

The Housing Executive's
COMMUNITY COHESION
STRATEGY

2015-2020



The Housing Executive's
COMMUNITY COHESION
STRATEGY

2015 - 2020

Contents

FOREWORD	3
CONTEXT	5
INTRODUCTION	7
WHAT DOES COMMUNITY COHESION MEAN TO THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE?	11
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	13
KEY STRATEGIC DRIVERS FOR THE COMMUNITY COHESION STRATEGY	25
EMBEDDING GOOD RELATIONS WITHIN THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE	29
PERFORMANCE AREA AND KEY IMPACTS	31
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020	33
DELIVERY STRUCTURE	39
SUMMARY	40
CONSULTATION RESPONDENTS	42

Foreword

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive was established in 1971 at the height of the Troubles to bring an impartial, fair and unbiased approach to dealing with housing in Northern Ireland. Throughout the Northern Ireland conflict the Housing Executive has continued to deliver housing services based on need, to all sections of our community regardless of religion, political belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or race.

Sadly, almost 17 years after the Good Friday Agreement, social housing remains deeply segregated and there is no doubt that community division and segregation exerts a high price which, in housing terms, prevents the best use being made of existing housing and land. We believe those who need housing in the social and affordable sectors must have greater choice. If we are to meet housing need in all its forms we must continue to work to make progress. In this context the promotion of good relations continues to be a key Housing Executive objective.

With a wealth of experience in working with communities at local level and across the whole of Northern Ireland, the Housing Executive published its first Community Relations Strategy in March 2004. In doing so we made an explicit commitment to promote equality and good relations and this has continued in the intervening 10 years. One of the key Housing Executive aims within this Strategy is a commitment to promote mixed housing where it is practicable, desirable and safe.

Successful implementation of our community cohesion strategy calls for joined up thinking and collaborative working between and within communities, agencies and individuals. Community cohesion depends ultimately on trust and safety and we will do all we can to help to build that trust and safety for our tenants.

The Housing Executive continues to make a significant contribution through its policies, partnerships, investment and resource allocation to speed up the pace of change to a more cohesive society.

Underpinning the Housing Executive's overarching aims and objectives, our Community Cohesion Unit is charged with translating our community relations objectives into actions on the ground through the implementation of the Community Cohesion Strategy.

We believe it is timely to reflect on the cohesion work we have undertaken to date and ensure our strategy is fit for purpose in the coming years. We have also refreshed our overarching cohesion strategy in order to reflect the changing policy context we operate under.

Helping tenants to feel safe, connected and involved is vital in order to foster vibrant communities. We know a difference can be made in communities when local people are supported to take action and work with others in a spirit of neighbourliness and we are committed to helping our neighbourhoods become strong, vibrant and united through our work in this vital area.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clark Bailie". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and larger than the rest of the letters.

Clark Bailie
Chief Executive

Context

From the early 1970's there has been a monumental population shift within communities across the whole of Northern Ireland. The displacement of families and communities due to fear, sectarian intimidation, threat or the destruction of residential accommodation has been a major feature of the Northern Ireland conflict and has resulted in longstanding, sustained residential segregation.

From 1971, the Housing Executive and its staff assumed responsibility for housing and had to work in areas that were most acutely impacted by the conflict. For example, 60,000 people were forced to leave their homes between 1969 and 1973 and 14,000 homes were destroyed following a "scorched earth policy". This led to widespread segregation which continues to this day.

However, internally there was no formal or vocalised recognition of the major difficulties staff had in dealing with a segregated community which resulted in staff having to adapt to an environment of division and serving two communities. Thus, the Housing Executive arrived at the cease-fires of 1994 with little internal dialogue and no official guidance about how to deal with Troubles related issues apart from "*just getting on with the job*" of delivering housing services in a divided community.

Segregation in Northern Ireland has created a segmented housing market, especially within social housing. Research has found that the most segregated communities are in the urban areas of Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Craigavon. Over 90% of social housing areas remain segregated into predominantly single communities, with this rising to 94% in Belfast. *Belfast Mapping Segregation Report 2009, Dr Ian Shuttleworth and Dr Chris Lloyd.*

The demographics of today's society are changing, with growing levels of new communities coming into Northern Ireland. These new communities need to be given opportunities to find their place within society without being constrained on one or other side of the existing divide.

However, despite this reality of physical separation, the majority (80%) of people aspire to live in mixed neighbourhoods, *Life and Times Survey*, but are unaware of how to go about creating a shared atmosphere.

The Housing Executive has a duty to ensure that housing is provided on the basis of need and undoubtedly segregation places pressure on the best use of existing housing and land. In this context the promotion of good relations became a key Housing Executive objective and the organisation published its first Community Cohesions Strategy in 2004 and makes explicit commitment within its Corporate and Business Plans to promote good relations and incorporate race relations.

Good Relations is not a new concept to the Housing Executive and we have a wealth of experience dealing with these issues at local level. The Community Cohesion Strategy is about developing and using this experience and all work undertaken under this strategy will be reflective of the overall aims of the Government's 2013 *"Together: Building a United Community" Strategy (TBUC)* and any further Race Equality Strategy.

We will deliver this strategy and continue to build on our strong track record and will strive for excellence within the field of statutory provision and promotion of community cohesion.

**“ good relations
is not a new
concept to the
Housing Executive ”**

6



Introduction

The Housing Executive has a statutory duty under Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a statutory obligation on all public authorities in carrying out their various functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependents and persons without.

In addition and without prejudice to this obligation, public authorities are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, and racial group.

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) recommends that each organisation should develop a Good Relations Strategy in order to provide a clear and workable framework that formalises its commitment to the promotion of good relations. The ECNI stated in its revised guidance in April 2011, “it is vital that the good relations duty is taken seriously”. It is important that it is mainstreamed and reported upon, the inter-dependence of equality and good relations is crucial”. The Housing Executive believes that real change is achieved through new commitments and delivery of meaningful good relations programmes within our estates, rather than just complying with the legislation.

7

The ‘Together: Building a United Community’ Strategy, published in 2013, reflects the Northern Ireland Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The TBUC Strategy outlines how Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities:

- Our people and young people
- Our shared community
- Our safe community
- Our cultural expression

Over recent years Northern Ireland has experienced a number of global and local changes. Since the trend towards free movement of labour, local populations are becoming increasingly diverse resulting in the changing needs of internal and external environment. We recognise that anti-discrimination legislation has addressed issues of equality of opportunity and much work has been done. However we have seen an escalation in racist attacks, reported by the PSNI to have increased by 30% since 2013.

