

## Promoting social and economic regeneration in Belfast's interface areas

### IS THERE A PARTICULAR ISSUE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIGHLIGHTED IN INTERFACE?

Send us an article about an issue that you feel needs to be highlighted, or about the work you're doing. Alternatively, BIP can write an article in consultation with you. Or maybe you have some photos of a project you're working on that you'd like published.

Contact Paul Donnelly at paul@belfastinterfaceproject.org or 9024 2828.

### INTERESTED IN JOINING?

Belfast Interface Project has three categories of membership:

- Community group
- Associate
- Individual

If you support our mission statement (see our website for details) and wish to join BIP, please get in touch. We will send you an information pack or our Development Worker, Paul Donnelly, can come out to meet with you.

### BELFAST INTERFACE PROJECT WEBSITE NOW ONLINE!

This useful resource will provide easy access to BIP's publications, programme of work and of course our news-sheet, *Interface* - both for members and for the large number of people looking for information about Belfast's interface communities.

BIP staff will be able to upload news items and publications in-house. New publications will include a report on last year's annual conference, 'Moving on at the Interface?', and a report on the survey of BIP membership needs.

During 2005 we plan to develop other areas of the site - including, for example, a photo gallery, a list of resources for interface community groups, an archive of interface-related materials and a map of Belfast's interfaces.

We welcome all feedback and especially new ideas!

**Check it out at:**  
www.belfastinterfaceproject.org

### GOODBYE AND HELLO!

Belfast Interface Project is an organisation in transition. Our Support Worker Marnie Kennedy is expecting her first baby in April and goes on maternity leave in mid-March. Those of you who have encountered Marnie will have been impressed by her efficiency and her friendly nature. The consensus at BIP is that she is a hard act to follow. We have been extremely fortunate, however, in finding a very able replacement in Genevieve Lennon who has been working with Marnie this month. Genevieve previously worked with Community Dialogue so the new voice on the phone might already be familiar to many of you.

All Marnie's friends at BIP would like to wish her and her partner Simon the very best in the coming weeks and months. We are also delighted to welcome Genevieve to BIP and look forward to working with her between now and September.

*Interface* is the news-sheet of Belfast Interface Project and reflects the views and diversity of our membership groups. *Interface* seeks to promote good practice around interface community issues and increased communication between groups across the city. The editor reserves the right to amend articles where appropriate with the consent of the author. The views expressed in *Interface* do not necessarily represent those of the management committee.



**Belfast Interface Project**

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Belfast Interface Project is funded by the Community Relations Council, the European Programme for Peace and Reconciliation Measure 2.1 and the International Fund for Ireland Community Bridges Programme.



# SUMMER YOUTH AND INTERFACE PROGRAMMES TO GO AHEAD?

By Paul Donnelly

Youth and community workers across Belfast are expressing their concern at the financial difficulties of our Education and Library Boards and asking, 'Will the BELB be funding this year's summer intervention programmes?' Nowhere is this concern more strongly felt than in Belfast's interface communities where the additional monies for summer and diversionary activities, available since 2002, could be in jeopardy.

*Interface* has spoken to Sean McMahon, Development Worker with Lenadoon Community Forum and volunteer Youth Leader at Horn Drive Community Centre, and Arder Carson, Youth Co-ordinator with the Glen Parent Youth Group in West Belfast. Both expressed deep frustration at the administration of the summer intervention and interface programmes. Particularly highlighted were ongoing problems in the relationships with the Department of Education, the BELB Youth Service and workers like themselves who try to plan and co-ordinate summer programmes from early in the year. Specifically, criticism was made about the

timescale for the release of information on funding from the Department to the Board to the groups. The late release of that funding - sometimes in early July - when money, or at least the promise of it, is needed in advance for effective planning of activities - was cited as a major concern. Interestingly, an independent evaluation commissioned by the Board into their summer programmes recommended in 2004 that:

**'The Board should be informed in March of the expected allocation and funding should be received no later than May'.**

Many youth workers would argue for an even earlier timetable to ensure the best delivery of services for young people, particularly in terms of planning and spending the additional interface monies.

