

# Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium

## E-Newsletter: April 2014

Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium (BCRC) is a citywide cross-community partnership working to *empower interface communities to develop the tools and resources to manage and address conflict transformation within their local areas and across the city of Belfast, underpinned by a community development ethos*. BCRC has secured Peace III funding to deliver a peace building programme until June 2014. Below is a brief update on some of our recent and upcoming project activities.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like further information. You can also find more details on the project and our activities on our website, which is currently being upgraded: [www.bcrc.eu](http://www.bcrc.eu)

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This project is part-financed by the European Union's European Regional Development Fund through the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. [www.seupb.eu](http://www.seupb.eu)

BCRC is supported by four partner organisations: Falls Community Council (lead agency) | Charter NI | EPIC | Intercomm

## Capacity Building & Training

As part of our objective to “develop and deliver a community connections leadership/capacity building programme targeting youth, community and women leaders from interface communities”, BCRC is planning a number of capacity building and training events in the near future, including ‘Tendering & Procurement of Services’. The project has also recently provided 16 people with the opportunity to take part in University of Ulster’s APEL training.

### *Tendering & Procurement of Services*

This training will be held over two consecutive Thursday’s, **8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014, 9.30-15.30 in Falls Community Council** and will be delivered by Copius Consulting. The training will be practical and based around a relevant ‘real life’ Terms of Reference. Key learning outcomes will include:

- Participants will develop an understanding of a practical approach to partnership working and collaboration;
- Participants will be better prepared to manage the transition from grant funding to tenders and commissioned contracts;
- Participants will have a greater understanding of the need for appropriate management and governance structure for organisations involved in large project management;
- Participants will have a greater appreciation of cost recovery and pricing models for commissioned contracts and services;
- Participants will develop a practical understanding of how to prepare winning tenders.

**Please email [info@bcrc.eu](mailto:info@bcrc.eu) or phone 90202030 to reserve a place.** The training is free but places are limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis with a deadline set for Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 12.00 noon. *Note that participants should be available to attend both days of training.*

### **APEL**

Through collaborative working and engagement with community relations/development workers and activists from across Belfast, BCRC identified a real appetite from various projects and initiatives to develop and enhance existing skills and experience for their staff and volunteers. Many of those we spoke to have been working in the community development and peace building sector for years without pursuing professional qualifications but who expressed a desire to increase their capacity and core competencies in a more formal and structured format and setting to place more value on their learning and experience.

Based on those conversations and engagements, the Project investigated the potential opportunities that currently exist to provide training courses and/or qualifications that would capture and value the experience and learning already acquired by these workers and activists. During the summer months, BCRC provided 16 people with the opportunity to take part in University of Ulster’s APEL course, a fast track course that enables participants to convert community/voluntary sector experience into university credits. Along with a portfolio of Learning

Outcomes it also offers the prospect of entry into the second year of the BSc Honours Community Development degree course. In addition to providing progression routes to those working in the sector, it is anticipated that this course will help sustain and professionalise the work of those that contribute to peace building and conflict transformation work underpinned by a community development ethos. Seven of the course participants are now looking at funding options to enable them to continue onto the second year of the Community Development degree course.

## Anti-Sectarianism Toolkit

BCRC have appointed ICR (Institute for Conflict Research) to produce an Anti-Sectarianism Toolkit and Training Model on behalf of the project. As acknowledged in the 'Together: Building a United Community Strategy' issued by OFMDFM in May 2013, sectarianism continues to form one of the main divides within society and we also recognise, as outlined in the ministerial document, that everyone has a role to play in tackling this issue. For our part we believe that the development of a pilot toolkit and training programme with a focus on sectarianism will help make a positive contribution towards the implementation of the strategy.

The aims of the toolkit include defining sectarianism within local/national/international contexts as well as distinguishing between local and urban settings, outlining the history of sectarianism and the different forms that the phenomenon takes and also providing a summary and analysis of what models exist to tackle it locally and worldwide. In addition, the contractor will provide an outline of a pilot training programme that can be rolled out by BCRC within the local context of Belfast as well as beyond. The Toolkit will further include a draft anti-sectarianism charter for use by BCRC during the delivery phase of the training.

