spaces and schools should be accessible by foot or by bike.

## Traffic

### Priorities identified by children:

- ⊗ More traffic calming in built up areas through lower speed limits Identifying alternatives to private cars so that children feel safe to walk, cycle or play in their area.
- ⊗ Improving safety by identifying alternatives to on street parking and promoting responsible driver behaviour in particular at crossings.
- ⊗ Less traffic in the city to reduce air pollution and decrease noise.

This Charter is based on priorities identified by 400 Primary School Children through the 'Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children' programme



# FabLab Programme of Activities



## FabLab Conference

FabLab NI hosted its first conference in November, held at the Guildhall in Derry. This one day event featured speakers from FabLabs in Detroit and Iceland and NESTA based in London. Blair Evans from Detroit discussed how the FabLab is driving economic and social regeneration in one of America's most deprived cities. The speaker from Iceland demonstrated how the growth of FabLabs are playing a key role in the recovery of the country after economic collapse in 2008.

It was also an opportunity for the Ashton Centre to present their model of peace building and community development to a local and national audience using examples of work done by FabLab with local community groups from North Belfast.

The conference was also a chance to highlight the work that FabLab is doing in promoting STEAM education which covers the following subjects; Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Design and Maths. This work is invaluable as FabLab is working with government initiatives to encourage more young people to actively consider taking an interest in these areas for study and future careers.

As always FabLab is pioneering new ways of engaging with people and introducing people (back!) into making things. The conference speakers from London, Detroit and Iceland all see the connection between how technology is driving lots of changes in our society and how with projects like FabLab everyday people can begin to play a part. All of the projects involved in the conference are committed to building a better future for society by involving people in the newest digital revolution.

## Schools Programme

Our school programme is well underway with primary and secondary schools taking part in engaging activities, these vary from using a laser cutter to make a one off bag tag, exploring ancient Egypt through to final year students building 3D printers as part of an after schools programme.

If you have a school or college in mind that you think might like to take part in a FabLab schools programme, why not speak to your local teacher and recommend getting in touch with us?

## Programme of Activities

### Christmas Crafts

FabLab will have an excellent Christmas Crafts session for parents and children. Minimum age 8 years old

Saturday 13th December 10.00 – 1.00

Tuesday 16th December 6.00 – 8.00

### Open Access Fridays

Why not drop into FabLab on Fridays to find out what you can make? Here is what is happening on Fridays – why not book in – best of all its free! Here are some great ways to get involved:

All Day Christmas Crafts Bonanza! 10.00 am – 4.00 pm  
Friday 5th December – Come and make your own crafts, these can be for the tree, your door, window or bedroom!

Times: 10.00 am - 11.00 am - Baubles

12.00 pm – 1.00 pm - Mini Trees

2.00 pm – 3.00 pm - Santa Stickers

3.00 pm – 4.00 pm - Candle Holders

Fablab will also be hosting a series of open workshops to allow people to come in and experience the wide diversity of creation that is available at FabLab Belfast:

Friday 9th January – Laser Crafts Open Day 10.00 – 4.00

Friday 23rd January – Vinyl Crafts Day 10.00 – 4.00

Wednesday 28th January – FabLab Fashion Creation 6.00 – 8.00

Wednesday 11th February - Laser Craft Workshop 6.00-8.00

Wednesday 25th February – FabLab Fashion Creation 6.00 -8.00



## Drum Making

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. Lead by Rohan Young and the FabLab team for 10 people all will leave with a beautiful Bodhran which was created by hand and decorated using both the laser and vinyl cutter.

Parent and Children Bodhran Making Workshop

Saturday 7th February – 10.00 – 4.00

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

# Irish language Transport Success

Tuistí an Tuaiscirt, a group of north Belfast parents have been campaigning for the provision of transport for 122 students attending the only post-primary Irish medium school in the north of Ireland (Coláiste Feirste), have finally secured the agreement from Minister for Education, John O'Dowd MLA to resolve this long standing issue.

Over the summer the parents and students led a campaign, including research, which showed that the failure to provide transport:

- was costing parents in north Belfast a combined annual bill of approximately £31,400
- was acting as a deterrent in terms of parents choosing where to send their children after primary school. 79% of parents in north Belfast Naíscoil and Bunscoil said that existing transport provisions are a significant obstacle to sending their children to Coláiste Feirste

The campaign run by Tuistí an Tuaiscirt involved parents, students and supporters staging a 5 mile walk to the school from north Belfast at the end of June, extensive research of parents of children in Irish medium education across north Belfast and a #busanois twitter campaign that received global attention including the endorsement of 'Anchorman' film star, actor David Koechner

Under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 and the Good Friday Agreement, the Minister has a legal responsibility to "encourage and facilitate" the development of Irish medium education.