There is recognition, shared by Arder and Sean, that the programmes are extremely important and that the interface funds have been welcomed by community groups and youth workers. This is despite the introduction by the

Board in 2003 of guidelines regarding issues such as transport costs that, some youth workers feel, have created difficulties in delivering actual programmes 'on the ground'.

*Interface* has contacted a number of Board personnel and emailed questions asking if the summer funding programmes will go ahead this year. As we go to print we have just had an indication from the Board that an administrative procedure is being prepared for a 'summer interface and social inclusion programme' which, if implemented, should make more money available in July and August.

One thing that is clear, however, is that youth and community workers in interface areas of Belfast need, ideally, to be reassured that the summer funding programmes will go ahead.

The position for the BELB is clearly difficult, but is there a more constructive way in which communications and systems could be improved, not least for the workers and volunteers who plan and deliver the summer programmes?

## BIP to launch city wide thematic discussions programme

By Paul Donnelly



Thematic discussions - What do we want to talk about? Photo: Frankie Quinn

Under the auspices of our Communications and Membership Support Project, BIP aims to organise a series of four thematic discussions on a city wide basis between May 2005 and March 2006. As a membership organisation we are keen that the topics for the discussions should come from

amongst our membership. This is your opportunity to put forward your ideas to set the agenda for the discussions.

The first discussion will be held on Thursday 26th May from 10.00 am- 12.30 in the Northern Visions studio at 23 Donegall Street.

*Continued overleaf*

### THIS ISSUE

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**Divided we stand: The Census and Segregation**

**Protestant Interface Network**

**Terry Enright Foundation**

**Member's profile: Terry Watson**

**New Border Generation: Cross-Border Relationship Building**

## BIP to launch city wide thematic discussions programme

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Possible discussion topics might include:

- The use of CCTV cameras at interfaces
- Policy issues for interface communities in the post general election period
- Exchanging good practice in peacebuilding

It's important to us that the sessions are useful and relevant to you. So if you have a suggestion regarding a discussion theme that you think would interest others, or if you'd like to comment on the above suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact Paul or Genevieve at [info@belfastinterfaceproject.org](mailto:info@belfastinterfaceproject.org) or on 9024 2828.

Finally, Northern Visions Television (NvTv), a community-based television service, has expressed an interest in interviewing participants at the discussion. So you may have the opportunity, should you wish, to get your views over to a wider audience on the issue of the day.

*"We are keen that the topics for the discussion should come from amongst our membership"*

# RACE AND ETHNICITY PEOPLE'S COLLEGE

In our first two issues *Interface* reported on initiatives in West and South Belfast which have been intended to support ethnic minority communities and to combat racist attitudes and attacks. For this issue Barbara McCabe, a Lecturer in Adult, Community Education at the Ulster Peoples College (UPC), outlines details of a new UPC course examining concepts of race and gives an insight into the broader thinking informing the course.

Barbara Mc Cabe writes: The Ulster People's College has developed a course entitled 'Race and Ethnicity' examining these concepts. The course includes 10-12 hours of teaching, is accredited to OCN Level 2 and is currently offered free to community groups and individuals. It has already been delivered to a number of groups such as the Rural College Network, Incore and the Chinese Welfare Association. Feedback has been very positive as these statements from the evaluation by participants from Incore illustrate:

"The course gave me a much better understanding of what race and ethnicity is, people's views and the amount of movement throughout the world. I was very surprised by how little I actually knew"

"I have a better understanding of refugees and asylum seekers and the issues they might have to face".

The course is not about legislation, statutory duties or ticking the right boxes. It is about giving people the opportunity to consider what these concepts mean to them, about why the issue has risen to the forefront of the media agenda and how the issue of immigration has quickly claimed centre stage in the forthcoming General Election campaign. For the next few months these issues will get a lot of coverage - but what will we really learn? The course - a mixture of discussion of attitudes, facts and figures as well as ways of accommodating difference, aims to be a positive contribution to the debate

and to bring the issue home to Northern Ireland. It will adapt in order to encourage people to examine the issues that are most relevant to them and their area.