As one of the largest employers in Northern Ireland, this Community Cohesion Strategy demonstrates the Housing Executive's commitment to challenging a segregated society and promotes an ethos of respect, equity and trust for everyone who works for us and our customers.

Locally we cannot ignore the fact that Northern Ireland is emerging from many years of violent political conflict and while significant progress has been made, Northern Ireland remains a divided society. In response to this the Housing Executive is committed to the development of a strategy that makes a practical contribution to promoting good relations by identifying key themes that require specific focus and attention.

The Community Cohesion Strategy builds on what we have achieved and demonstrates a top level commitment to good relations which will be communicated throughout and beyond the organisation.

The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2015-2025, launched in December 2015, will establish a framework for Government departments (and others):

- to tackle racial inequalities and to open up opportunity for all;
- to eradicate racism and hate crime; and
- along with Together: Building a United Community, to promote good race relations and social cohesion.

The Strategy also sets out seven strategic aims that the Executive will pursue in eradicating racism and tackling racial inequalities.

- Elimination of Racial Inequality
- Combating racism and hate crime
- Equality of Service Provision
- Participation
- Social Cohesion
- Capacity Building
- Cultural Identity

The Housing Executive will reflect these aims in a refreshed Race Relations Policy.

The Housing Executive has a statutory duty in terms of Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In this context the Housing Executive has a key role in promoting community relations and community cohesion. It is important to understand the practical reasons for developing this strategy.

The Housing Executive is the comprehensive housing agency for Northern Ireland and our **Vision for Housing** is:

“One in which housing plays its part in creating a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous and fair society.”

Our **Mission Statement** is:

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

And our **Core Values** are:

*“Making a difference through:
Fairness, Passion and Expertise”*

Our strategic objective to promote good relations (incorporating race relations) is linked to the following aims:

The Housing Executive will:

- Respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict.
- Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society.
- Facilitate and encourage mixed housing where it is practicable, desirable and safe.

Promoting Community Cohesion is not new to the Housing Executive and much progress has been achieved over the years to make sure that:

1. Our services are accessible to all
2. Our staff are confident at work
3. Our customers feel that they get an excellent service

Bricks and mortar are not our only focus at the Housing Executive and we strive to improve our neighbourhoods and to provide people with more opportunities for a better quality of life.

Many partnerships already exist with other statutory agencies, voluntary and community groups that contribute to the promotion of good relations. Over the years our front line services, community development and cohesion work has established robust links with local communities, key influencers and decision makers.

The implementation of this Strategy will provide more opportunities to connect with people at ‘grass roots’ level to develop an understanding of local issues around community cohesion.

The Housing Executive has the following range of policies in place that support a culture of equality in employment in which staff are treated fairly and with dignity and respect and sets precedence for inclusion.

Disciplinary Procedure
Employment of People with Disabilities
Equality in the Workplace
Grievance Procedure
Guidance for dealing with Abusive Telephone Calls
Race Relations Policy
Human Resources Strategy
Management of Harassment in the Workplace
Reasonable Adjustment - Guidelines for Managers
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Worklife balance Strategy
Community Involvement Strategy
Community Cohesion Unit
Equality Unit
Joint Declaration of Protection

Promoting equality and good relations is key to improving the quality of life for everyone and to making Northern Ireland a better place to live, work, socialise and do business.

10

We want to make sure that fairness, equality and respect are at the heart of everything we do. These values are central to our policy making process and underpin all our activities.

In going forward we will continue to support our staff to move along the continuum of good relations and we will provide training in good relations and race relations.

We will also work collaboratively with our colleagues across our divisions to ensure joined up working to enable and equip our communities with the relevant skills and expertise to engage in wider socio-economic activity.

This will transcend across departments, including OFMDFM, TBUC, DoJ Interface Strategy, DSD Building Successful Communities (BSC), Urban Villages and the onset of Community Planning.



What does community cohesion mean to the Housing Executive?

Community cohesion involves:

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

There is no doubt that community division and segregation affects many aspects of our lives and this can prevent the best use being made of existing housing and land.

People who need housing in the social and affordable sectors must have greater choice. It is our duty to make sure that housing is provided on the basis of need. If we are to meet housing need in all its forms we must work to make progress. Because of this, the promotion of good relations is one of our key objectives.

Community Cohesion Objectives:

11

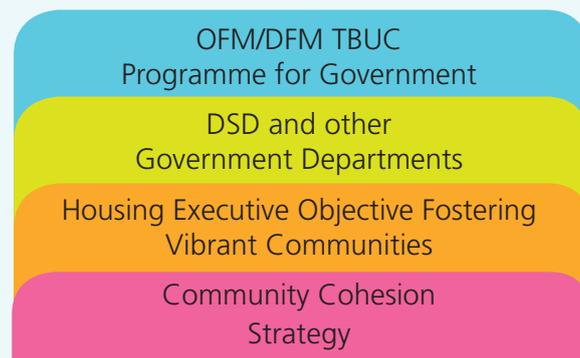
- To contribute to the creation of more stable, safer and cohesive neighbourhoods.
- To work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society.
- To respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict.
- To facilitate and encourage mixed housing where this is practicable, desirable and safe.

The Housing Executive delivers its community cohesion agenda through its Community Cohesion Unit:

The Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Unit is located within the Landlord Division and was established in 2004 to deliver the organisation's Community Cohesion Strategy.

Following on from our work in previous years, our new strategy 2015-2020 will be delivered across 5 key themes:

1. Segregation/Integration
2. Race Relations
3. Communities in Transition
4. Interface Areas
5. Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols



Strategic Model: *CCU sits within the Housing Executive Strategic Objective "Fostering Vibrant Communities"*

12

The Community Cohesion Unit's overarching objective is:

"To contribute to the creation of more stable, safer neighbourhoods by working in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a diverse and divided society."

Working Together:

Most of our interventions, statutory and non-statutory, are based on the principles of partnership working. Good Community Cohesion requires the intervention of all relevant statutory government bodies working closely with the community to bring about change.

Working in collaboration with other groups, agencies and departments is the core of how we will deliver our Community Cohesion Strategy. Through partnership working we will endeavour to build community confidence and ensure that all of our efforts are relevant to the needs of local communities.

The Community Cohesion Unit works closely in partnership with all Housing Executive Departments and is closely aligned with our Community Involvement and Community Safety units.

The Housing Community Network (HCN) is a key delivery mechanism and its Inter Community Network subcommittee is vital in scrutinising our services and shaping future good relations policy and programmes.

