

# WRITTEN CONSULTATION RESPONSES TO THE COMMUNITY COHESION STRATEGY 2015 - 2020

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Consultee	Consultee Response	NIHE Response
Supporting Communities NI	<p>Generally supportive.</p> <p>SHRP key strategic driver for Community Cohesion Strategy – strong partnership working is crucial to implement priorities identified within the programme.</p>	<p>Accepted – The Housing Executive work in collaboration with SCNI &amp; The Housing Community Network to roll out the DSD's Tenant Participation Strategy 2015-2020, through the facilitation of Tenant Scrutiny Panels.</p>
Derry City and Strabane District Council	<p>Generally supportive</p> <p>Pages 13-28: The impact of previous strategies on communities should be highlighted in the document.</p> <p>Pages 29-31: Mainstreaming of Good Relations should be fully progressed within the lifetime of the strategy.</p> <p>Urban Villages should be included in the draft document.</p> <p>Hate Crime Policy and Toolkit should complement any local or national initiatives in place. Local GR Teams should be consulted with regards to hate crime policy and 'Toolkit' to ensure that initiatives such as 'Hands off my Friend' are promoted.</p> <p>'Hard issues' of Bonfires, Emblems and Sectional Symbols should be addressed in a meaningful and inclusive way.</p> <p>Further Information on BRIC 2 would have been useful in terms of scope and priorities for the program.</p>	<p>Noted – The information provided on pages 13-28 of the Community Cohesion Strategy adequately covers previous strategies.</p> <p>Accepted – The Housing Executive fully concurs.</p> <p>Accepted – The Strategy will include Urban Villages on page 10</p> <p>Noted – The Hate Harassment Toolkit was developed by the Housing Executive in partnership with other organisations to provide tenants, staff and the general public with information about Hate Harassment.</p> <p>Accepted – The Housing Executive fully concurs.</p> <p>Not Accepted – An overview of the BRIC 2 program is sufficient for the Strategy</p>

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	<p>It is essential that this work is prioritised in a reducing budget environment to ensure that all communities continue to foster Good Relations.</p>	<p>Accepted – The Housing Executive is fully committed to ensuring that all communities continue to foster Good Relations.</p>
<p>Housing Rights</p>	<p>Important for NIHE to encourage local communities to be more involved in developing Cohesion. Facilitate community leaders/activists to encourage communities to be welcoming and inclusive. Specific attention should be given to involving those who are easy to ignore (poor communication skills, disabled, mental health problems).</p> <p>Practical steps should be taken to improve the response from NIHE in helping victims of intimidation/harassment and review the availability of temporary accommodation to help minority ethnic communities. The Traveller community should be included in the final strategy.</p> <p>The Housing Executive should consider establishing a specific point of contact within the organization for victims of hate crime.</p> <p>The Housing Executive should look at what measures can be utilized to speed up responding to the needs of people living in danger.</p> <p>Better protocols and communication between the PSNI and the Housing Executive to accelerate the process of rehousing those in a dangerous situation – Information Sharing Protocol <i>Information Request Pro-Forma</i> needs to include deadlines for the receipt of information for quicker processing of intimidation points.</p>	<p>Accepted – Communities are encouraged to be welcoming and inclusive through Community Cohesion-funded projects and events. The Housing Executive has a Service Level Agreement with and provides funding to Disability Action to facilitate the Disability Forum, which has representatives throughout Northern Ireland. The Housing Executive also engages with communities through the Housing Community Network.</p> <p>Noted – The Race Relations element of this strategy will be subject to further review (and consultation) once the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy is released. The Traveller Community is included in The Hate Harassment Toolkit, which was launched in October 2015 and sign-posts victims of Hate Harassment.</p> <p>Noted – The Transformation Department is responsible for examining how best to streamline the Housing Executive’s services and protocols. Staff in all of our 34 District Offices deal with Hate Crime. The Housing Executive works in partnership with the PSNI on a number of schemes and initiatives, including the HIPA Scheme. We also have representatives involved in Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. The overall purpose of these bodies is to help make communities safer and to ensure that the views of local people are heard on policing and community safety issues.</p>