History is dominated by movement – settlers arriving, and emigrants leaving. How many of us have branches of our families in other parts of the world, beyond Northern Ireland? These migrants have not just been economic opportunists - some have fled poverty, oppression and in more recent times the dangers and frustrations of the 'Troubles'. They have been absorbed, tolerated, persecuted or ignored by the societies into which they have arrived. Of course, nothing in human history should lead us to assume that just because this is our history we should tolerate others repeating it.

*"The course gave me a much better understanding of what race and ethnicity is, people's views and the amount of movement throughout the world. I was very surprised by how little I actually knew"*



## interface profile TERRY WATSON

**POST:** I am the Chair of Donegall Pass Community Forum (DPCF). The tenure of the chair is for two years, I'm in my sixth year so that's three terms!

**YOUR COMMUNITY:** Donegall Pass is a tightly knit inner city Protestant community in South Belfast with very clear boundaries defining it. Redevelopment in the 1980's severely reduced the housing stock, some of which was part of a private development which didn't cater for the local population. Whilst the quality of housing improved, we suffered population decline and the disintegration of community spirit.

Today we face many issues. We need more quality three bedroom family houses. We have the traditional interface issues facing many communities, although progress has been strong here.

In addition we have the complex issue about relationships with the Chinese community in Donegall Pass which created negative publicity for the Pass over the plans to develop a Chinese community centre in the area. The area has third generation Chinese families living here and I feel the community has made the Chinese community welcome, historically.

A final issue facing us is that of parking and traffic volume due to the growth of private industries just outside the area.

**LOW POINTS:** Definitely the negative publicity around the issue of the Chinese centre. There was a lack of understanding about this community and people associated it with racist attacks, which is not true. We also received very bad publicity about a racist leaflet, produced by one person, as if it spoke for the community.

**HIGH POINTS:** The community festival in 1995 when we unveiled a Somme mural. We had people come to the festival who hadn't been in the Pass since leaving it nearly 15 years ago! The place had a buzz!

**GOOD PRACTICE:** The meetings with our nationalist neighbours around interface issues and the Gasworks mobile phone network is good practice. The emergence of the Forum was evidence of good practice and there are pieces of youth work in the area which demonstrate good practice.

**YOUR DAY:** I'm in paid employment but my DPCF role takes up a huge amount of spare time. For instance, twice already in this interview my phone has rung on DPCF business! I have responsibility for staff line management and there are times I'll be out watching the interfaces, attending meetings...

**HOBBIES:** Fishing and coaching football...not playing, watching!

# NEW BORDER GENERATION- Building Relationships Across the Island

By Paul Donnelly

BIP met with Michelle McGarry of the County Louth based group, New Border Generation (NBG), in June 2004 to discuss areas of mutual interest in our work. We were particularly interested to learn from Michelle about NBG's work in facilitating contact and relationship building between groups in Southern Ireland and groups from within unionist communities in Belfast. Following this initial contact, we thought it would be useful to produce a short article outlining the history and aims of NBG, in order to make them known to a wider audience.

Michelle McGarry and Clodagh McKeivitt founded the organisation in 1998 with the objective of building bridges of communication and co-operation between communities in Northern and Southern Ireland. The promotion of mutual respect and understanding is sought through the sharing of past experiences and via sharing new experiences as part of the project. Michelle points out that the formation of the group was very much informed by the political landscape at the time, from ceasefires to Canary Wharf and back, and the general sense of change that had accompanied the political Talks process. It was her view that it was a very important time for new relationships to be forged and developed.

The initial partnership formed under the project was between the Cooley Peace Initiative and East Belfast Community Focus. This partnership was based upon community development principles, with a view to establishing a cross border community network as agreed by NBG and groups from Northern Ireland. In 2002 a cross border conference was held, at which it was agreed to formally endorse a funded network. This was realised in April 2004 with the establishment of the 'Island Network of Community Hands' (INCH).



NBG currently aims to support the development of the network over the next three years.

NBG activities since 1998 have included the following:

The production of a video with young people from the Cooley Peninsula and young people from Belfast's Donegall Road, discussing their relationships with each other over a three year period from age sixteen to nineteen.