Key Achievements to date

The following key achievements have been achieved to date via the 5 key themes of the Community Cohesion Unit:

1. Key Achievements through Regional Programmes

Shared Neighbourhood Programme

The Housing Executive's Shared Neighbourhood Programme was a 3 year pilot programme (2008 to 2011) which aimed to support and encourage 30 shared neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland. The Programme set out:

"To develop 'Shared Housing Neighbourhoods' where people choose to live with others regardless of their religion or race, in a neighbourhood that is safe and welcoming to all, and threatening to no-one".

The £1million pilot Shared Neighbourhood Programme was funded by the International Fund for Ireland and the Department for Social Development and an external evaluation of the programme stated:

"It is considered that the Shared Neighbourhood Programme (SNP) is a crucial element in the achievement of equity and respect and has the potential to make a significant impact on relations, not only between different religions but also different nationalities".

13

Shared Communities Programme

The Housing Executive's Shared Communities Programme commenced in 2011 at the request of the DSD who wished to see a mainstreamed programme based on the successful Shared Neighbourhood Programme. The Shared Communities Programme was based on the same principles of the pilot programme and set out to deliver a further 20 Shared Neighbourhoods in a three year period. This Programme concluded in December 2014 and has achieved all of the targets that were set for it, bringing the total shared neighbourhoods in Northern Ireland to 50 estates.

BRIC (Building Relationships in Communities) Programme

The Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC) programme was launched in 2010. Funded under Priority 2 Theme 2 of the EU Peace Programme, BRIC was designed to develop the good relations capacity of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and to develop good relations plans and programmes for 88 Housing Executive estates.

Delivered through a public private partnership involving the Rural Development Council (RDC) (lead partner), the Housing Executive and training consultancy TIDES, the programme facilitated an institutional capacity building

process providing a lasting legacy towards a shared society within the largest provider of social housing in Northern Ireland.

This was achieved through the implementation of three distinctive and complementary themes:-

- 1. Changing Minds** – a bespoke training programme designed to put good relations at the heart of the Housing Executive’s policies and service delivery functions;
- 2. Sharing Visions** – to create opportunities to provide the Housing Executive with the skills to influence the removal/re-imaging of up to two physical interfaces. To develop a model that will enable the delivery of urban renewal areas founded on the principles of instilling community cohesion; and
- 3. Crossing Borders** – to explore housing policy on a cross border housing market delivery model in order to promote cross border participation and integration in border housing market areas.

Delivered regionally over a four year period and during a time of significant community discord, this innovative model of partnership and peace building focused on every aspect of Housing Executive business empowering staff and resident communities to promote and embed good relations within their work and everyday lives. The programme secured funding of £3,522,000 under the EU Peace III Programme. The programme ended in December 2014 and a recent evaluation stated:

“Evidence would suggest that programme implementation has been very effective resulting in the over achievement of many of the defined targets. Financial implementation resulting in 93% expenditure is considered effective in the context of the programme which worked across three organisations and within 91 estates”.

2. Key Achievements under Cohesion Strategic Themes:

Theme 1: Residential Segregation and Integration

We facilitate and encourage mixed housing schemes in the social and affordable sector as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe. We work with the Department for Social Development (DSD), Housing Associations and others to bring proposals forward for the OFM/DFM’s TBUC Programme.

This theme has a twin track approach with both a new build and programme delivery and also cuts across all other cohesion themes.

Theme 1: Residential Segregation/Integration – a twin track approach	Outcome
Approach 1: Shared New Build Programme	From 2006 a total of 11 schemes across Northern Ireland have been developed in collaboration with the appointed Housing Association. These schemes follow Shared Future principles of a signed Community Charter supporting good relations and the right to diversity within the estate.
Approach 2: Programme Delivery within existing estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Neighbourhood Programme and Shared Communities Programme from 2008 have worked within a total of 50 estates • They included upwards of 60,000 people • They aimed to secure and protect shared neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland and produce a ripple effect of sharing • £5million of additional funding was levered in via the Cohesion Unit

Case Study: Strule Park, Strule and Centenary Parks, Omagh

15

What can be done to address the problem?

That was the question being asked by local residents.

Over the years the wall at the area's entrance was unsightly and suffered from being daubed with various forms of graffiti. Recognising the positive influence a good entrance to an estate area can have the Housing Executive's Cohesion Unit agreed to invest in the community led artwork.

The local community group Omagh West ensured everyone in the area was given the chance to consult on the entrance feature and artwork's creation. The residents of both parks seized the opportunity to participate in the consultation. The consultation revealed a desire to feature local landmarks including the railway, prefabs, Bells Bridge and the Spires. In addition the community wanted to have featured the local cycling club along with images of individuals and groups as well as details of significant events.

The entrance feature and artwork both reflect the legacy of the steam railway – Strule Park being one of the stops to L/Derry. The entrance feature reflects the tracks of the railway and uses sleepers as part of it. Meanwhile the wall art has been created from recycled tiles, a first for this type of installation.

For the launch, the community group arranged for a display of photos from the area featuring local people and events since the 1950s which proved a great talking point for young and old. The group was able to show rare cine/8mm film footage of Strule and Centenary in the mid-1960s depicting prefabs, the start of the construction of the parks and day to day life of local people which are easily recognisable on film.

The mural depicts the departing train which reminds us of times gone by and what was a significant feature of this area, while the photographic tiles recall the strong musical and sporting traditions of Omagh, and the contribution which local personalities have made to the town.

The outcome of this entrance feature and artwork is a legacy for Strule Park and Centenary Park. It is great to see the iconic local landmarks in the artwork alongside local people representing what is great about the area. It has been a terrific talking point, bringing people together on an intra and inter community basis and has helped stimulate a positive outlook.



16

Theme 2: Race Relations

We aim to demonstrate a clear and positive commitment to tackling race issues including Race Hate through our Race Relations Policy. We contribute to improving race relations on a strategic and operational level through effective partnership working.

Our race relations policy (available at www.nihe.gov.uk) aims to ensure that all black and minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland can get full and fair access to housing services and employment opportunities within the Housing Executive. We aim to support the promotion of good relations between and within ethnic groups and communities.

Theme 2: Race Relations	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Hate Incidents Practical Action Scheme (HIPA) delivering practical support to victims of hate crime. • The BME Housing Forum engaged directly with BME support groups • The implementation of a Hate Harassment Toolkit for the Housing Executive • Supporting the provision of advocacy workers for Chinese, Polish and Roma communities and previously supported the LGBT and disability sector. • Funding of locally based Race Relations projects across NI in Housing Executive estates • Developed innovative specialist support for minority ethnic tenants, victims of hate harassment and refugees.

Case Study: Cloughmill's Community Action Team, Cloughmill's Village, Co Antrim

Cloughmill's Community Action Team was supported in developing a Good Relations action plan to promote good relations across the village to reflect the changing demographics and to increase engagement with new communities. The plan delivered a number of events and opportunities aimed at various sections of the community to promote good relations, engagement and volunteering.