In a 2011 judicial review, Justice Treacy found that the Minister and Department for Education had the legal power to develop unique transport arrangements for Irish medium education sector. Indeed a similar duty exists for the integrated sector, and the provision of transport was an important factor in the growth of this sector.

Following a meeting with Minister for Education John O'Dowd on 3rd September 2014, the Department has allocated a budget of a maximum £70k per year for a period of three years in order to develop a long term transport plan. After three years, the



Dessie Donnelly PPR Project with Irish Language students and parents

arrangements will be reviewed.

Welcoming the development, Nicola McMaster, a parent, said:

"Now that the Minister has brought forward a proposal, we are hopeful that the vast majority of students from north Belfast who need transport to the only Irish medium post-primary school available to them, will receive it. We will work with the school as quickly as possible to get the buses on the roads. We very much welcome Minister O'Dowd's decision and send a big thank you to everyone who contributed to this campaign. It's a good decision for the 122 north Belfast students, the parents, all the pupils in north Belfast Irish medium nursery and primary schools, for Coláiste Feirste itself and for the development of the Irish language."

Dessie Donnelly from PPR who supported the parents' campaign praised said:

"The creativity and determination of the parents and students throughout this campaign has managed produce a result that not even a successful court case could produce three years ago. This campaign demonstrates the power of people working together to defend and promote rights."

"As a result of their pressure, not only will transport be provided to 122 students – it is being provided as a means to "encourage and facilitate" the development of Irish medium education as promised by the Good Friday Agreement. It is about so much more than a bus, and Irish language rights campaigners should pay attention to, and use, this precedent in their own campaigns elsewhere."

It is hoped that the buses will be available from the beginning of December. Parents will receive word from the school about the specific arrangements.

## Food Appeal

North Belfast Advice Partnership is collaborating with North Belfast Food Bank to assist people in food crisis. As part of this the Ashton Community Trust, Star Neighbourhood Centre and Tar Isteach are asking people who are in a position to do so, to donate towards this. Any help



would be greatly appreciated, non-perishable goods only such as tins, packets etc. Donations will be accepted at the centres named above.

**Ashton Centre 5 Churchill Street, Star Neighbourhood Centre 79-83 Hillman Street. Tar Isteach 244 Antrim Road.**



*Belfast City Councillors with Real Jobs Now group*

Thanks to widespread public support (over 2000 unemployed people and thirty community organisations from the areas worst impacted by unemployment) Belfast City Council made history on the 6th January 2014 and passed what is called the 'REAL JOBS NOW' motion. It became the first council on these islands to recognise the shortcomings of government back to work schemes and commit to set aside fully paid jobs and apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed (people out of work for over 12 months) in all Council contracts.

The idea came from a group of unemployed people who call themselves Right to Work: Right to Welfare (R2W) – and are supported by North Belfast based Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR) organisation). They surveyed hundreds of people signing on at Belfast dole cues. In April 2013 R2W published their research carried out at Corporation Street then monitored all seven doles in Belfast for a year to see if things got worse or better.

The research showed that government policy, such as back to work schemes which paid £34.5 million to private companies between September 2008 and June 2014, were getting less than 1 in 4 people back to work. It showed that a wide range of financial sanctions already introduced as part of ongoing welfare reform policy were leaving people destitute and denying their basic rights to work and welfare not to mention their dignity. For a year they continued to monitor the doles in Belfast recording the living breathing evidence in the testimonies of unemployed people, as the situation got worse. And they developed the REAL JOBS NOW campaign in response.

Belfast City Council spends around £40 million of public money every year paying private companies to carry out maintenance work, do construction, install 3G pitches, renovate parks, etc - and is currently planning to spend

£150 million on major redevelopments like Waterfront Hall or Girdwood. This involves the creation of hundreds of jobs. R2W asked the question asked – 'Why not ring fence some of those jobs for those who need them most but have least chance of getting them – the long term unemployed?'

Securing the support of the majority of political parties on Council, REAL JOBS NOW was formally adopted by Council. The previous and current Mayors have both supported REAL JOBS NOW.