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	<p>The Hate Incident Practical Action Scheme needs to be widely promoted and clear indication as to who a victim of a hate crime should contact in an emergency.</p> <p>Fundamental review of the Social Housing Allocation Policy should consider the impact of change on minority ethnic groups.</p> <p>NIHE should consider additional measures to help sustain tenancies through mediation.</p> <p>The Housing Executive should address the issue of permanent housing and availability/provision in relation to temporary accommodation with regards to black and minority people – ensure that the providers of temporary accommodation have adequate policies and procedures in place to create a safe environment.</p>	<p>Accepted – There are leaflets containing information about the HIPA Scheme, which were updated in March 2015 and are available at any of our 34 District Offices. The leaflets were included in packs distributed at the Hate Harassment Toolkit launch. The Housing Executive website (<a href="http://www.nihe.gov.uk">www.nihe.gov.uk</a>) also contains easily accessible information on the HIPA Scheme.</p> <p>Noted – DSD is currently reviewing the Social Housing Allocation Policy.</p> <p>Noted – The Housing Executive’s Community Safety Team offer mediation in cases where there are neighbour-neighbour disputes. For more information contact Sharon Stuart. The Community Cohesion Unit offers community-community mediation. The Housing Executive is also in the process of refining a Sustaining Tenancies Policy.</p> <p>Noted – The Housing Executive makes considerate efforts to ensure that all temporary accommodation meets the needs and guarantees the safety of black and minority ethnic tenants. This comment will be referred to our Homeless Support Unit for appropriate response.</p>
<p>Linda Hutchinson, Northern Ireland</p>	<p>More specific and explicit commitments to Race Relations up to 2020.</p> <p>In paragraph 5 on page 5, the word colonized is inappropriate and should</p>	<p>Noted – The Race Relations element of this strategy will be subject to further review (and consultation) once the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy is released.</p> <p>Accepted - The word 'colonised' will be changed to 'constrained'.</p>