Cloughmill's Community Action Team traditionally held an annual cross community Easter celebration event for children and families of the two local primary schools. The event included the traditional Easter egg hunt and egg and spoon races. In order to reflect the changing demographics of the area, we incorporated Easter arts and crafts from countries around the world into the event to allow the young people to take part in arts and crafts workshops from other countries and learn about how other cultures celebrate Easter. All the artists were nationals of the country they represented to allow natural discussion on how each of the cultures celebrate Easter.

The artists worked with young people of different age groups and the young people asked lots of questions about different nationalities and learnt an enormous amount, in the flow of very natural conversations. Our support enabled the group to raise their profile, increase engagement and volunteer numbers, increase skills and celebrate diversity. The group continues to go from strength to strength building on previous successes to develop shared space and a cohesive community in Cloughmill's.

Theme 3: Communities in Transition

The Communities in Transition theme aims to build relationships within and between people and communities, promotes participation in community development and peacebuilding and encourages greater community cohesion within Housing Executive estates.

It recognises particular difficulties facing communities with weak community infrastructure 'tipping point' and is an important step in redressing imbalances from lack of investment in social capital especially around young people.

Theme 3. Communities in Transition	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed intervention models for estates which are at risk of descending into inter or intra community violence • Funding for estate based cohesion projects • BRIC Programme – secured £3.5m Peace III funding and in partnership with RDC and TIDES delivered wide ranging Good Relations Training and developed good relations plans and projects to 88 Housing Executive estates • Delivered the Areas at Risk (A@R) Programme on behalf of DSD at local level <p>Case Study: Mourneview and Grey Estates Community Association, Lurgan, Co. Armagh</p>

The 'bric effect' within Mourneview Community Association delivered better teamwork and improved leadership skills as a result of the training provided by TIDES.

Through this facet of the BRIC Programme, the committee found it much easier to pull together and deal with issues around the area through the use of delegation and pooling their combined resources, skills and knowledge. The group also noted much more tolerance within the committee and credited this to the completion of the Conflict Management Course. Representatives from the Committee now also sit on mainstream Housing Executive scrutiny panel and the Community Forum Panel via the Housing Community Network.



The committee are also enjoying joined up working relationships with the statutory agencies and regularly ring the Housing Executive directly to query after grants available or to raise issues from their community.

The impact of the BRIC Programme can also be seen across the estate through its initiative to remove a number of paramilitary murals and replace them with bespoke historical artworks.

In addition to this, the programme funded a Community Fun Day for local children.

Theme 4: Interface Areas

As a result of the Northern Ireland conflict, interfaces now separate a number of our neighbourhoods and villages across Northern Ireland; whether it is one of the physical structures that are evident in the urban environment or the invisible separations that exist in our rural and semi-rural areas.

Belfast has over 80 peace walls or interfaces, by far the greatest number anywhere in Northern Ireland. Erected originally to improve security, they remain almost 40 years later and have contributed to the perpetuation of the cycle of division and segregation.

Interfaces are not just in Belfast but also in Derry/Londonderry and Portadown and Housing Executive homes are located in the immediate vicinity of all of these structures. Twenty one of these interfaces are owned by the Housing Executive.

The Housing Executive therefore has a key role in assisting these interface areas which suffer greatest from the impact of community division and are most affected by the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict.

We work to develop opportunities to bring interface communities together; especially hard to reach groups such as young people. We have an ongoing programme of capacity building in areas of weak social infrastructure and we continue to invest in physical improvement through interface modification programmes on Housing Executive owned structures, environmental initiatives and regeneration programmes.

Theme 4. Interface Areas	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with and support communities who wish to remove/re-image or re-imagine barriers • Supported communities to develop 'visioning tools' at interfaces • Implement physical improvement programmes to Housing Executive owned structures • Deliver 'normalisation works' to homes adjacent to barrier re-modelling projects to support communities who wish to remove, re-image or re-model the interface.



Case Study: Black Mountain Shared Space Project - Belfast

Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSS) is a cross community project located across the foot of the Blackmountian and includes the Upper Springfield area of West Belfast (predominantly nationalist) and Springmartin/Highfield (predominantly unionist) in Greater Shankill.

Inter community discussions around the project commenced in late 2007, with regular shared meetings taking place between the CNR (Catholic/Nationalist/Republican) and PUL (Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist) communities and statutory agencies. A series of structured planning day sessions and a two day residential in Bushmills in September 2010, were also completed. These cross-community discussions focused on the potential for a shared initiative which will:

- Address anti-community behaviour issues and address interface tension;
- Develop youth, community, education, training and employability programmes that through new, creative and innovative approaches might address the quality of life issues that have so far proved intractable;
- Commence a community engagement process that will begin the conversations to enable discussions around the 12 interfaces surrounding the Finlay's site
- Create a new perspective on community relations, developing shared space and creating a community asset by regenerating the vacant and derelict Black Mountain site which includes the seven acre Finlay's Factory Site and unmanaged open areas which have become contested spaces and focal points for anti-community behaviour.

21

The working relationship between the projects member organisations was formalised by a Partnership Agreement with the Housing Executive, which was agreed and ratified on Thursday 29th March 2012. This process was facilitated by Belfast City Council Peace III funding. This was a key milestone for the BMSS Project given the fact that just 9 months earlier intercommunity relations had temporarily broken down. In the period that followed, leading up to the signing of the Housing Executive Partnership Agreement a small group of community representatives came together and consolidated project working arrangements to form a steering group that would guide the BMSS Project out of what had been a difficult and challenging time.

The Housing Executive empowered and enabled the group to secure funding from the Community Relations Council (CRC) and also International Fund for Ireland (IFI) to deliver IFI's Peace Walls Programme at the site.

The outcome of the IFI application has assisted the group to initiate a 2 stage engagement process and running parallel a consultation process with all the relevant statutory agencies and key stakeholders.

Through the process the group have highlighted the short, medium and long term outcomes which could take the form of re-imaging, re-engineering, greater permeability, connectivity and issues around safety and movement.

As this process unfolds it will create the impetus to unlock the interfaces/ barriers and in turn develop the Finlay's site as a shared community asset through regenerating the vacant and derelict area as a flagship capital build which will remove the current unmanaged open space.

Theme 5: Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols

People have the right to live in a tolerant, diverse society where differences are recognised and respected. Our aim is to create an environment where people feel safe to celebrate and respect culture within and between communities.

22

Political and sectarian displays are prevalent within our estates and symbols such as murals, flags, kerb painting, bonfires and paramilitary memorials can create a significant 'chill factor' for visitors to our estates.