The hosting, in Carlingford, of over 2,000 young people from within Belfast unionist communities, for discussion programmes related to peace building themes.

The provision of outdoor pursuits and activities such as surfing, rock climbing and quad biking for youth groups.

All projects have included trips to both sides of the border. Groups have also stayed in each other's communities for periods of time.

Whilst the above indicate much emphasis on work with young people, NBG are keen to stress that they work with all age groups.

Similarly, NBG do not work exclusively with unionist communities and have also worked closely with people from the Short Strand area of Belfast, for example. NBG aim to continue this work, assisting in the development of new relationships with groups from Northern Ireland, regardless of political or community background.

For more information, Michelle can be contacted at [michelle@newbordergeneration.org](mailto:michelle@newbordergeneration.org) Finally, NBG's website will go live in a couple of weeks at [www.newbordergeneration.org](http://www.newbordergeneration.org)

# The Terry Enright Foundation By Nichola McIlvenny



Youth leader Nichola McIlvenny makes a presentation to the Enright family

On the 30th November 2001 a meeting was held between Tom O'Dowd, a former colleague of the late Terry Enright, and Seamus Colligan, one of the young people Terry inspired. The purpose of this meeting was to look at the idea of creating a lasting memorial to Terry Enright. The meeting began with a discussion about the possibility of meeting with interested parties or stakeholders, with the purpose of setting up a foundation. Following a number of years of development, the Terry Enright Foundation has been firmly established and the following areas of work have been cultivated.

## Aims

To make a contribution to peace building across sectarian divisions by drawing together young people between the ages of 17 and 25 from all community backgrounds to participate in the Foundation's activities and programmes. The Foundation will continue in its role of nurturing young leadership in this age group.

## Key Areas of Work

### a) Bursary Scheme

The Bursary Scheme offers grants to support young people and youth projects from the areas of greatest disadvantage and need in Belfast. It helps in the region of 150 young people annually. The scheme aims:

- To support personal development;
- To be accessible to all young people;
- To promote opportunities for intercommunity contact through activity and shared experiences;
- To support programmes which reflect the spirit and ethos of the Terry Enright Foundation.

### b) Leadership Programme

The mission of the Terry Enright Leadership Award is to invest in Young people's potential for leadership.

The vision of the Terry Enright Leadership Award is to create a new style of leadership in a post conflict society.

The Leadership Award is a new initiative which will identify, develop and recognise young emerging leaders in disadvantaged communities in Belfast. The leadership programme will seek to work with 20 young leaders per year between the ages of 17 and 25.

It will be modelled on the values and qualities that Terry Enright stood for:

- The importance of peace building;
- The value of role models which young people can identify with;
- The potential of young people from disadvantaged communities.

### c) Challenge

The Terry Enright Challenge is a cross community, team-based outdoor challenge for young people from areas of social need in Belfast.

It aims to develop the young participant's capacity:

- To follow through on a commitment;
- To work as a member of a team;
- To lead others in challenging circumstances;
- To value diversity;

I became involved in the Terry Enright Foundation when I agreed to take part in their Leadership Award. When I started this award I did not realise the opportunities or prospects this would open up for me. The opportunities that opened up for me were challenging but enjoyable. They helped me to grow as a person, to learn to think for myself and to work on my own initiative. I met many new people and gained many friends, people from all over Belfast who I would never have met otherwise. These people gave me both knowledge and insight into other communities from throughout Belfast.

The people involved in the Terry Enright Foundation, both staff and young people, were all very friendly and down to earth. There was never any difference made between the young people or the leaders. Everyone was treated as equals. The way the leaders worked seemed to me to be a very person centred approach. Young people were made the priority. Everyone had a voice and the decision of what they were involved in was entirely up to them. When I was involved in anything with the Terry Enright Foundation I always came away happier, more confident and generally feeling better about myself. The Foundation has had a real, positive influence on my life so far and I hope it carries on having an influence on my life in the future.

