

Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Area Annual Report 2015/16





View looking over Ligoniel Village (RushlightMagazine.com)

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Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership ANNUAL REPORT – 2015-2016

About Neighbourhood Renewal

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme aims to reduce the social and economic inequalities which characterise the most deprived areas. It does so by making a long term commitment to communities to work in partnership with them to identify and prioritise needs and co-ordinate interventions designed to address the underlying causes of poverty. Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships were established with representatives of local community interests together with appropriate Government Departments, public sector agencies, private sector interest and local elected representatives. The socio economic statistics demonstrate some of the principal challenges facing the Ligoniel area; reflecting high levels of unemployment, low educational attainment, community health issues and the challenges facing young people in the area and lack of facilities available.

About Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership

Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership area is located in the hills of North Belfast and holds a unique position above the city with breath taking views across the city. It has a very specific 'village' feel with the Belfast hills bordering the village. The area takes into account approximately 1900 people based upon 2010 census figures, which is a significant increase from 2001 census figures of 1400 people. This change and expansion in the intervening years is due to major development in housing. An additional 800 housing units have been constructed within the Neighbourhood Renewal area with the total number of homes in the area now estimated at approximately 1300 in total. The location of the area brings its own challenges with problems identified in the transport links across the city and additional cost for the community to access services.

To take forward the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership was set up in 2006 to oversee the development and delivery of the local Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan. The Partnership currently comprises eight members which include representatives from local communities, voluntary organisations, elected representatives, private sector and local statutory organisations. It currently meets on a bi-monthly basis and its administration services are provided through Ligoniel Improvement Association.

The main Partnership Committee of Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership provides the overall direction to the work of the partnership. Its membership is listed below:

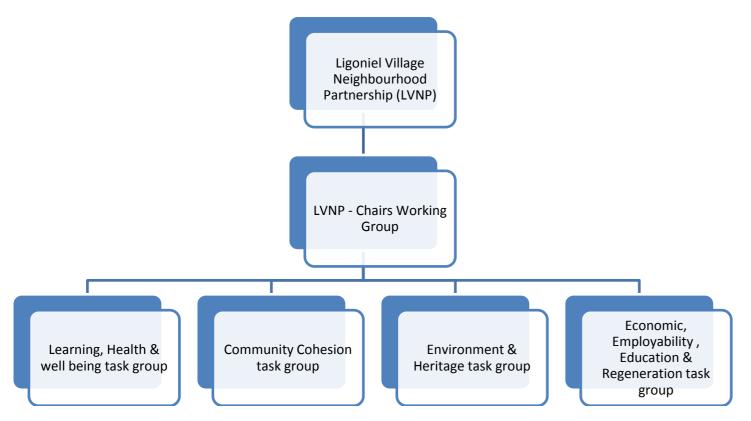
Chairperson (LCE) Arthur Acheson Ligoniel Improvement Association Maria Morgan Belfast City Council Representative Ulrike Letzner Belfast City Councillor Gerry McCabe North Belfast Partnership John McCorry Kieran O'Reilly Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Belfast Regeneration Office Claire Nolan Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Gabi Mornhingweg Ligoniel Healthy Living Centre Maria Burke Administrative support - LIA Stephen Graham

The Partnership has established four task groups to assist them in the identification, development and where appropriate the delivery of projects which aim to address the Programmes four strategic objectives of community renewal, social renewal, economic renewal and physical renewal. They also assist local community organisations to co-ordinate actions that are beneficial for all communities living in the Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA). They include:

- Ligoniel Family Centre
- Ligoniel Fishing Club
- Ligoniel Boxing Club
- Mountainhill Youth Club
- Ligoniel Working Men's Darts Club
- Ligoniel Working Men's Football Club
- St Vincent De Paul Primary School
- Ligoniel Primary School
- Ligoniel Healthy Living Centre
- Ligoniel Residents Association
- Ligoniel Community Events Committee

With the development of the first neighbourhood action plan in 2007 all those groups involved in delivering neighbourhood renewal had a seat at the main Partnership Committee. After the review of the implementation plan in 2009 it was agreed that we move towards a smaller more focused Partnership committee. This coincided with the re-launch of four task groups which would draw their membership from all those groups working on neighbourhood renewal.