Proactive negotiations with communities and the funding of locally based re-imaging initiatives have had significant impact on our single identity estates and we work with both sides of the community, at the communities pace in order to affect change (e.g. Lower Newtownards Rd, Sandy Row, Ligoniel, Lower Falls, Milltown, Doury Rd).

There is clear evidence of how re-imaging projects can be the catalyst for physical, social and economic regeneration and we are committed to carrying forward this work in our new strategy in order to develop community capacity and build stronger and more confident communities.

Murals and Memorials

We are establishing a comprehensive database on all sectional symbols located on Housing Executive land and properties.

We support local communities in the removal of sectional symbols including murals, memorials and territorial displays.

We target areas for our estate based re-imaging programme and establish links with key organisations to assist in developing neighbourhood based re-imaging programmes

Bonfire Management

The Housing Executive's Better Bonfire Management Scheme has been in operation since 2006 and allows the Community Cohesion Unit to support estates who wish to positively address the issues of bonfires in their areas. The Better Bonfire Management Scheme funded projects across NI including Belfast, Antrim, Newtownabbey and Ballycastle.

Flags

There has been a significant upsurge in displays of territorialism across Northern Ireland and the 2012 flags dispute brought to an end many established local flags protocols.

We have produced a Good Practice Guide (available on www.nihe.gov.uk) for dealing with flags and sectional symbols and we continue to work in our estates to deliver local solutions for local issues.

Theme 5: Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with single identity communities to develop community capacity and build stronger and more confident communities by supporting locally based projects• Proactive engagement and negotiations and Housing Executive funding of flags and mural initiatives through the Unit with both sides of the community, delivered at the communities pace e.g. Lower Newtownards Road, Sandy Row, Ligoniel, Lower Falls, Milltown, Doury Road and Ballymurphy• Developed a new approach to bonfire funding and management eg: the use of beacons.

Case Study: Launch of Mural at Cuba Walk in East Belfast

The Housing Executive were approached by Community Representatives in East Belfast to re-image a paramilitary mural in East Belfast in order to build good relations and good race relations in East Belfast.

The former UFF painting in Cuba Walk has been replaced by imagery depicting the Titanic and its enduring connections to the area.

The transformation was driven by the local community and managed by Charter NI who worked with the Forward Group, Pitt Park Women's Group and community representatives on the mural. The group worked closely with renowned artist John Stewart to design the images that capture the enormous role local people played in the creation and story of the world's most famous ship.

Gustav Wilhelm Wolff was born in Hamburg and was a migrant to the UK from 14 years old (1834-1913). He moved to live with his uncle in Liverpool - Gustav Christian Schwabe (10 May 1813-10 January 1897) Schwabe, with Thomas Henry Ismay, purchased the bankrupt White Star Line in 1867.

24

In 1869, during a game of billiards, Gustav Schwabe made a deal with Thomas Henry Ismay to finance the White Star Line, provided that the White Star Line would buy its ships from Harland and Wolff. In essence this original migrant worker played a huge role in the success story of East Belfast.



Key strategic drivers for the Community Cohesion Strategy

OFMDFM's Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) Strategy

The Together: Building a United Community Strategy outlines a vision of “a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.” The Government’s TBUC Strategy ‘Together: Building a United Community’ Strategy, published on May 23 2013, reflects the Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The Strategy represents a key building block in the implementation of the Programme for Government 2011-2015 and reflects the Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and building a united and shared society.

TBUC Key Priorities

The TBUC Strategy outlines how Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities:

1. Our children and young people;
2. Our shared community;
3. Our safe community; and
4. Our cultural expression.

25

The Together: Building a United Community Strategy outlines a vision based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation. It provides the framework for government action in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance while seeking to address division, hate and separation.

The Housing Executive is tasked with delivering key elements of priorities 2 and 3.

The Social Housing Reform Programme

Our Community Cohesion Strategy also has close linkages with DSD Social Housing Reform Programme and broader policy themes and, as such, requires strong partnership working to implement the priorities identified.

The Social Housing Reform Programme was announced by the Social Development Minister, Nelson McCausland in his statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on the 26th February 2013.

The main objectives of the reform programme are:

- To ensure we can continue to deliver well maintained housing stock;
- To improve the focus on strategy;
- To ensure value for money for taxpayers in the future;
- To provide an opportunity to become more efficient and innovative in delivering and maintaining social housing to tax payers and tenants alike.

The Department of Justice's Community Safety Strategy 2012-17, Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities

'Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities' is an Executive Strategy that sets the direction for government over the next five years for reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime in Northern Ireland. It reflects the views heard during an extensive engagement and consultation with individuals, communities and organisations across Northern Ireland. Building on the progress made over the past decade, the overall aim of the Strategy, as endorsed during the consultation, is to help build:

- **Safer communities**, with lower levels of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- **Shared communities**, where each person's rights are respected in a shared and cohesive community; and
- **Confident communities**, where people feel safe and have confidence in the agencies that serve them.

26

Peace IV

The PEACE Programme will contribute towards the development of social and economic stability through the promotion of increased cohesion between communities. This is in line with the relevant national policies including the 'Together: Building a United Community' (TBUC) strategy published by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister of the Northern Ireland Executive. Following the Good Friday Agreement, the Irish Government made a commitment to 'positively consider the case for enhanced financial assistance for the work of reconciliation'. A significant investment has been made to date and a new strategy for the fund will be published in September 2015. Under the proposed CP support will be allocated to shared education initiatives; support for children and young people; shared spaces and services; and projects which can contribute towards a more inclusive and tolerant civil society.

Shared Spaces and Services

As a result of the success of the PEACE III legacy projects, which created shared spaces to facilitate the integration of divided communities, the first consultation advocated strong support to continue to build upon this

important work. During the consultation process, the requirement to facilitate further removal of visible and invisible barriers between communities also received strong support. It is envisaged that the integration of communities can be facilitated and improved through the investment in an increased number of shared spaces and services.

Peace IV support will therefore be provided to transform segregated urban, rural and border areas in need of regeneration into 'shared spaces' that will encourage greater levels of cross-community interaction. These spaces will be specifically designed to help reduce the levels of sectarian and racially based division across the eligible area.

Specific Objective of Peace IV:

To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.

Housing Executive's Journey to Excellence Programme

Central to the Housing Executive's road map for the future is our internal reorganisation to deal with the new challenges facing housing in the coming years. The Journey to Excellence programme aims to ensure consistent approaches to our business, customer and people excellence - the "golden threads" that should run through the whole Housing Executive, whilst still allowing a distinct focus on our strategic Regional Service enabling and Landlord Service delivery roles.

