A Bill of Rights for All – A Bill of Rights for Youth

By Gary Mc Clean

Margaret Valente from the Star Neighbourhood Centre (SNC) contacted Interface recently to discuss an exciting piece of work that the SNC is currently engaged in. The project aims to “educate young people around the concept of a Bill of Rights, which will of course impact on their lives, both now and in the future. In addition, those participant young people will then set out to inform their peers and others in their community about the Bill of Rights.”

The project aims to “educate young people around the concept of a Bill of Rights...”

I asked Margaret about how a Bill of Rights will affect her community, to which she replied “the New Lodge area is a marginalised community...”

A better future?

Interfaces and the Good Relations Panel

By Duncan Morrow

At the end of the day, an interface is where two groups of people meet, face to face but never as friends. The message of interfaces is a stark one of ‘us’ and ‘them’, where people make hard choices not so much because of their personal attitudes or anything in their own past, but because of wider connections and what that means.

Interfaces are the hard evidence that conflict is not really over yet. In fact most of what we call interfaces are the direct result of political battles and the violence that arose from them.

The logic of interfaces is that ‘we’ hold out against ‘them’. Any change in the map is a victory for one side or the other. The best we can hope for is to manage the fear, put up better and bigger barriers and hope that people turn their backs on one another rather than face each other in a
A Bill of Rights is a list of basic rights that everyone in the state is entitled to enjoy. These rights normally only bind public institutions, although, in some countries, such as South Africa, private bodies are covered. Usually individuals can seek remedies in their local courts for alleged infringements of these rights and in some instances organisations can take cases if they feel a breach has occurred. In most cases a Bill of Rights is included in the country’s constitution, for example, India, USA, Canada and the Republic of Ireland.

In many countries a Bill of Rights is the “supreme law” which ensures that local parliaments cannot pass laws that infringe people’s rights. In many countries a Bill of Rights is included in the country’s constitution, for example, India, USA, Canada and the Republic of Ireland.

Margaret explained that “the Bill of Rights Project involves the SNC working in collaboration with the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) and the Participation and Practice of Rights Project (PPR).”

“We have accessed funding from the Community Foundation Northern Ireland (CFNI) in order to engage 15 young people aged between 12 and 16 years old from the SNC.”

The aims of the project are to:

• Raise awareness of the significance of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland for young people.

• Ensure that the issues which affect the rights of young people are considered by the Bill of Rights Forum - www.billrightsforum.org

• Ensure the participation of young people in articulating and highlighting their rights during the Bill of Rights consultation process.

“The project itself has had a number of different elements. Initially, we carried out a number of workshops, whereby the young people looked at what a Bill of Rights will mean for them, helping them to gain a better understanding of the topic.

“Our next element involved a weekend residential facilitated by tutors, youth workers and community artists. The purpose of the residential was to discuss issues that are of importance to young people and that could be included in a Bill of Rights. The young people then chose one of those issues and worked along with their drama coach to produce a dramatisation around that particular topic. They worked with the artists to design costumes, stage sets and to create a plan to record the drama piece on video. It was agreed at the residential that we would have 12 workshops to follow up on this work.”

The video will be ready at the end of January and will be used as a learning aid in future workshops.

The video will be ready for distribution at the end of January and will be used as a learning aid in future workshops. Copies will be sent to all groups who are working towards a Bill of Rights for the North of Ireland.

Margaret concluded, “All of our work, from start to finish, will be recorded on video and used to convey the views of our young people in relation to a future Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.”

For further information please contact:
Margaret Valente
Youth and Community Development Worker
The Neighbourhood Centre
79-83 Hillman Street
Belfast BT15 2FS
Tel: (028) 9074 0693
Email: margaret.star@btconnect.com

Duncan Morrow addresses 2007 BIP conference.
Photo: Christopher Honeyey

An image of a group of young people standing together.

A Bill of Rights, by protecting and promoting people’s human right to housing, health care, leisure, education etc., can be a powerful tool for our community.

The Commission has been asked to advise on rights which reflect the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland and that are additional to the European Convention on Human Rights. It has argued that special rights may have to be devised in the following areas: equality; education; language; cultural expression and identity; victims’ rights; social and economic rights; criminal justice and implementation. It is also concerned about guarantees which may be required for certain groups of people, such as women, children and young people.