Each task group would then nominate at least one member to sit on the main Partnership management committee. Each task group was to appoint a chairperson and a secretary and engage with the appropriate statutory representatives to ensure representation on the task group.



The task group members are made up from a range of organisations and are broken down as follows:

Health & Wellbeing Task Group

Maria Burke Chairperson Caroline Milligan Sure Start

Catherine Rock Ligoniel Family Centre Claire Hillman Ligoniel Primary School

Gabi Mornhinweg Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Josephine Rice Resident

Kathleen Kelly
Kieran O'Reilly
Claire Nolan
Maria Morgan
Mary Bartolo
Nichola Mallon

North Belfast Advice Partnership
Ligoniel Improvement Association
Belfast Regeneration Office
Ligoniel Improvement Association
North Belfast Advice Partnership
Belfast City Councillor – SDLP

Ulrike Letzner Belfast City Council

Community Cohesion subgroup

Maria Morgan (LIA) Chairperson

Billy Johnston Belfast City Council - Wardens

Eammon Canavan PSNI

Gerard McCabe Belfast City Councillor

Kieran O'Reilly LIA

Laura Gibbons Clanmil Housing Association Liam McKinley Belfast City Council - Parks

Margaret Gallagher N.I.H.E

Maria Burke **Healthy Living Centre** Nichola Mallon Belfast City Councillor

Paul Reynolds Helm Housing

N.I.H.E Paula Brennan

Roger Clarke Clanmil Housing Association

James keyes Resident

Ulrike Letzner Belfast City Council - Community Development

Gerard Flynn N.I.H.E

Claire Nolan Belfast Regeneration Office

Environment & Heritage Task Group

John Gray (LIA) Chairperson

Kieran O'Reilly LIA Damien McCallin LIA

Michael Young Ligoniel Fishing Club Emma Campbell Belfast City Council Jerry Drew GroundworkNI Jim Bradley Belfast Hills Liam McKinley Belfast City Council

Lizzy Pinkerton Belfast Hills

Maria Morgan LIA

Judy Meharg Groundwork NI

Maria Morgan LIA

Claire Nolan Belfast Regeneration Office

Economic, Employability, Education and Regeneration Task group

(LCE) Chairperson Arthur Acheson

Alice Quinn North City Business Centre Ligoniel Family Centre Catherine Rock

Gerry Rooney **Local Chemist**

John McCorry North Belfast Partnership

Kieran O'Reilly LIA

Belfast City Council SDLP Nichola Mallon

Maria Morgan LIA

Belfast Regeneration Office Claire Nolan

Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership Projects

Due to its unique location, the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund is currently supporting projects in the Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Area. However the support of the task groups provides leverage to access funding from many other sources to provide programmes to meet the needs of the community.

The current LVNP action plan details proposals in four areas i.e. Community Renewal, Social Renewal, Economic Renewal and Physical Renewal. Broadly speaking the action plan falls into three categories:

- Advice and Educational support for a range of vulnerable groups in the community e.g. families and children, the unemployed, the elderly, the sick and disabled etc.
- Capital projects to provide the necessary facilities and resources for a growing population e.g., extension to the Wolfhill Centre, Environmental and Heritage Project, a new Family Centre, shared space projects etc.
- Community events i.e. events to bring people together, to strengthen community bonds and encourage more people to volunteer and participate in local services and activities.

The role of the LCE and LIA figured prominently in all four areas of Renewal, particularly in terms of the potential offered by the development of the Wolfhill Centre site to meet the needs of the targeted, deprived, community in Ligoniel and the growing population.

Community Renewal/ Economic Renewal/Social Renewal & Physical Renewal

1. Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development and Relations:

LIA provides advice and support to individuals, community and voluntary groups and organisations on matters of funding, organisational management, strategy, visioning and structure.