27

The four main strategies within this are:

Business

We will develop and implement our first Business Excellence Strategy to ensure best use of available resources, keeping services and rents affordable and creating capacity to reinvest savings to improve services.

Customer

We will produce a Customer Excellence Strategy that will apply across all of our services, committing to excellence for every customer, every time and however they contact us.

People

We will produce a new People Strategy which will outline how an increasingly diverse and innovative organisation will recruit, develop, support and retain the best people to achieve our ambitions.

Technology

We will develop a Technology Strategy to set out how we will use modern technology to drive a modernisation programme which puts customers' needs at the heart of all we do through enabling technologies such as improved workflows and customer insight.

The first main change in April 2014 was a separation internally into a regional housing services body and a landlord body which includes asset management and housing services.

This internal separation provides the opportunity for a clear focus on both regional and landlord functions. Separate business plans will be developed under the corporate plan from April 2014.

To date there has been a realignment of the directorate structure to facilitate this and the introduction of a new directorate of Business Transformation to oversee business change and to ensure that this is in line with the direction envisaged by the Social Housing Reform programme.

In addition there has been a rationalisation of the management structure within the local office network around twelve areas and three regions. This may require some further amendment as the details of RPA are finalised.

The Housing Executive's strategic direction and key objectives provide the foundation for promoting good relations and support the development of this Strategy. We know that any improvement in building relationships across our divided society will have a positive impact in achieving these objectives.

28



Embedding Good Relations within the Housing Executive

A Key component of the BRIC Programme was to ensure Good Relations becomes an integral component throughout all departments within the Housing Executive. Through the BRIC programme 1,873 staff received Good Relations training.

The results of an internal survey to assess the impact of the training recorded the following:

- 87% confirmed involvement increased their self-awareness and responsibility around Good Relations issues, behavioural and attitudinal change
- 80% confirmed involvement increased confidence in Good Relations issues and developing Good Relations programmes
- 67% confirmed increased mediation skills
- 80% confirmed involvement increased their knowledge of practical tools to build Good Relations internally and externally to Housing Executive
- 69% confirmed increased skills in dealing with conflict
- 65% would be interested in additional training

Through reflective practice sessions the need was identified to further support the integration of good relations as part of the organisational change process, through annual business planning days. Between 2012 and 2014 Community Cohesion Unit offered all areas the opportunity to hold business planning days which had a central theme of good relations. This element of the programme ensured continually building and threading Good Relations throughout the organisation.

29

Conclusion

With the success of the Good Relations Awareness Training (delivered from Board level to front line staff) and delivered to reach all staff collectively through Business Planning days, the Housing Executive has taken the necessary steps to integrate good relations into its policies, procedures and service delivery functions.

In going forward we will deliver the following training at an organisational level:

- Good Relations Awareness Raising Training to staff
- Good Relations induction training for new staff (temporary and permanent)
- Deliver Good Relations related training courses to staff
- Deliver six monthly e-bulletin to staff on Good Relations and Diversity. And highlight examples of best practice
- Work in conjunction with Learning and Development to continue supporting all Areas in promoting Good Relations through the Annual Business Planning Days

Opportunities for specialist services developed for minority ethnic tenants to be incorporated into mainstream services will be identified.

Training will be delivered to everyone involved in policy making at all levels and stages, to ensure that equality of opportunity and good relations are central to policy making, implementation, review and service delivery.

Case Study

"As a Neighbourhood Officer I deal closely with the community and groups. Attending meetings and supporting events and assisting with funding applications. BRIC allowed for training to involve Housing Executive staff and community groups together which helped to strengthen relationships."

"Good relations impacts on my work as it helps to build confidence in our estates.....Through good relations I am recognised and welcomed onto contentious estates and feel comfortable to do my work. Obviously building good relations at ground level is a win win for all."

"The training was very relevant and informative."

"Further training around this complex issue would be beneficial."

30



Performance Area Key Impacts

<p>OFMDFM Together building United Communities - TBUC</p>	<p>Shared Aim: <i>to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Housing Associations to deliver 10 shared new build schemes • Enhance further integrated housing development opportunities • Create new shared neighbourhoods in areas undergoing change • Increase inward investment • Increase in community cohesion and quality of life
<p>DSD Social Housing Reform Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure we can contribute to deliver well maintained housing stock; • To improve the focus on strategy; • To ensure value for money for taxpayers in the future; • To provide an opportunity to become more efficient and innovative in delivering and maintaining social housing for tax payers and tenants alike
<p>Housing Executive – Community Cohesion Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete audit of sectional symbols on Housing Executive land and properties and produce a comprehensive list of all paramilitary displays in our estates • Reduce aggressive displays of territorialism by continuing to deliver our re-imaging programme, targeted to areas of most need • Increase community awareness and respect for diversity • Increase community dialogues within and between communities • Increase local community participation particularly around young people

Housing Executive – Community Cohesion Strategy continued...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase community social bridging with adjacent neighbourhoods • Increase the number of good neighbour charters • Increase integration and support for new neighbours and migrant workers • Provide all possible support for victims of hate crime • Increase community engagement and interaction between segregated, single identity estates • Create higher degrees of permeability and mobility between single identity community areas • Enhance social capital and encourage social enterprise in Housing Executive estates • Reduce interface tensions • Work with local interface communities to help re-design Housing Executive owned interface structures • Reduce voids in hard to let areas by developing greater social cohesion with our good relations programmes
Community Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce perception of fear of crime • Increase satisfaction levels of residents within their areas as a place to live • Help local people improve the quality of their lives through meaningful participation, consultation and involvement in the decision making process
Local Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work to support and complement the delivery of local Councils' Good Relations Strategies

Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Strategic Drivers

- As previously outlined, the Housing Executive has a statutory duty to promote good relations in terms of Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
- This strategy is developed to assist in the delivery of the Housing Executive's Corporate Objective 'Fostering Vibrant Communities'.
- The Together: Building a United Community Strategy, published in 2013, reflects the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

Our Vision for Community Cohesion 2015-20

"A cohesive, resilient and vibrant community, with strong positive relationships and respect for diversity between people from all backgrounds and cultures."

Our Key Values and Principles

Our commitment to community cohesion within the Housing Executive is based on the following values and principles:

- Housing need will continue to set the context for housing policy.
- We understand the impact poor community relations have on the delivery of housing services.
- We believe no housing policies or programmes should endanger the lives of tenants, staff, communities or property.
- Partnership working will underpin the responses designed to enhance community cohesion.
- We will thread good relations throughout all the work we do and put cohesion at the heart of all our business

33

Aims

The Housing Executive's strategic objective to promote good relations is aligned to the following aims.