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<p>Housing Executive</p>	<p>be changed to either restricted or constrained.</p> <p>In paragraph 1 on page 6 “all the work undertaken under the strategy will be reflective of the overall aims of the Government’s 2013 “Together: Building a United Community” strategy (TBUC)” <i>and any further Race Equality Strategy</i>.</p> <p>Race Equality Strategy should be mentioned on page 8. Alternatively a shorter line could be added here and fuller details under Key strategic drivers for the Community Cohesion Strategy (Page 25).</p> <p><i>The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014 - 2024 currently being developed, will establish a framework for Government departments (and others):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>to tackle racial inequalities and to open up opportunity for all;</i></li> <li>- <i>to eradicate racism and hate crime; and</i></li> <li>- <i>along with Together: Building a United Community, to promote good race relations and social cohesion.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The Strategy also sets out six strategic aims that the Executive will pursue in eradicating racism and tackling racial inequalities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Elimination of Racial Inequality</i></li> <li>- <i>Combating racism and hate crime</i></li> <li>- <i>Equality of Service Provision</i></li> <li>- <i>Participation</i></li> <li>- <i>Social Cohesion</i></li> </ul>	<p>Accepted – The statement ‘<i>and any further Race Equality Strategy</i>’ will be added to the original sentence.</p> <p>Accepted – The paragraph will be included in the strategy</p>
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<p>- <i>Capacity Building</i>  <i>The Housing Executive will reflect these aims in a refreshed Race Relations Policy.</i></p> <p>On Page 9. 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 the people in danger as a result of community conflict or <i>hate harassment</i>.          Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a <i>diverse</i> and divided society.          Table on page 9 should read Race Relations policy not strategy.          Page 12: It says 2015-2018 while the cover says 2015-2020.          Page 12: To contribute to the creation of a more stable....<i>diverse</i> and divided society.”          Page 16-Just a Race Relations Policy.          Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The BME Housing Forum <del>engages</del> engaged directly...</li> <li>- The implementation of a Hate <del>Crime</del>-Harassment Policy... (<i>I haven't seen a Hate Crime Policy?</i>)</li> <li>- The implementation of a Hate <del>Crime</del> Harassment 'Tool Kit'.</li> <li>- Supporting supported the provision of advocacy workers for</li> </ul>	<p>Accepted – The Strategy will incorporate the suggested changes.</p> <p>Accepted – The word 'engages' will be changed to 'engaged'.</p> <p>Accepted – the word 'crime' will be changed to 'Harassment' in both instances.</p> <p>Noted – The sentence will be changed to acknowledge the fact that we still support the provision of advocacy workers for the BME sector in Ballymena and Newry, whilst also acknowledging the fact that we have supported the provision of LGBT and</p>
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<p>Chinese...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Developed innovative specialist support for minority ethnic tenants, victims of hate harassment and refugees.</i></li> </ul> <p>Page 29: Embedding Good Relations within the Housing Executive <i>Opportunities for specialist services developed for minority ethnic tenants to be incorporated into mainstream services will be identified.</i></p> <p>Add under the conclusion: <i>Training will be delivered to all the <b>actors</b> normally involved in policy making at all levels and at all stages to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are central to policy making, policy implementation, policy review and service delivery.</i></p> <p>Page 31 to add to the Race Equality Strategy 2014-2024 and its aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To tackle racial inequalities and to open up opportunity for all,</li> <li>- To eradicate racism and hate crime, and</li> <li>- Along with Together: Building a United Community, to promote good race relations and social cohesion.</li> </ul> <p>Page 33-Aims and objectives-minor changes as proposed above for page 9.</p> <p>Page 35. Theme 2: Race Relations</p>	<p>Disability advocates.</p> <p>Accepted – This point will be included in the Community Cohesion Strategy.</p> <p>Noted – This will be included in the summary section of the Community Cohesion Strategy.</p> <p>Noted – The paragraph will be included under the conclusion with some minor changes to the wording.</p> <p>Noted – This is a re-iteration of the paragraph that is being included on page 8.</p>
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	<p>Just policy (not strategy)</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrate a clear and positive commitment to tackling race issues through the Housing Executive's <i>new</i> (2015-2020) Race Relations Policy.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Continue to deliver the HIPA (Hate Incident Practical Action) scheme on behalf of the Department of Justice <i>and PSNI</i> to support victims of hate crime.</li> </ul>	<p>Accepted – The word 'strategy' will be changed to 'policy'.</p> <p>Noted – the word 'updated' will be used instead of 'new'.</p> <p>Not Accepted – There is no change to the original point.</p> <p>Accepted – The PSNI will be included in this point.</p>
<p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council</p>	<p>Meaningful liaison with the local government sector to avail of knowledge and expertise when developing and delivering programmes – especially those which have a direct community planning and Good Relations impact.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to more fully outlining and acknowledging the role of community planning and how the Housing Executive will play a role and make a positive contribution to developing each Local Government area's Community Plan and Local Area Plan.</p>	<p>Noted – The Housing Executive works with a number of governmental agencies to improve expertise, a list of which can be provided upon request.</p> <p>Noted – Community Planning is mentioned on page 10 and page 32 of the Community Cohesion Strategy. It would be beneficial to look at the Housing Executive's Housing Investment Plans, which are the "comprehensive conversation piece" for the housing element of community planning". Needs will be identified and monitored and we will engage in the delivery process as agreed in the Plan. Stephen Semple is the lead officer and will be rolling this out.</p>

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David McNarry, United Kingdom Independence Party	Generally supportive comments.	Noted with appreciation
Chartered Institute of Housing Northern Ireland	Generally supportive comments.	Noted with appreciation
Belfast City Council	<p>Generally supportive.</p> <p>In areas where information from both agencies can contribute to addressing good relations indicators, it would be beneficial to look at ways in which these could be undertaken on a joint basis.</p> <p>Would like to look at the NIHE Sectional Symbols database in relation to the Council's assets. Protocols, guidelines and good practice need to be shared and lessons learned to facilitate communities which wish to address these issues.</p>	<p>Accepted – The Housing Executive has worked in partnership with Belfast City Council on several projects, and welcomes any future opportunity to work in partnership with them to promote and enhance Good Relations.</p> <p>Noted – A recent meeting between Belfast City Council and the Housing Executive's GIS team took place to progress Data Sharing Protocols. These will be considered in order to align the Housing Executive's Good Relations Plan with that of the Council's.</p>



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Northern  
Ireland  
housing  
Council

Would like to enforce the importance of tenant involvement and the need for open communication with community groups to build stronger sustainable neighbourhoods.

Concerned that movement of tenants or sale of properties within a designated shared neighbourhood would cause an imbalance of the community make up – recommend that measures be put in place to address this issue and retain balance without engineering waiting lists.