Our main objective in delivering this service is to equip and encourage the groups to respond in a positive way to the demands, which are made both on their present and future positions within the community. We believe that through the provision of sound advice, information, support and assistance groups are aided in their development needs and with the development of a strategic plan for their short term and long term development. A further role of LIA has been to raise the awareness of the group; to projects outside the Ligoniel area, and to be aware of and respond to strategies of statutory agencies and outside bodies who have an impact and relevance to their group and the area.

LIA supports the established task groups associated with the LVNP and continues to convene and facilitate the establishment of groups and partnerships, acting as a liaison between community and statutory bodies, campaigning on issues of community concern, and initiating projects and activities involving the local community. We identify the gaps in this marginalised area and develop community infrastructures and encourage and support residents establishing their own self-help groups.

The organisation has developed and maintained good working relationships with the community, voluntary and statutory sectors across north Belfast and plays an important role in north Belfast wide initiatives. It is essential for the regeneration of Ligoniel that the community is actively engaged with other communities in order to reduce the sense of isolation, partially created due to its location on the periphery of the city. LIA is particularly successful in working in partnership with our neighbours in Ballysillan. Both LIA and Ballysillan Community Forum were joint winners of the Aisling Award for Outstanding Inter-community Endeavours.

At present, we have a cross community steering group addressing sensitive issues between both communities, with LIA acting as the lead organisation within the Ligoniel community to drive forward the actions derived from the joint Ligoniel/ Ballysillan, Upper Ardoyne Neighbourhood Renewal Forum.

This project provides services through the provision of community development. LIA provides practical assistance in typing, computer access, and services such as, photocopying, printing and marketing material and is involved in providing advice and help on funding, training, networking, co-ordinating and facilitating meetings through requests for support and assistance from groups, projects and residents both in Ligoniel and Ballysillan.

The centre is a hub for the provision of an independent advice service which stretches across a number of north Belfast areas, providing assistance with issues such as benefit entitlement, job search, employment mentoring, money and debt advice, tribunal representation, DLA, benefit checks, training and volunteer development

LIA provides a wide range of training and education opportunities at different levels, including community development courses, essential skills, ICT, family learning, cultural diversity, youth, health, negotiation skills, referral techniques, and monitoring and evaluation procedures. An important element of the education and training strategy is providing progression routes for clients and developing a culture of lifelong learning. Programmes are developed and delivered in response to need, identified through community consultation.

The centre itself is registered as an accredited centre and can now offer OCN level one classes in two subjects; horticulture and drug awareness.

LIA is integral to the social and economic regeneration of Ligoniel. It is instrumental in highlighting both positive and negative issues which impact on the lives of the local community; developing strategies to address issues; developing mutually beneficial partnerships (statutory, community, private and voluntary); drawing down funding to sustain and support projects. The organisation has established a credible track record of community development. including health & wellbeing programmes, advice, training, education, housing, personal development and capacity building, local history, cross community programmes and a wide range of other activities. Collaborative working and youth initiatives target all age groups and sectors in the Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

The development and regeneration of the surrounding area is a key priority to link the village LIA is a key stakeholder and resource within the community and work closely with statutory agencies and other voluntary and community organizations to promote community development in the area.

It addresses the following themes in the Action Plan:

- Health & Well Being
- Economic, Employability, Education and Regeneration
- Environment & Heritage
- Community Cohesion & Events
- 2. North Belfast Advice Partnership Welfare advice: The aims and objectives of this project is the delivery of front line welfare and benefit advice services across North Belfast through various advice centres and outreach locations. The service is available throughout North Belfast and customers are offered a choice of advice centres to ensure client confidentiality and support. The advisors are highly trained in welfare rights and have an excellent network of partnerships which link into specific initiatives and programmes in relation to a range of services including

The NBAP was established in April 2003, when a number of independent advice service within North Belfast decided to form a partnership that would enable them to build better infrastructure and organisation to marshal all local resources and provide a holistic and enhanced service.