The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement states that the Bill should reflect the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland, drawing as appropriate on international instruments and experience.

The Commission is also to consider whether and how to formulate:
(i) a general obligation on Government and public bodies fully to respect, on the basis of equality of treatment, the identity and ethos of both communities in Northern Ireland; and
(ii) rights not to be discriminated against and to equality of opportunity in both the public and private sectors.

The rights it contains are to reflect the principles of mutual respect for the identity and ethos of both communities and parity of esteem.

In order to give the best advice, the Commission has been engaged in a comprehensive consultation process. It has received over 400 submissions from individuals and agencies and organised a large number of public meetings, seminars and training events throughout Northern Ireland to ensure that as many views as possible are heard.

Information reprinted with permission of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.
Ligoniel/Ballysillan neighbours on a day out. Photo: Anthony Stuart

By Anthony Stuart

Flags and Emblems Program

Aim to push forward and break psychological barriers that have been erected over years of conflict.

The two community groups aim to push forward and break down psychological barriers that have been erected over years of conflict.

Over the past year the Greater Ballysillan Community Forum and the Ligoniel Improvement Association, based in the Wolfhill Centre, have been working in partnership with great success. The wide array of programs facilitated and the lasting links forged between the communities were a major contributing factor in the two organisations winning the prestigious Aisling Award recently. Although this is the case the two community groups will not rest there, they aim to push forward and break down psychological barriers that have been erected over years of conflict.

The next step in the long term plan for the community youth workers is the Flags and Emblems Program. This project is an adventurous one, funded by the Community Empowerment Partnership (CEP) and facilitated by Northern Ireland Children’s Centre, have been working in partnership with great success. The wide array of programs facilitated and the lasting links forged between the communities were a major contributing factor in the two organisations winning the prestigious Aisling Award recently. Although this is the case the two community groups will not rest there, they aim to push forward and break down psychological barriers that have been erected over years of conflict.

The aim of this program is for the young people to learn about their own culture first and foremost and then about each other’s culture.

The program will also include various social events and eventually a residential. We sincerely hope that the groups can make lasting friendships and this being the case, we will aim to build on that in the future. If we want the relationship to improve between the polarised communities of Ballysillan and Ligoniel then future work of this nature is paramount.

Anthony Stuart is the Youth Health Co-ordinator for Ligoniel Improvement Association.

Contact: Ligoniel Improvement Association 128 Ligoniel Road Belfast BT16 1DY Tel: (028) 9039 1225 Email: anthony@ligonielvillage.com

The Wider Circle

The Wider Circle provides a supportive and safe environment where people can deal with frightening emotions and experiences.

The Wider Circle is a counselling organisation and cannot offer counselling to individuals. However, through its Trauma Programmes, The Wider Circle provides a supportive and safe environment where people can deal with frightening emotions and experiences. They can share their stories and their problems and know that they are not alone in their suffering. They are encouraged to accept their trauma as something that happened in the past, rather than something they have to live with all the time.

The Wider Circle Trauma Programmes are free of charge and take place across Northern Ireland. They are available to both those who have suffered trauma and to those who care for traumatised individuals.

Sessions focus on sharing traumatic experiences through a process of story telling in a supportive and confidential small group atmosphere. A range of visual materials and reflection are also used. The trauma is put in the context of being a part of a person’s life, rather than becoming their whole life. New participants are welcomed into a friendly and warm atmosphere. This is a group support situation. It is where people can come together to support and develop rather than going it alone as an individual.

The Sky before the Storm publication sets out in simple language the devastating physical and psychological effects of trauma and how to move forward from a traumatic experience. The book is also of benefit to professional bodies. It provides information on how to work with trauma survivors to reduce symptoms and to increase their confidence and esteem, so they can learn to cope again.

The Sky before the Storm has been sent to all GP surgeries in Northern Ireland. You may have seen a copy in your own local doctor’s surgery. This has helped The Wider Circle to spread awareness about psychological trauma to a wider circle of people, particularly those who have been seriously affected by 30 years of violence in Northern Ireland.

It is generally accepted that the events of the Troubles have left a large number of people with undiagnosed psychological trauma. The Sky before the Storm publication can help these people come to terms with what they’ve experienced.

The Wider Circle is planning to run another structured Self-help Trauma Programme beginning February 2008, which is free to those wishing to participate. The course will be held one evening per week lasting two hours and will run for 15 weeks.