## 'The Hungry Thirties': Shared History Youth Event

At the end of September 2013, BCRC invited a selection of young people from across Belfast to attend a Shared History Event as an extension of the project's broader shared history programme, 'Acknowledging the Past: Building for the Future'. The event was organised with an aim to begin engaging young people in a conversation of our complex history and included presentations by local historians Bobby Foster and Tom Hartley on the theme of 'the Hungry Thirties'. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session and feedback indicates that there is an appetite among young people to engage with issues around shared and contested history and how this connects to the present day.

Previous shared history programme activities organised by BCRC include a cross-community study visit to Dublin dealing with the decade 1910-1920, tours of the Milltown, City and Shankill cemeteries/graveyards as well as talks on Remembering/Forgetting World War I, Nationalism & the Ulster Covenant and The Legacy of the 1886-1912 Home Rule Bills. Further events and talks are being planned for the coming months and details of these will be circulated by email and advertised on our website, [www.bcrc.eu](http://www.bcrc.eu).

## Building Sustainable Communities: Challenges & Opportunities

### *Interface Survey & Conference*

During workshops held by BCRC across Belfast in early 2008, it was made clear that the key issues of concern for interface communities fall into six overall categories: community safety and policing, youth, education, employment, health and, not least, housing and development. On the back of these workshops and BCRC's ongoing work in interface communities across the city, a position paper on interfaces was produced in 2010 which outlined a response to the ongoing discussion on peace walls and barriers, stressing the importance of addressing the underlying issues in interface areas, i.e. the causes and not just the symptoms. BCRC concludes that "the issue of interface walls and barriers needs to be seen in the context of local regeneration of interface areas in which residents and local communities decide their priorities and give direction for strategies to improve the living conditions of residents." On this basis, BCRC believes that the issue of regeneration and development in interface areas has received insufficient attention and that the barriers to building sustainable communities therefore need to be further investigated.

In November 2012, BCRC therefore commissioned CMWorks to carry out a survey on the theme of *Building Sustainable Communities: the Regeneration and Development of Interface Communities*. The survey focused on an examination of potential barriers that persist regarding the regeneration and development of interface communities and recommendations for overcoming these. The key objectives of the research included:

- To assess the impact and effectiveness of existing regeneration processes using four case studies in designated parts of the city.
- To examine and provide analysis as to why interface communities remain within the most deprived wards in the city.
- To identify potential physical and economic opportunities within each of the designated areas.
- To make recommendations on how potential opportunities can be developed and incorporated into existing and future regeneration processes.

On the back of the research and related themes, a conference was organised at Radisson Blu Hotel in Belfast on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and a number of speakers were invited to contribute, including Cecilia Whitehorn (CMWorks), Jonny Byrne (University of Ulster), Brian McKeivitt (Terry Enright Foundation) and BCRC Steering Group members Tom Roberts, Sean Murray and Billy McQuiston. We would like to thank all those who took the time to contribute to and take part in the event.

For a copy of the research report and executive summary, please visit our website [www.bcrc.eu](http://www.bcrc.eu) or send us an email at [info@bcrc.eu](mailto:info@bcrc.eu).

## Emerging Leaders Programme

Based on its ongoing work in interface communities across Belfast, BCRC identified a need for building positive leadership among young people as well as to bridge the gap between youth work and interface work. As a result of this and following extensive consultation with youth providers across Belfast during the summer months of 2012, an advisory group was set up to guide the first phase of BCRC's Emerging Leaders Youth Programme. The programme started in early October 2012 and its first phase finished in December 2012, involving 12 young people from north, east, south and west Belfast. Nine young people completed the full programme and received an OCN accreditation in Youth & Community. The first phase of the Emerging Leaders programme further included a team building residential and weekly sessions on a variety of themes relevant to the building of leadership skills as well as local community projects. BCRC representatives also engaged directly with the young people during a session on conflict resolution. During June-August 2013 the second phase of the programme was delivered, involving a further 12 young people from across the city. The overall focus on developing youth leadership remained during this phase which also consisted of facilitated sessions on related themes, a teambuilding residential as well as completion of relevant OCN accreditation.