- The following organisations formed the North Belfast Advice Partnership:
- Ligoniel Improvement Association
- Ballysillan Community Forum
- Ardoyne Association
- Tar Isteach
- The Vine Centre
- · North Belfast Citizens Advice Bureau

One of the major strengths of NBAP is that it draws from all sides of the religious, political, social and geographical divides, allowing organisations, groups and communities who have historically been opposed, to work in unison for a common good.

NBAP plays a lead role in capacity building in North Belfast and in addressing poverty and deprivation. NBAP helps individuals in most deprived areas to improve their quality of life, to contribute to the economic infrastructure within their communities. NBAP encourages groups and individuals to play an active role within their communities improving social conditions, thus creating a safer environment and enabling communities to become more attractive, sustainable and work in partnership with other communities and groups.

NBAP provides strong leadership at a local community level and continually builds on the "good relations and partnership working" both across North Belfast and the wider city.

The services NBAP provides ensures individuals, families and group secure the basic necessities, by helping them access benefits, ensuring representation at appeals and delivering money/debt advice. In the current economic downturn this work is essential especially as NBAP have seen a dramatic increase in employment over the past year and high numbers of people facing house repossession and eviction.

There is a strong correlation between poverty, crime and anti-social behaviour. It is often the case that individuals who are involved in these activities, particularly younger people, are more likely to come from very challenging family backgrounds, either through unemployment or family breakdown. NBAP works to help people across North Belfast, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable living in the hardest and most challenging areas, to deal with the difficulties that affect their everyday lives. NBAP dealt with 32,000 enquiries last year and in many cases refer on to other organisations for additional support and help, thus creating a more stable community.

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The Partnership has become much stronger in the past number of years which allows advisors to share a wealth of knowledge, experience and information. Over the past year we have seen advisors working closer together, referring between centres and to the specialist staff, this is clear example of good relations and community partnership.

The main aims of the this project are as follows;

• To provide advice, information, support and advocacy to empower individuals to secure their rights and gain access to the services and entitlements that are available to them

- To promote social inclusion and cross community activities addressing common areas and issues.
- Allow groups and communities the opportunity to work together as a partnership to tackle common issues and needs.
- To promote community relations, equal opportunities and challenge discrimination
- To enhance present services through partnership working and complement existing provision from statutory and other voluntary agencies.
- To operate in line with current government policy including new TSN, Section75, best value and neighbourhood renewal.

NBAP are committed to providing the following:

- A uniformed quality advice service delivering advice and information
- To deliver programmes/information sessions on Benefit Uptake, Money Management to groups and individuals
- To work with statutory agencies, voluntary and support groups to ensure the needs of clients are met
- To identified and meet the needs of the disadvantaged and most marginalised individuals and groups, providing specialist information and advice
- To empower individuals and communities to access and exercise their rights
- To maximise client income and improve their quality of life
- To build the confidence, skills, knowledge of individuals and groups
- To recruit local volunteers and provide them with training opportunities
- •To produce statistical data from CARMA case recording on benefit uptake and financial claw back
- To share information with other government departments and voluntary groups

The benefits of NBAP programmes and services are far reaching within communities, they enable groups to gradually build trust and as programmes touch on money, employment, health, parental responsibilities, caring responsibilities it allows participants to share experiences with one another and therefore groups become closer and help one another to overcome problems or barriers.

Groups participating in these programmes go away with knowledge that can help family and friends, it enables them to past on advice and information, and open up conversations around their values and attitudes towards money, finance, employment and responsibilities whether that be children, parents or someone with a disability. These are concerns for all of us and by NBAP delivering programmes/talks addressing these issues it allows participants to seek advice and improve their lives.

- 3. Ligoniel Improvement Association The Ligoniel Development Project: This project proposed by Ligoniel Improvement Association (LIA) has three different elements.
 - 1. Cornmill site Environmental Centre
 - 2. Wolfhill Centre Site Development.
 - 3. Mountain Hill Youth Club Development

SITE 1 - Cornmill Site

The proposal is to develop the site of a disused Cornmill into an environmental centre which will have the potential to act as a hub for activities, initiatives and to provide space for work on environmental issues. The site is an opportunity for cross community and reconciliation structures that will provide opportunities to all ages and groups to access the mountain and walkways and the Ligoniel Dam which is currently owned by LIA. The proposal will include a number of surveys that are required on the site to prepare the case for development. This element is to develop the concept plan in collaboration with the Belfast Hills Partnership to link areas of environmental interest in the Ligoniel Hills, Divis Mountain and Cavehill. It will include a feasibility study and specific surveys of the site including a structural survey, topographical survey, ground condition survey and bat survey.