Martina Mullin-O’Hare is the Development Officer for The Wider Circle Programme.

If you would like to find out more about these programmes contact: The Wider Circle 76-78 Hamill St Belfast BT12 4AA Tel: (028) 9024 5595 Email: info@widercircle.org www.widercircle.org

Many of us are close to someone who has experienced a traumatic event in their lives. Or perhaps we have been traumatised ourselves.

Many traumatic experiences can range from a serious car accident to abuse and, of course, as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland. A traumatic event can be anywhere where someone suffers a severe shock.

The Sky before the Storm publication sets out in simple language the devastating physical and psychological effects of trauma and how to move forward from a traumatic experience. The book is also of benefit to professional bodies. It provides information on how to work with trauma survivors to reduce symptoms and to increase their confidence and esteem, so they can learn to cope again.

The Sky before the Storm has been sent to all GP surgeries in Northern Ireland. You may have seen a copy in your own local doctor’s surgery. This has helped The Wider Circle to spread awareness about psychological trauma to a wider circle of people, particularly those who have been seriously affected by 30 years of violence in Northern Ireland.

It is generally accepted that the events of the Troubles have left a large number of people with undiagnosed psychological trauma. The Sky before the Storm publication can help these people come to terms with what they’ve experienced.

The Wider Circle is planning to run another structured Self-help Trauma Programme beginning February 2008, which is free to those wishing to participate. The course will be held one evening per week lasting two hours and will run for 15 weeks.

Martina Mullin-O’Hare is the Development Officer for The Wider Circle Programme.

If you would like to find out more about these programmes contact: The Wider Circle 76-78 Hamill St Belfast BT12 4AA Tel: (028) 9024 5595 Email: info@widercircle.org www.widercircle.org

The Wider Circle has helped over 600 people through its trauma programmes. Many thousands more have been helped through its trauma publications.

Many of those who have benefited from the Trauma Programmes have been encouraged to become programme facilitators themselves. Through their unique understanding and support, they help other traumatised individuals to move forward with their lives and make a positive contribution in society.

In conjunction with its trauma programmes, The Wider Circle has also produced a publication that explains in very simple terms what trauma is and how to cope with it.

The Sky before the Storm publication sets out in simple language the devastating physical and psychological effects of trauma and how to move forward from a traumatic experience. The book is also of benefit to professional bodies. It provides information on how to work with trauma survivors to reduce symptoms and to increase their confidence and esteem, so they can learn to cope again.

The Sky before the Storm has been sent to all GP surgeries in Northern Ireland. You may have seen a copy in your own local doctor’s surgery. This has helped The Wider Circle to spread awareness about psychological trauma to a wider circle of people, particularly those who have been seriously affected by 30 years of violence in Northern Ireland.

It is generally accepted that the events of the Troubles have left a large number of people with undiagnosed psychological trauma. The Sky before the Storm publication can help these people come to terms with what they’ve experienced.

The Wider Circle is planning to run another structured Self-help Trauma Programme beginning February 2008, which is free to those wishing to participate. The course will be held one evening per week lasting two hours and will run for 15 weeks.

Martina Mullin-O’Hare is the Development Officer for The Wider Circle Programme.

If you would like to find out more about these programmes contact: The Wider Circle 76-78 Hamill St Belfast BT12 4AA Tel: (028) 9024 5595 Email: info@widercircle.org www.widercircle.org
The Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

By Stephanie Green

The Participation and the Practice of Rights Project (PPR Project) is a coalition of groups and organisations working on social justice issues in Ireland, north and south. We aim to give individuals, groups and communities the tools and support they need to actively lobby and campaign for their human rights and economic rights. Social and economic rights include the right to the highest attainable standard of health both physical and mental, the right to adequate housing, the right to education and so on.

rights around health, education and housing, amongst others, are hugely important issues for interface communities

The PPR Project is committed to:

- Promoting rights-based democratic practice on the basis of participation by marginalised groups in decisions which affect their lives
- Strengthening the direct accountability of public authorities in health and social service provision
- Training for community activists in the use of human rights tools (e.g. budget analysis, using human rights legislation)
- Publications including profiles of human rights in action in specific communities
- Seminars and conferences linking the work of local residents and community activists with national and international human rights advocacy

The United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, as a response to the atrocities witnessed by the world during the Second World War. This was the first document to talk about social and economic rights.Both Ireland and the United Kingdom signed up to the Universal Declaration. In the following years, Ireland and the UK have signed up to other human rights treaties which have included economic and social rights, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the European Social Charter.