The Terry Enright Foundation can be contacted through [www.terryenrightfoundation.org](http://www.terryenrightfoundation.org) or via Seamus Colligan on 9031 2831.

# TRAINING AT THE ULSTER



UPC discussion group. Photo: Paul Donnelly

The problems faced by people arriving in Northern Ireland are not unique; neither are the problems faced by people born in Northern Ireland but belonging to identifiable 'minority ethnic communities'. However, the politics of Northern Ireland, revolving so closely around issues of identity and belonging, leaves little space for people who do not fit into the traditional 'two tribes' - and there are plenty of people belonging to minority ethnic communities who claim this problem too.

Is there a danger in this new found interest in 'race' - is it a good way of avoiding issues 'closer to home'? We are very good at managing to avoid dealing with difficult issues and we are even better at congratulating ourselves when we avoid them. Of course avoiding problems does not make them go away - indeed it can make them worse. Growing evidence of racism in Northern Ireland should not be used as an excuse for ignoring or diminishing the problems we

have in trying (or not trying) to live together. Instead we would be better to see the two problems as related - if we cannot 'live with' people with whom we have a great deal in common, it is hardly surprising that we can't deal with people who seem to be very different... with different religions, different colours, different cultures.

So, if we are to avoid the hand-wringing politeness that ensures we do nothing constructive, we have to get involved, get interested and be prepared to ask the questions and to learn more. Above all, we have to become more comfortable in our own skins in this place we call home and which is increasingly home for people we see as being different from 'us'.

For further information about the course please contact Barbara McCabe on 02890 330131 or on [bmccabe@upclearn.org](mailto:bmccabe@upclearn.org)

*“we have to become more comfortable in our own skins in this place we call home and which is increasingly home for people we see as being different from ‘us’”.*