Site 2 - Wolfhill Centre Site.

LIA currently operate from the Wolfhill Centre which is owned by the Ligoniel Community Enterprises. The current facility provides a range of offices, retail units, workshop units and horticultural area. However LIA have ambitious plans to develop the site to develop and extend the current horticultural centre, extend the existing premises to provide a full time childcare facility, provide additional office space and housing units for the elderly and disabled. All of the facilities would be operated on a social enterprise model as is currently operated for the Wolfhill Centre. To facilitate this development a site investigation report and feasibility study is required.

Site 3 - Mountain Hill Youth Club

Mountain Hill Youth Club is a BELB youth service in the Ligoniel Area. BELB have approached LIA with regard to establishing a community steering group to manage the Mountain Hill youth club with the goal of LIA taking responsibility for the full time management of the centre. This will allow for the services provided in the area to focus on the needs of the community and youth services. A prerequisite of the acceptance is that

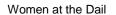
research is undertaken and the outcomes can be agreed with BELB to satisfy their criteria. However before this can be considered LIA would require a feasibility study, survey of the existing building, needs analysis and community audit to be carried out before they could determine the additional and legal requirements and impact on the organisation.

All three elements will allow for the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal and the implementation of the Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan

Women in Politics programme

In the latter part of the year LIA staff and the group of women involved in the Women in Politics Programme visited the Dail, Stormont, Parliament, and the Scottish parliament, where they were given the opportunity to find out at first-hand how all four political systems operated and to discuss with political representatives what issues they are experiencing within their own areas and what they feel the politicians in Norther Ireland should be doing..







Finding out how the Scottish parliament works

The Impact of NBAP

During this year there have been over 8,863 enquires (4462 phone enquiries, 4401 face to face enquiries) and £1, 173,376 has been secured for clients. This year, we assisted 91 older people and helped them claim £192,920 in additional entitlements. Apart from the gain for individual clients, these successes brought additional spending power back into the community.

16 people took part in SafetyNet training. Participants were taught about the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse. The Asist training and SafetyNet training enabled participants to gain a formal, recognised qualification. The training of LIA staff resulted in the organisation being recognised as the first registered Safety Net centre in Belfast.



Money and Benefit Advice

Case Study

Last year as part of SSA Benefit uptake an advisor received referral for elderly couple wanting a full benefit check. The advisor identified that the gentleman was in receipt of high rate mobility and middle rate and both were receiving state pension. The advisor did a full benefit check and identified the lady should be receiving Attendance Allowance; they both should apply for Pension Credit, Carers Allowance and Rates Relief. Rates relief was paid in full and they received £22 per wee pension credit however the lady's Attendance Allowance was disallowed. The advisor appealed the decision as it was based on an examining medical practitioners report from Attendance Allowance and took the case to appeal, the lady was awarded high rate Attendance Allowance at £79.15 per week back dated for 62 weeks and both received a higher rate of pension credit including cares premiums backdated for 62 weeks, there new weekly total is £617.59 an increase of £287 per week and they received back dating money of £16,414.50. This made a great different to them as they were able to purchase a mobility scooter to get to local shops, doctors and chemist.