The UK has made commitments to protect, respect and fulfil economic and social rights. People in the UK cannot have their economic and social rights directly enforced by their own courts. The European Convention on Human Rights, which has been incorporated into UK law and allows citizens to claim human rights in their local courts, does not contain economic and social rights. But the UK has promised to make sure that its laws and policies protect economic and social rights. The United Nations and the Council of Europe keep watch on whether or not they do.

There is no set definition of a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). The rights based approach can be seen as having a number of its characteristics, some of which are explained below:

1. The HRBA turns “needs” into “rights”

Using the HRBA means that what was previously a request for improved service, is strengthened by the fact that the government has voluntarily committed itself in an international human rights treaty to provide a certain standard of, for example, housing and health services. The request becomes a call for the government to live up to this obligation.

PPR, for example, has been working with a group of people from PIPS (Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide) based in Duncairn Gardens and RAYS (Reaching Agri’s to Reduce Your Risk of Suicide) located on the Woodvale Road. This group now calls itself PIPS/RAYS Rights Group and has linked a number of issues they have identified as an affected group into human rights standards. For instance, the group were concerned that mental health service users were not getting follow up appointments when discharged from hospital within appropriate timescales. They were then assisted through the PPR Development Programme to link this issue to the appropriate international human rights standard, which in this case was - under human rights law - health facilities have to be accessible to everyone without discrimination - especially the most vulnerable or marginalised sections of the population. This right to health includes the provision of equal and timely access to - appropriate mental treatment and care.

2. The HRBA promotes accountability

Because governments have signed up to human rights treaties they are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil these rights and related regular reports to bodies which assess their performance in meeting this obligation.

The HRBA turns government and therefore public authorities or service providers into duty bearers; they are obliged to demonstrate how they are working towards realising people’s rights. The Rights Based approach enables people in the community to remind government and service providers of the rights they have promised to fulfil, protect and respect.

A recent example of how this has been done with the PIPS/RAYS Rights Group is that the group itself researched, through surveys and focus groups, the extent to which the problem of, for example, getting follow up appointments affected other mental health service users. The research provided a picture of what the reality of mental health services was like on the ground and especially for those in deprived communities. The group then called for change or improvement in this particular service by setting what it termed human rights indicators – these are basically what the group wants to see improvement on over a period of time. With regard to follow up appointments – their indicator for change based on international standards was highlighted in a speech by a member of the group, Roberta Coates, at a recent PPR Mental Health Forum.

‘Over the next year we want to measure what progress the Department of Health is making to meet this right. We will measure the number of patients discharged from hospital after mental health treatment who receive their follow up appointment within a week. This is a small issue, but one that could make a huge difference to people in crisis. If it was addressed as a result, the group is keen to see it addressed quickly. In six months, the group wants an increase in 45% of people receiving a follow up within a week. Within a year, the group would like to see a system in place in which 85% of patients receive their follow up appointment within a week. The group thinks the issue of follow up appointments should be addressed as a matter of right, in order to show progress on working towards the fulfilment of the right to health.”

The group is presently awaiting a meeting with the Minister of Health on this and other issues which they have identified.

The other characteristics of the HRBA approach which have already been discussed to a certain extent are:

- The HRBA empowers people
- Participation is central to a HRBA
- The HRBA focuses on the inclusion and involvement of particularly vulnerable groups

Stephanie Green is the Local Development Worker with the PPR Project. If you would like more information about the project please contact:
Tel: (028) 9032 8460
Email: stephanie@pprproject.org
www.pprproject.org

Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm

Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide & Self Harm (PPS) was established in North Belfast, due to high levels of suicide and the fact that there was very little support for the people of Belfast and a resource that has not been available in the past. We hope to create awareness and break down barriers to the issue of suicide and self harm and hopefully save lives in the process.

To Murphy of the PIPS Project, who is also a block owner, said she was delighted with the new facility. ‘Dozens of people have given up their time to help us get it up,’ she said. ‘Three years on, our vision has become a reality. True partnership working really does pay off, as the opening of PIPS House illustrates.’