The Housing Executive will:

- Respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict
- Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society
- Facilitate and encourage mixed housing as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe
- Work with residents to transform interface areas, at the pace of the community

Key Objectives

- To contribute to the creation of more stable, safer neighbourhoods
- To work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society
- To address cohesion issues through the 5 themes of the strategy

The Housing Executive's 2015-2020 Community Cohesion Strategy will be delivered around 5 key priority themes:

1. Residential Segregation/Integration
2. Race Relations
3. Communities in Transition
4. Interface Areas
5. Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols

Theme 1: Residential Segregation/Integration

We will facilitate and encourage mixed housing schemes in the social and affordable sector as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe.

We will deliver this through a twin track approach of support for shared new build and programme work within existing estates.

We will work with the Department for Social Development (DSD), Housing Associations and others to bring proposals forward shared new build schemes under the OFM/DFM's TBUC programme.

34

Theme 1	We will:
Residential segregation/integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyse and assist in the sustainability of Shared Neighbourhood estates by supporting research into segregated/shared housing, including updating the Mapping Segregation report.• Facilitate and encourage mixed housing schemes in the social and affordable sector (as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe.)• Work with the OFMDFM TBUC, Department for Social Development, Housing Associations and others to bring proposals forward for 10 'Shared Future' capital build projects of mixed housing schemes in the medium term.• Develop support programmes of action to address the issues of residential segregation and integration in 72 communities across 3 years, through our new BRIC 2 programme• Develop legacy programmes targeting the young champions in our neighbourhoods

Theme 2: Race Relations

We aim to demonstrate a clear and positive commitment to tackling race issues through our Race Relations Policy. We contribute towards race relations on a strategic and operational level through effective partnership working.

Our race relations policy (available at www.nihe.gov.uk) aims to ensure that all black and minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland can get full and fair access to housing services and employment opportunities within the Housing Executive. We aim to support the promotion of good relations between and within ethnic groups and communities.

Theme 2	We will:
Race Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate a clear and positive commitment to tackling race issues through the Housing Executive's updated Race Relations policy.• Contribute towards improved race relations at a strategic and operational level through effective partnership working via our ICN (Inter Community Network) and our estate based strategy work.• Continue to deliver the HIPA (Hate Incident Practical Action) scheme on behalf of the Department of Justice and the PSNI to support victims of hate crime.

Theme 3: Communities in Transition

The Communities in Transition theme aims to build relationships within and between people and communities, promoting participation in community development and peacebuilding and creating community cohesion.

It recognises particular difficulties facing communities with weak community infrastructure and 'tipping points' that might create community division and where our intervention is an important step in helping improve community relations within a neighbourhood.

Theme 3	We will:
Communities in Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify communities at risk ('tipping points') and taking a proactive approach to identifying "hot spots" and changing issues within the 5 themes through establishing a comprehensive data base to identify areas that would benefit from intervention. • Create the environment to allow timely and appropriate interventions. • Renew our focus on statutory and voluntary partnerships through participation on multi agency forums • Engage with adjacent communities to foster an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and understanding via 'bridging events' • Conduct regular audits and prepare good relations local plans • Continue to deliver Areas at Risk (A@R) Programme on behalf of DSD at local level

Theme 4: Interface Areas

Belfast has over 80 peace walls or interfaces, by far the greatest number anywhere in NI. Erected originally to improve security, they remain almost 40 years later and have contributed to the perpetuation of the cycle of division and segregation.

Interfaces are not just in Belfast but also in Derry/Londonderry and Portadown and Housing Executive homes are located in the immediate vicinity of all of these structures. Twenty one of these interfaces are owned by the Housing Executive.

We will continue work to develop opportunities to bring communities together especially hard to reach groups such as young people. We have an ongoing programme of capacity building in areas of weak social infrastructure and we will continue to invest in improvement programmes to transform interfaces through environmental initiatives and regeneration programmes.

This work will be undertaken at the communities pace and only in circumstances where residents feel safe and confident to transform their interface environment.

Theme 4	We will:
Interface Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities to bring communities together. • Invest in our young people as the next generation of leaders in our society, through a programme of interface intervention • Support interface communities by supporting local plans for the regeneration and re modelling of interface areas. • Continue capacity building in areas of weak social infrastructure. • Continue to invest in improvement through environmental initiatives. • Deliver the Interface Normalisation programme on behalf of the Department of Justice. This programme provides additional security measures to resident's homes at interface locations that are proposing transformation.

Theme 5: Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols

People have the right to live in a tolerant, diverse society where differences are recognised and respected. Our aim is to create an environment where people feel safe to celebrate and respect culture within and between communities. Political and sectarian displays are prevalent within our estates and symbols such as murals, flags, kerb painting, bonfires and paramilitary memorials can create a significant 'chill factor' for visitors to our estates.

There is clear evidence of how re-imaging projects can be the catalyst for physical, social and economic regeneration and we are committed to carrying forward this work in our new strategy in order to develop community capacity and build stronger and more confident communities.

We will continue to target areas for the re-imaging programme and develop neighbourhood based and community led re-imaging programmes.

We will also develop a comprehensive and up to date data base on all sectional symbols on our land and property which will help inform and direct our work in the coming years.

Bonfire Management

We will continue to deliver the successful Better Bonfire Management Scheme which has been running from 2006 and allows the Community Cohesion Unit to support communities who wish to positively address the issues of bonfires in their areas.

Flags

There has been a significant upsurge in displays of territorialism across Northern Ireland. The 2012 flags dispute brought to an end many established local flags protocols and whilst the majority of flags are not flown from Housing Executive properties, nevertheless, we will continue to work with OFM/DFM and fellow statutory partners to play our part in assisting communities to move forward on this issue.

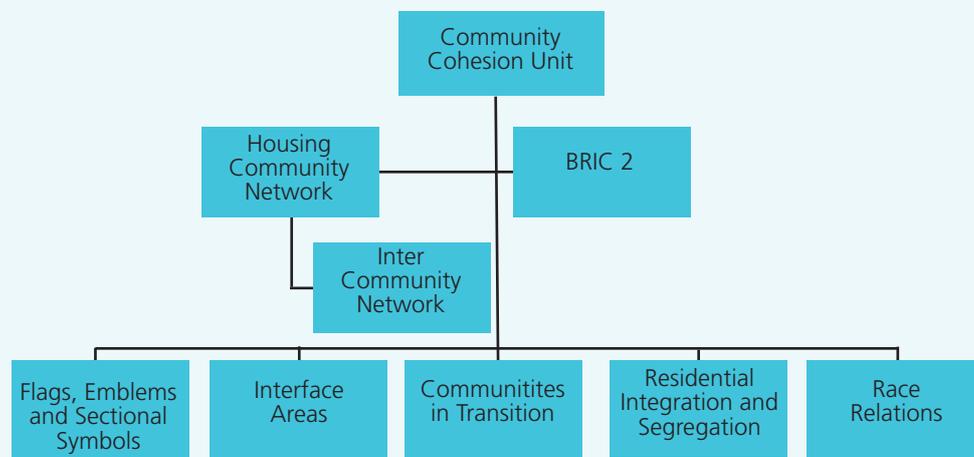
We have also produced a Good Practice Guide (available on www.nihe.gov.uk) for dealing with flags and sectional symbols.