Concerns about the changing status and role of the Housing Community Network – regular engagement with local communities & tenant Associations etc. is being replaced by Tenant Scrutiny Panels – Change of current structure has not been explained & The Housing Council supports the HCN which is well-established and best placed to engage with local communities.

Supports 5 key themes and request regular progress updates.

Noted – The Housing Executive are dedicated to rolling out the DSD Tenant Participation Strategy 2015-2020 by working in partnership with many local government and statutory agencies to facilitate this provision of Tenant Scrutiny Panels. This is highlighted through the Community Involvement Strategy 2014-2017.

Noted – The Housing Executive’s Community Cohesion Strategy addresses issues of Segregation and Integration and this is delivered through our BRIC 2 programme.

Noted – This is an issue which is not directly related to the Community Cohesion Strategy. The Tenant Scrutiny Panels are a stipulation of DSD’s Tenant Participation Strategy 2015-2020. The Housing Community Network and the development of Tenant Scrutiny Panels are facilitated through the Community Involvement Strategy 2014-2017, and this was consulted upon. However, if communities wish to develop Tenant Scrutiny Panels then the Housing Executive will support them.

Noted – The Cohesion Manager has delivered an initial presentation on the Community Cohesion Strategy, and will liaise with the NI Housing Council’s secretariat regarding future progress updates.

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CRC

Concerned that those who face intimidation are moved from their homes, rather than identifying the intimidator and dealing with the threat through the judicial system.

Problems exist around gatekeepers and victims are reluctant to report incidents – they must be considered seriously in any strategy regarding Community Cohesion.

NILTS (2014) reported that 78% of respondents would prefer much more or a bit more mixing where they live – These attitudes should help inspire and steer the final strategy and encourage NIHE to be ambitious for the future of cohesive communities.

Strategy is lacking in ambition – important to include a vision statement for Community Cohesion, rather than a ‘statement of intention’. Refer to the Institute for Cohesion.

Urge NIHE to develop a vision statement which reflects on existing statements as well as the local attitudes that aspire to greater shared living.

Noted – Tenants are encouraged to report any intimidation to the Housing Executive and the PSNI. Intimidation is dealt with as quickly as possible when reported to us. Ensuring tenant safety is paramount to the Housing Executive.

Accepted – The Community Cohesion Unit work to break down barriers through joined-up thinking and collaborative working between and within communities, agencies and individuals. Community cohesion depends ultimately on trust and safety and we do all we can to help to build that trust and safety for our tenants. The Community Cohesion Unit work in collaboration with statutory agencies and community partners to deliver the best outcomes for the community through our Community Safety Strategy, our Community Involvement Strategy and our Community Safety Strategy.

Accepted – the Housing Executive fully concurs with this statement and is dedicated to delivering OFMDFM’s TBUC objective of delivering 10 shared new build schemes.

Not Accepted – Our vision for housing is *“One in which housing plays its part in creating a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous and fair society.”* This reflects the overall vision of the Housing Executive in *“Fostering vibrant communities”*. The Housing Executive’s Community Cohesion Strategy is one of the most innovative and far-reaching of any governmental agency and we provide best practice guidance to governmental and statutory bodies and local councils, as well as the wider community for Good Relations.

Noted – The Race Relations element of this strategy will be

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Urge NIHE to develop and include detailed goals for reducing segregation and hate crime.

Cross-reference exact details of Policy developments (shared housing schemes, environmental improvements, surplus MoD assets) contained in 'Building a Prosperous and United Community; One Year On' publication to the proposed actions in the strategy – trace progression on strategic announcements.

Updates on how the Peace IV monies will help compliment the strategy objectives – shared spaces is a specific objective.

Important for Community Cohesion Strategy to align itself to Community Safety Strategy as the two are inextricably linked. Ensure Community Safety support packages are in place to help develop safe, open and accessible residential areas.

CRC is concerned at the high levels of hate crime – there is an increasing urgency for the Executive to publish and implement a robust Racial Equality Strategy to drive forward strategic actions. NIHE will need to adjust this strategy when RES emerges.

Review NIHE Race Relations policy – involve an examination of the Common Platform's response to the RES consultation and develop and incorporate appropriate actions.

NIHE should be seen to take action to deal with hate incidents and crime – ensure the safety and residency of individuals and families.