Safety Net training at the Wolfhill Centre

Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership 2015/2016 Expenditure (by Strategic Objective)

The following table details current projects funded via the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment fund. It also details the 2015/16 individual spend for each project, the total amount of expenditure by strategic objective and the overall 2015/16 total expenditure in the Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

Programme/Project	CFF Funding Period	CFF Funding Amount (Project allocation)	2015/16 Spend (as at 31/03/16)
COMMUNITY RENEWAL/ SOCIAL RENEWA	L		
Ligoniel Improvement Association		£145234.00	£138119.78
Total Community/Social Renewal Expenditure			
ECONOMIC RENEWAL			
North Belfast Advice Partnership (Lead Partner Vine Centre) LIA Portion only		£123892.20	£123015.11
Total Economic Renewal Expenditure			
PHYSICAL RENEWAL			
Ligoniel Improvement Association – The Ligoniel Development Project			
		Total Allocation £269126.20	Total Spend £261134.89

ACHIEVEMENTS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUNDING IN 2015/16 YEAR

Community Renewal

Community Output Measures	CR1 - Number of people participating in community relations projects		CR4 - Number of people engaged/involved in unpaid voluntary work	CR6 - Number of people using new or improved community facilities	9	CR9 – N involved promote	CR12 – Number of enquiries and clients by category	CR16 – Number of direct referrals to other support services	CR17 – Value of benefits claimed as a result of advice given £
Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	163	1514	68	1077	13	1509			
North Belfast Advice Partnership – Ligoniel Improvement Association – Welfare and Benefit Support							7501	611	£1829633
Totals	163	1514	68	1077	13	1509	7501	611	£1829633

Education Output Measures from April 2015/16

	aucation Outp	ut Measures i	TOILL APITE	013/10	
PROJECT	SR(ED5) Number of people engaged in parenting/skills development programmes	SR(ED)6 Number of pupils directly benefiting from the project	SR(ED)8 Number of pupils directly benefiting from project	SR(ED)18 Number of pupils directly benefitting from being supported by the project	umb sople scial r phy
Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	56	55	49	29	207

Social Renewal - Health Output Measures from April 2015/16

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PROJECT	SR(H)2 Number of people attending Health education / awareness initiatives	SR(H)4 Number of health education/awareness initiatives provided/delivered	SR(H) 5 Number of people benefiting from new or improved health facilities	SR(H)6 Number of people participating in suicide prevention projects	SR(H) 7 Number of new / improved sports facilities provided	SR(H) 8 Number of people using new sports facilities
Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	108	9	152	79	1	132

Social Renewal - Crime Output Measures from April 2015/16

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PROJECT Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	SR(C)1 – Number of people receiving advice on crime prevention	SR(C)2 – Number of Gommunity safety initiatives implemented	SR(C)3 – Number of people participating/attending community safety initiatives	SR(C)4 Number of crime prevention initiatives implemented	SR(C)5 – Number of g people participating/attending crime prevention initiatives	SR(C) 6 – Number of young people benefiting from youth inclusion/diversionary projects	SR(C) 10 – Number of Speople involved in dealing with the impact of interface issues

Physical Renewal Output Measures from April 2015/16

	oai iteliewa				
PROJECT	PR1 - Area of land improved or reclaimed for open space	PR5 – Number of buildings improved	PR9 – Number of projects improving community facilities	PR10 – Area of land improved and made ready for shared space	PR11 – Number of volunteers/ people involved in physical development and /or environmental improvement
Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	2	2	9	1	38

Economic Renewal Output Measures from April 2015/16

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PROJECT	ER4 - Number of people receiving job specific training	ER5 - Nu participar training p	ER6 Number of new business start ups		ER8 - Number of new business start ups	ER14 – Number of people attaining a formal qualification from participation in adult education	ER15 – Number of FTE jobs safeguarded
Ligoniel Improvement Association – Community Development & Relations	13	10	120	47	4	68	4.8
North Belfast Advice Partnership – Ligoniel Improvement Association – Welfare and Benefit Support							2
Total	13	10	120	47	4	68	6.8

Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership Conclusion

In the 2015/16 financial year, Ligoniel Village Neighbourhood Partnership total overall spend was £261,134.89 broken down as follows:

Community / Social Renewal - £138,119.78

Economic Renewal - £123,015.11

Physical Renewal – £0.00



Belfast Regeneration Office

North, Greater Shankill Office & Girdwood Team

North City Business Centre

2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT11 8GZ