In August 2014, however, Council officials presented a draft policy about REAL JOBS NOW which does not deliver on the commitment the Belfast City Councillors signed up to in January.

The group have since worked out that if the policy goes ahead it will create only 24 jobs (1 year contracts) for the long term unemployed out of thousands of potential opportunities created by the £150million of public money.

R2W think the council can do much better and have launched an online campaign which is again harnessing community support ask Council to take 3 Simple Steps to ensure REAL JOBS NOW is fully implemented:

1. Be clear about how many jobs they are creating
2. Include jobs for the long term unemployed in every contract – if City Council don't, they have to explain why they did not
3. Make it a 'breach of contract' if private contractors fail to provide the jobs for the long term unemployed people.

You can support the 3 Simple Steps, or find out more about R2W, by sending an email to [sean@pprproject.org](mailto:sean@pprproject.org) with your message of support.



## Ashton Community Trust

Bridge of Hope is a community based victims and survivors service that works with individuals, families and communities affected by the conflict in North Belfast and beyond. Over 11,500 individuals have accessed our services since we were set up in 2001. Our goal is to tackle the legacy of the conflict through a variety of holistic approaches to trauma recovery. We do this through the delivery of complementary therapies, life coaching, counselling support, legacy and conflict analysis, as well as accredited training and personal development courses. Further information can be accessed on our websites – [www.ashtoncentre.com](http://www.ashtoncentre.com) [www.thebridgeofhope.org](http://www.thebridgeofhope.org)



### Bridge of HOPE

Employment & Training Services has long track record of working closely with the local community. The organisation has developed strong links with local community groups, schools and employers. We are a recognised training centre for a wide range of qualifications. For the past 20 years Employment & Training Services has been delivering training and employability initiatives to the unemployed. These services are provided through 19 plus outreach centres across North Belfast to ensure that all sections of the community have access. For further information contact 9074 2255



Ashton Community Trust  
Employment & Training Services

In 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. Some of the services provided include 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. For further information contact 9075 1358



New Lodge Arts provides an exciting and packed programme for young people of all ages in dance, drama, film-making, carnival arts, visual arts, volunteer development and youth leadership. We work with approximately 2000 children and young people each year. Our key aim is to make the Arts accessible to all in our communities regardless of age, gender or background. For further information contact 90742255



Ashton's service delivery outputs are an important element in community and social development in North Belfast. In each of our service delivery areas we are constantly working to improve and grow the services we provide. Below is a brief summary of some of our key services.

FabLab (Digital Fabrication Laboratory) is halfway between a



## FABLAB BELFAST

laboratory and a workshop it's a place where you can make (almost) anything, where both small children and inventors can turn an idea into reality. We can make products out of wood, acrylic, composite moulds, silicon, cardboard, sheet aluminium, plastics, copper foil and vinyl using various technological methods. FabLab works with young people, students, community and voluntary organisations, arts groups and individuals, schools, universities and businesses helping people to develop their creativity, skills and life opportunities. For further information contact: 9075 5412

The North Belfast Social Enterprise Hub is a pilot signature project of the Northern Ireland Executive through their Delivering Social Change Fund.



This project is based at 52 York Street, opening Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Within the Hub we are offering facilities such as hot desking, information library, conference/training facilities and market research. The Hub activity will range from best practice visits, ideas generation, business clinics, peer to peer matching, mentoring support to help produce business planning, marketing, legal structures and training on topics such as finance, governance, human resources all of which are tailored to your needs.

The Hub is a great opportunity for the community sector to demonstrate the benefits of social enterprises, help to increase economic growth and provide a clear insight for government into the benefits and potential for further developing the social-enterprise sector going forward.

The increasing opportunities becoming available now in North Belfast for regeneration and employment means that the community plan is changing in North Belfast and the Hub is an opportunity for people to avail of free support and get ready for that change.

If you wish to contact us please call 95609521 or 95609522 or email [nbsehub@ashtoncentre.com](mailto:nbsehub@ashtoncentre.com)

Provide high quality, affordable day care and after schools services to local children, thereby supporting their development and improving parents' access to education, training, employment and support services.



Ashton Community Trust (ACT) believes that learning begins at birth and has a profound affect on life long development and adult wellbeing. ACT acknowledges that quality child care promotes healthy child development at the same time as it supports families, reduces child poverty, advances equality, and deepens social inclusion. For further information contact 9074 2255