The work of PIPS involves:

- Working with bereaved families, who have lost a loved one through suicide, in helping to support them in coming to terms with their loss and their grief.
- Crisis intervention for those who are attempting to and/or have previously attempted to take their own lives.
- Provision of counselling and/or complementary therapies for all service users of PIPS (i.e. bereaved families, self harmers, carers of self harmers, those feeling suicidal, depressed or dealing with mental health issues).
- Lobbying and campaigning for a suicide strategy and the implementation of policies around the issues of suicide and self harm.
- Assisting communities in establishing their own local support networks and groups. We have already established such groups in Downpatrick, Newcastle, Newtown, Newry and Ballynahinch, amongst others.
- Going into communities and schools to provide awareness and training around the issues.
- Working to remove the social stigma currently attached to suicide, self harm, depression and other mental health issues.
- Establishing Neighbourhood Response Teams. Sharon Quinn is Senior Administrator with the PIPS Project.

For further information please contact: Sharon Quinn PIPS Project 187 Duncairn Gardens Belfast BT5 5EF Tel: 028 9075 5070 Email: pipsproject@btconnect.com www.pipsproject.com
By Gary McClean

Interface recently met with Teena Patrick from the Interface Residents Group which operates at the interface between the Arnsfield area and the Springfield Road. Teena contacted us to share the news on a recent cross community youth project that she had helped organise in association with Fortspring Inter Community Group and Shankill Alternatives.

Teena explained how she had accidentally come across a book of photographs and poems produced by her daughter and some friends as part of a project carried out back in 2001. “From a young person’s perspective, this book conveyed for the first time the true reflections and a feeling of what it was really like to live in an interface. In this area it was either the shadow of the peace-wall (as it is called) or the shadow of the police station on the Springfield Road, which is now gone. The project had been coordinated by the Fortspring Inter Community Group based on the Springfield Road.”

Teena spoke to a number of young people about how they would feel taking part in a similar project and to her delight she received a very excited response. With this feedback, Teena approached Deirdre Mcmahon, youth worker with Fortspring Intercommunity Group, about the possibility of running a similar project again, six years after the original.

“From there the project just took off. I spoke to Kelli Crawford from Greater Shankill Alternatives and they were delighted to work jointly on the project with us and our partner group, Fortspring. A joint application was then put forward to the Community Cohesion Unit of the N.I. Housing Executive and the Community Relations Council and this funding financed the cost of the project.

“Once the funding was in place, we brought the young people together and gave them the opportunity to explore the positives and the negatives of living in the shadow of a west Belfast interface and to express their reflections through the medium of photography. The final pieces of photographic work were then placed on public exhibition for two weeks at Fanster International on the Springfield Road. From the pieces that the young people produced, there are now 8oo photographs available on archive for public viewing at the Belfast Exposed gallery on Donegal Street.

“The exhibition was such a success and the young people achieved so much from it. The young people felt it would be a great idea to produce a new booklet on the photographic project, updating the 2001 Forthspring publication “The Hurt, the Peace, the Love and the War”, with the photography from 2007. At present we are currently waiting for news from CRC in the hope that our application to complete this project has been successful.

“The young people have since been working together on a college for both communities, along with postcards from the photographs they have already taken. The college of their work is to be erected in both communities. Should any group wish to display the exhibition this can be arranged by contacting one of the groups by email.”

Teena added, “I believe that by bringing together young people from adjoining communities of the interface, we can help to reduce negative perceptions and work to build positive relationships. I am certain that friendships will continue to grow and develop based on acceptance of difference, trust and respect through sharing and reflecting on their similarities and diversity, each can be respected rather than feared.”

Following the meeting with Teena, Interface spoke briefly to Deirdre Mcmahon and Kelli Crawford, who both reinforced what Teena had said.

Deirdre, in her capacity as co-partner and youth worker involved in the project at Fortspring Inter Community Group, who helped co-ordinate the project activities, echoed those sentiments and added, “The young people were very positive in their participation and their confidence was boosted as they learned new skills and took up opportunities for new experiences .... The launch of this exhibition will emphasise that it is really important that young people are valued and portrayed in a positive light.”

Kelli, from Greater Shankill Alternatives and partner co-ordinator of the project, said, “As others have highlighted, the project raised young people’s awareness regarding interface issues, peer similarities and diversity. It also taught the young people new skills and allowed their creativity to excell. Equally as important, I feel the project enhanced the young people’s social development through group work and activities. It advanced their positive development through encouraging them to think beyond the literal meaning of images, into the representation. It furthered their practical development through teaching photography skills. Most importantly, it provided the young people with a sense of pride and ownership of this, their project.”