The strategy should pay attention to existing and emerging research. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Peace Monitoring Report advised that we know very little about how

subject to further review (and consultation) once the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy is released.

Noted – The Housing Executive will consider how best to trace progression of these policy developments with cross-reference to the proposed actions in the Community Cohesion Strategy.

Noted – Regular updates on the work of the Community Cohesion Unit are contained in the Housing Executive's Quarterly Equality Reports.

Accepted – The Housing Executive fully concurs.

Noted – The Race Relations element of this strategy will be subject to further review (and consultation) once the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy is released. The Hate Harassment Toolkit was developed by the Housing Executive in partnership with other organisations to provide tenants, staff and the general public with information about Hate Harassment.

Noted – The Race Relations element of this strategy will be subject to further review (and consultation) once the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy is released.

Noted – This is demonstrated in the Hate Harassment Toolkit and through our Community Safety Framework.

Noted – The Housing Executive will continue to monitor

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much sharing goes on and that qualitative studies are needed. This is an important area for further exploration and the 'lived experience' of those living in shared/mixed areas must be heard and used to shape emerging policy and practice.

Examine how the final strategy will support the development of social capital in order to affirm bonding and continue a sense of community. CRC recommends a mapping exercise of social capital at local level. An analysis of how bridging and bonding capital are currently supporting the development of cohesive communities would support the development and implementation of the strategy.

Develop approaches that help community cohesion – enhanced community representation from members of BME communities.

Important to maximize partnership working arrangements for shared learning/practice or capacity issues/engagement.

Fear must be addressed in order to deliver equality and meet objective need. It is imperative that people can move to and live where they want regardless of community background or race.

The strategy must consider the broader context of the housing market and a shrinking estate. A collective approach is needed to deal with the complex housing market – NIHE cannot tackle segregated living by just focusing on social housing.

information as it evolves, for research and evaluation. The Research Department, headed by Joe Frey are currently developing a report on 'Mapping Segregation'.

Noted – The Housing Executive work closely with local communities to develop social capital at local level.

Accepted – The Housing Executive is constantly developing approaches to promote community cohesion and enhance community representation. The Housing Community Network's Tenant Scrutiny Panels are one such approach.

Noted – The Housing Executive has partnership working arrangements with many other organisations, including the Housing Community Network, Supporting Communities NI, the Central Housing Forum, NI Youth Forum, Disability Action, Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium, Regenerate, Charter NI and the Rural Community Network.

Accepted – The Housing Executive fully concurs.

Noted – The Housing Executive has a Research Department which produces an Annual Review of the Housing Market. This is available on our website [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk). The DSD Housing Branch is also exploring innovative ways to tackle segregated living.

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The final strategy should include an action plan with timetabled targets, accountable structures/staffing and outcomes. Indicate tools used to monitor progress and indicate relevant partners for successful implementation.

Examine how implementation of this strategy has a positive influence on contact. Implementation and monitoring processes should aim to reveal how actions support the development of strong, confident communities – bonding and bridging. Engage with internal stakeholders to maintain and develop a sense of community.

The final strategy should indicate the level of resources being allocated for each action.

Commitments and targets relating to shared/mixed/good relations interventions span both Landlord and Regional divisions – joint engagement and planning for programme development delivery and implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Knowledge should be proactively harnessed.

Inclusion of a question and answer section or separate response booklet, with relevant contact details for responding, and including ‘draft’ wording throughout the strategy would have strengthened the overall consultation process.

The draft strategy should be equality screened and the documentation should be available alongside the consultation document.

Accepted – The Community Cohesion Strategy details our Five Core Themes and illuminates how these will be addressed in an outcome-based approach. The Summary outlines how the strategy will be taken forward.

Accepted – The Housing Executive will monitor how the implementation of Community Cohesion policies supports the development of strong, confident communities, and liaise with internal and external stakeholders to support this.

Not Accepted – the Housing Executive is not in a position to provide this detail.

Accepted – The Housing Executive promotes joint engagement and planning between Landlord and Regional divisions of the organisation, and places great value on the proactive harnessing of information.

Noted – The Housing Executive acknowledges this input and will proactively consider the suggestion for future consultation processes.

Accepted – The Community Cohesion Strategy has been equality screened by our Equality Manager, and a copy of the Equality Screening Report can be made available on request.