## Ongoing Local Engagements

As part of our objective to provide support and assistance to local groups and networks, BCRC continues to engage with stakeholders and local processes across the city on an ongoing basis. BCRC's key focus remains on interface communities across Belfast with a particular emphasis on engagements with residents, local groups and networks; the prevention of and dealing with interface incidents and violence; parallel to working with local groups and initiatives. As part of this work, the project has an ongoing engagement with some 30+ local groups and networks and team members also continue to engage with statutory agencies on issues related to interface areas. The examples below only provide a snapshot of the Local Engagement work and activities that BCRC is involved in.

### ***Black Mountain Shared Space Project***

One example of this work is the Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP). From its inception, BCRC team members and steering group representatives have been instrumental in the development of the project. BMSSP began to take shape following cross-community discussions from 2007 onwards to address local issues and concerns in the area of the Upper Springfield/Moyard/New Barnsely and Springmartin/Highfield in West Belfast. The project was formalised in March 2012 and has received funding through Belfast City Council's Peace III programme as well as support from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Community Relations Council. The project's aims include the development of a shared space and community asset by regenerating a vacant site (Finlay's Factory Site) in the area and a feasibility study has also been commissioned by BMSSP in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. IFI Peace Walls Programme funding has recently been received to deliver a project as part of the

broader BMSSP remit in the area and BCRC would like to wish its former Outreach Development Worker, Seamus Corr, every success in his role as Manager for the BMSSP Peace Walls project.

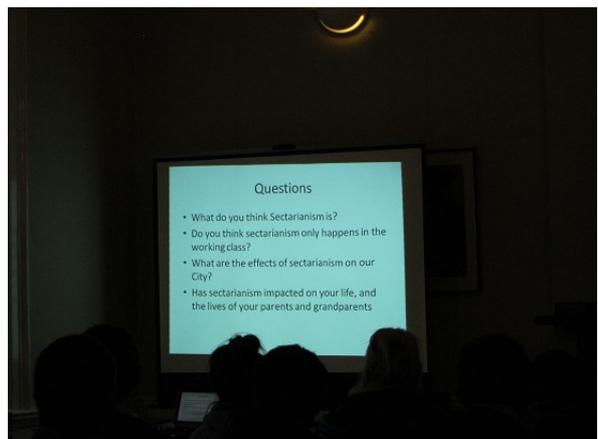
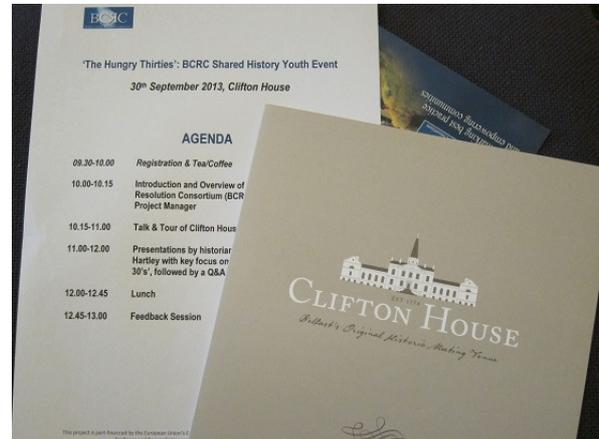
### ***Sliabh Dubh Art Project***

BCRC staff have also been involved in supporting a visual arts and reimagining project in the Sliabh Dubh area of West Belfast. The 'Superheroes Project' resulted in bespoke artwork (featuring various superheroes) replacing graffiti on a wall in the local area. The mural was designed by local young people, created by mural artist Danny Devanny and commissioned by the BRIC programme with the broader aim to build understanding and relationships in the community. The project has benefitted from the support of local residents and young people along with the Upper Springfield Development Trust as well as the Housing Executive. A public launch of the mural was held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

For more information on BCRC's Local Engagement work, please contact [info@bcrc.eu](mailto:info@bcrc.eu).

## Event Photographs

### 'The Hungry Thirties': Shared History Youth Event (September 2013)



## Building Sustainable Communities: Challenges & Opportunities (June 2013)



## Community Safety Research Launch (April 2012)



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