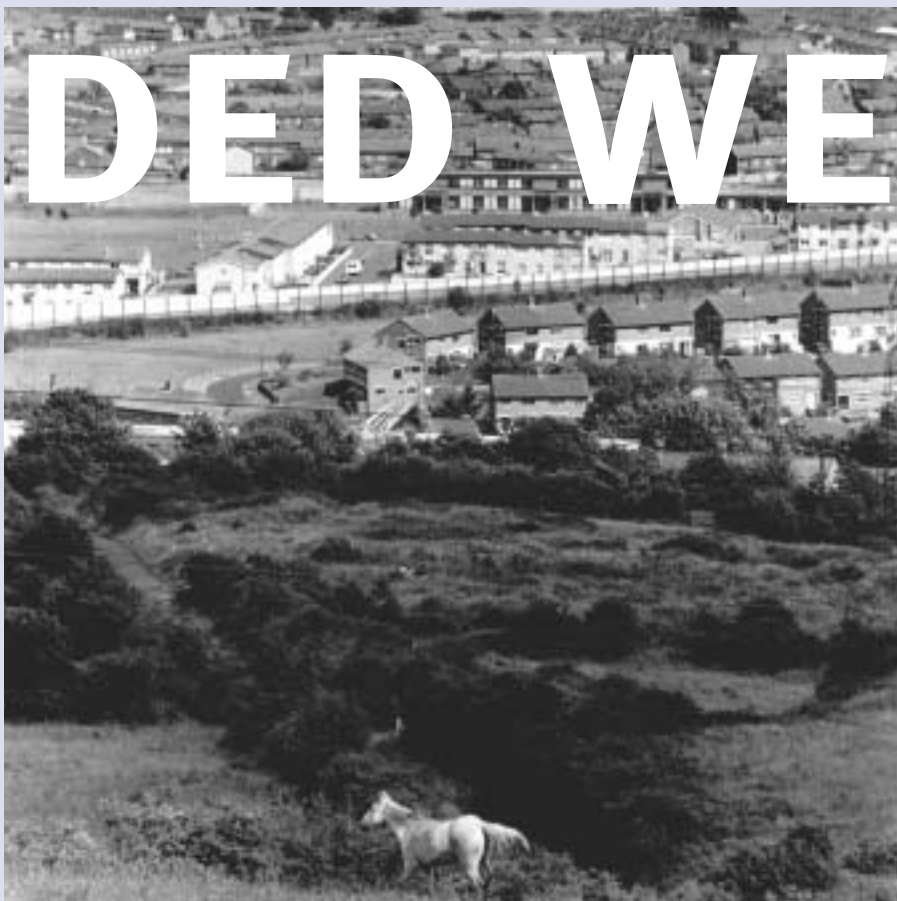
# DIVIDED WE

By Dr. Pete Shirlow

The reproduction of segregation through housing, education, employment and mobility remains an important facet of life and living within Belfast. Around two thirds of people, living within highly segregated communities, identify places that they would not enter if those places are dominated by the 'other' community. Similarly, over 80% would not enter such places at night. Around a half have also concluded that relationships between interfaced communities have worsened since 1994 - a possible reflection of the impact of events such as Drumcree and Holy Cross. In a sense, and despite obvious political change, we remain locked within a form of spatial apartheid within which communities tend to share different lives, cultural norms, employment experiences and political values.

No one would have seriously predicted that historically high levels of segregation would have simply fallen away due to political change, but it may have been expected that politicians and policymakers would have identified the centrality of segregation in relation to the perpetuation of low level conflict and social and cultural separation. In policy terms there remains a stubborn refusal to plan and co-ordinate services and housing within neutral zones so as to alter the nature of social practice and avoidance. The recent Belfast Area Metropolitan Plan plays down the significance of segregation as an institutionalised form that requires radical policy intervention. The Noble Index, which measured access to services, completely failed to recognise that access to services could be undermined by fear. Mobility, it was assumed, was merely based upon how far you were away from a service, despite a whole body of work showing that access was clearly related to patterns of segregation.

According to the 2001 census the population of the Belfast Urban Area stood at 277,391. There was, as shown in Table 1, a near equal split Catholics and Protestants with regard to Community Background. Religion has always been measured within the Northern Ireland Census. However, due to a growth in the non-stating of religion and a need to determine community background with regard to assessing equality agendas, the Community Background variable was introduced. This variable includes those who state their religion and those who do not state a religion but who determine that they come from a particular faith based background. Within Northern Ireland the share of those who did not state their religion was around 14%. In Belfast 214,711 stated their religion as either Catholic or Protestant. An additional 50,967 were attributed with a Community Background<sup>1</sup>. The non-stating of religion among Catholics and Protestants within Belfast was 23.7%.



A view of Belfast. Photo: Frankie Quinn

Table 1: Community Background Northern Ireland

2001 Belfast	Community Background
Total Catholic Population	130,887 (47.2%)
Total Protestant Population	134,791 (48.6%)

Source: Census of Population NI, 2001

73% of those with a Protestant community background live in places that are at least 81% Protestant. This indicates an overwhelming share of those living within what are essentially highly segregated places. A mere 10.7% live in places that are predominantly Catholic (0-40% Protestant). 7% live in the most mixed band within which Protestants constitute between 41 and 60% of the population.

Persons from a Catholic community background tend to live within slightly less segregated environments. 67.3% of those with a Catholic background live in places that are at least 81% Catholic. Slightly fewer Catholics (8.3%) than their Protestant counterparts, live in predominantly Protestant places (0-40% Catholic). More Catholics than Protestants live within the most mixed 41%-60% group, 10.7% compared to 7%.

Table 2: Protestant Community Background by Segregation Level

% Protestant Population Bands	Community Background % of Total Protestant Population in band:
0-20	3.4
21-40	7.3
41-60	7.0
61-80	9.3
81-90	28.4
91-100	44.6

Source: Census of Population NI, 2001

Table 3: Catholic Community Background by Segregation Level

% Catholic Population Bands	Community Background % of Total Catholic Population in band:
0-20	4.7
21-40	3.6
41-60	10.7
61-80	13.8
81-90	9.3
91-100	58.0

Source: Census of Population NI, 2001

There is no doubting that the perpetuation of parallel lives creates dismal spaces between communities that are filled with low level violence and forms of ethnic identification that undermine more shared senses of progress and social and cultural development. The central aims of future interface based work must be to:

- facilitate a proper appreciation of the issues faced by interfaced communities;
- understand how violence and fear impacts upon mobility and the use of facilities;
- indicate to government and policymakers that the removal of fear and prejudice requires an analysis of special needs and policy change;
- understand the complex nature of avoidance strategies between communities;
- understand how fear and violence dilutes the potential for economic

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# STAND

development and normalised patterns of living. In particular to understand how fear may reduce the mobility needed when searching for work;

- provide data and information which sets out to the community the nature of the negative impact of segregation upon 'both' communities;
- fully comprehend what living in and at an interface actually means;

- provide a policy initiative which provides the possibility of linking into all agencies, groups and individuals with a direct interest in the problem of interfaced areas;

- understand the link between fear/violence and the perpetuation of economic and social deprivation.

Dr. Peter Shirlow is a lecturer and researcher at the School of Environmental Sciences in the University of Ulster. He can be contacted at p.shirlow@ulster.ac.uk

1. The adjustment of Census results for respondents who either failed to answer a question, answered inconsistently or answered incorrectly was made possible using an Edit and Donor Imputation System (EDIS) that was devised for the 2001 Census. The system was created to fill in a number of gaps in the records for enumerated people and households. For Community Background the primary matching variables used were Irish Language, Ethnic Group and Age. For this variable the Community Background of the other people in the household was also taken into account. For further information see [http://www.nisra.gov.uk/census/pdf/methodological\\_approach2001.pdf](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/census/pdf/methodological_approach2001.pdf)



Interface: White City. Photo: Frankie Quinn

By Paul Donnelly

Interface met with John Montgomery, a Protestant Interface Network (PIN) co-ordinator in the White City area in outer North Belfast, to learn about PIN's origins, aims and activities. We later attended a presentation by the group at Stormont in February 2005, sponsored by Sir Reg Empey MLA.

PIN was formed in 2002 with the support of the Ulster Political Research Group who had been working on the interfaces, within Protestant/unionist communities, in a bid to reduce tensions and end sectarian attacks.

As a direct result of an upsurge in interface violence, a group of community workers, church leaders, local councillors, PSNI and paramilitaries met and decided that action needed to be taken to assist people living in the areas. The action taken was the formation of PIN.

Expanding on the history of the group, John identified several key aspects of the thinking behind the network. "In many ways we were responding to the 'blame game' as we saw it, being directed against our communities" explained John, "we needed to give expression to the views of actual communities suffering from

violence and then being badly portrayed by the media". One of PIN's primary concerns was that relationships between unionist communities and the police were being damaged. PIN has since sought to liaise with the PSNI and loyalist communities and groups in order to ease tensions. To this end PIN have strongly supported the use of CCTV cameras at interfaces, arguing that they are a deterrent against violence which 'gives people space' from its ongoing pressures. "The main aim of PIN is to encourage the community to be pro-active and not re-active; it is our belief that violence is counter productive", emphasised John.

Speaking at the Stormont presentation, overall PIN co-ordinator Beverly Davidson outlined that the network receives no core funding and that all of its workers are volunteers from unionist areas across Northern Ireland. The network has been sustained by around 25 volunteers with a core group of a dozen, and has received funding for mobile phones and occasional residential to plan future strategies. Recently, these strategies have included: liaising with phoneholders on the other side of the interfaces; working with the PSNI and local groups, and operating

cross border programmes so that young people from loyalist areas could travel to the Republic of Ireland to meet with groups such as the Meath Peace Group with whom PIN have developed strong links.

Until recently, the network has not undertaken cross community work within Northern Ireland. PIN's Stormont presentation, however, in it's 'Mission Statement Aims and Roles', identifies PIN's Aim 1 as being:

*'To identify key priorities for cross community activity from an early age and prepare a strategy and action plan for addressing these priorities'*.

This new emphasis suggests that PIN is assessing its roles and activities on an ongoing basis and will continue to develop its work in stabilising interfaces from within the unionist/loyalist community.

PIN can be contacted c/o 6 York Road Belfast BT15 3HE or via Beverly Davidson 0781 481 0076.