Theme 5	We will:
Flags, Emblems and Sectional Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a comprehensive and up to date data base of all sectional symbols on Housing Executive land and property.• Identify areas ready for positive intervention in collaboration with our Regional/Area Offices• Consult and support local communities about the removal of sectional symbols• Continue capacity building in areas of weak social infrastructure.• Use the BRIC2 programme as a vehicle for addressing sectional symbols• Focus on more acceptable expressions of cultural identity• Propagate models of 'good practice' and promote sharing the learning events.• Develop and expand our existing support network and services to help us deliver a culture of respect throughout Northern Ireland

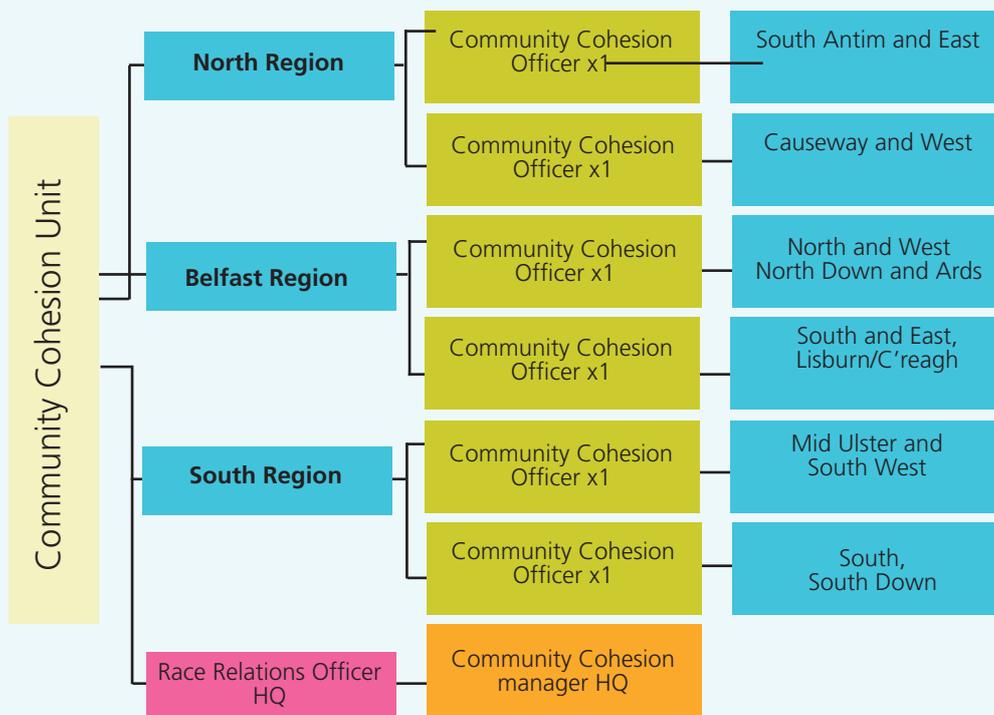
Delivery Structure

We cannot deliver our Community Cohesion Strategy in isolation. Our job is to engage and enable local communities/agencies/'young champions' for change, to get involved in good relations work in order to translate our strategy into practical action on the ground. The Housing Executive's contribution to these interventions is driven by our staffs' experiences of community cohesion issues, their grass roots, local knowledge and the trust that has been built up between staff, community and political leaders across Northern Ireland.

Proposed Strategic Delivery Structure



Operational Delivery Structure



Summary

- From 2004 the Community Cohesion Unit has delivered a number of successful programmes via its 5 key themes as highlighted in the key achievements section and we propose maintaining these themes for 2015-2020.
- Bricks and mortar are not our only focus at the Housing Executive and we will be striving to improve our neighbourhoods and to provide people with more opportunities for a better quality of life.
- Promoting equality and good relations are key to improving the quality of life for everyone in the Housing Executive – making Northern Ireland a better place to live, work, socialise and do business in.
- We will endeavour to make sure that fairness, equality and respect are at the heart of everything we do. These values are central to our policy making process and underpin all our activities
- In going forward we will continue to support our staff along the continuum of good relations and we will provide training in good relations and race relations
- We will also work collaboratively with our colleagues across our Divisions to ensure joined-up working to enable and equip our communities with the relevant skills and expertise to engage in wider socio-economic activity.
- We recognise the need for single identity work, work to engage young people, supporting capacity building within these neighbourhoods but with clear goals towards instigating cross community contact 'bridging' and an engagement framework via a good relations area planning.
- There has been considerable progress made on interfaces but there is still much to be done. We recognise that there is a substantial need for intervention, particularly during periods of heightened political and community tensions.
- There is a need to develop and equip communities with the skills and expertise to develop social economy/social enterprise initiatives to assist in the wider regeneration of neighbourhoods.
- Promoting positive expressions of cultural heritage has proved successful. However, there is still substantial work to be done, particularly in relation to engaging communities around bonfires, parades, protests and flags.

- There is a need to enhance intervention work by developing it into a year-round intervention and resilience programme for young people throughout our neighbourhoods
- Promoting the participation of minority ethnic and migrant communities will be essential to the success of the next phase of the BRIC2 Programme in our neighbourhoods and will be supported by a Hate Crime Policy and "Tool Kit"
- The Housing Executive will continue to work to support local groups in the development of Good Relations through our estate based strategy work, based on criteria directly related to the aims and priorities within the Together; Building a United Community strategy (TBUC).
- This will equip us in moving forward in 2015-2020 by making our contribution to delivering the key Housing Executive objective of "Fostering Vibrant Communities."



Consultation Respondents

Written responses to the Community Cohesion Draft Strategy were received from the following:

Councils

Derry City and Strabane District Council
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Northern Ireland Housing Council
Belfast City Council

Voluntary/External Organisations

Supporting Communities NI
The Community Relations Council
Chartered Institute of Housing Northern Ireland
Housing Rights
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Political Advocates

David McNarry, United Kingdom Independence Party

Housing Executive

Linda Hutchinson, Northern Ireland Housing Executive





44





Housing
Executive



www.nihe.gov.uk

RS/124/01/16