For information on the exhibition, contact: Teena Patrick
Interface Residents Group
Email: teenahpatrick@yahoo.com
Deirdre Mcmahon
Fortspring Inter Community Group
Email: deirdreme@btconnect.com
Kelli Crawford
Greater Shankill Alternatives
Email: alternatives_kc@yahoo.co.uk

There are now 800 photographs available for public viewing at the Belfast Exposed gallery on Donegal Street.
Building strong and vibrant communities must be the investment that empowers communities to take ownership of the challenges of making peace. There have always been barriers to action. Communities however must be resolute in their determination to improve their own quality of life. The reality now is that we are one community with different needs, different identities and different aspirations. The Paisley/McGuinness model is proof that we can overcome division and work together for the common good. The Programme for Government must match this symbolism with a new Peace Plan and a sufficient resource commitment.

The challenge now for political and community leaders is to draw on the Paisley/McGuinness model a legitimising influence to build confidence and trust in communities. There is no manoeuvre left for duplicitous signals or double speak messages from government or public bodies. Actions and programmes that target segregation, shared public space and poor quality of life in interface communities are needed now. The Programme for Government must meaningfully address these real issues. In addition communities deserve and desire a language of hope and generosity. Collectively we must appreciate that this new society is in the product of compromise. Our political architecture has created a new context in which to shape a new future. This in itself has created a new political language of co-operation and negotiation. This language must inform a rethink of peace building and community relations practice. There is an ever pressing need to develop new strategies, new working practices and a shared vision that we can all collectively shape and create. Compromise must be the bedrock of everyday living.

The Draft Programme for Government does not creatively grasp the challenge of building a better future. Government needs to plan ahead with the vision of creating a society at peace. The alternative is that we will not overcome the patterns of fear and mistrust. The same patterns of communal segregation will remain and sectarianism in all its manifestations will remain unless our Executive quickly demonstrates that they have the capacity and will to build a society based on equality and respect.

In light of the restoration of devolution, not to radically rethink how community relations practice is delivered and sustained to manage the transition forward will be to mislay another opportunity to create an agreed vision for the future. There is a clear onus on government to set the context for a creating a shared future: communities must be empowered to be constant and equal partners in a way that makes this new political dispensation real and meaningful. Politicians can create a context for co-operation but only a bottom-up approach will deliver stable and cohesive communities.

We all need to think outside of the box. The Programme for Government must set the stall out for a ten year community peace plan. Unless specific actions are detailed around the need of interface communities then another opportunity to regenerate and rebuild communities will have been lost and, worse still, by our own elected politicians. The Programme for Government must move beyond broad brush strokes. It must be capable of overcoming the division of the past while facilitating communities to benefit from the promised economic prosperity of the future. It has to detail how it will engage disadvantaged communities, become economically active and must grow local enterprise. Otherwise the peace process will have done nothing for interface and disadvantaged communities but to cement economic inequalities.

The responsibility is now firmly on the new Stormont Executive, to demonstrate political leadership in a way that builds community confidence and signal progress towards an agreed vision for the future. The draft Programme for Government has some way to go if it is to convince communities that an agreed vision for the future, where the most disadvantaged can prosper, is on the radar!

Editor’s comment: It is hoped that this article and the issues raised within will stimulate further debate. If you would like to respond to any of the comments offered in this article or simply continue this discussion, please contact us at Belfast Interface Project.

We will consider all responses for publication in future editions of interface.

John Loughran is Programme Director for the North Belfast Developing Leadership CEP.

He has written this article in a personal capacity.

Contact: john@intcommbelfast.com

The responsibility is now firmly on the new Stormont Executive, to demonstrate political leadership in a way that builds community confidence and signal progress towards an agreed vision for the future. The draft Programme for Government has some way to go if it is to convince communities that an agreed vision for the future, where the most disadvantaged can prosper, is on the radar!

Editor’s comment: It is hoped that this article and the issues raised within will stimulate further debate. If you would like to respond to any of the comments offered in this article or simply continue this discussion, please contact us at Belfast Interface Project.

We will consider all responses for publication in future editions of interface.

John Loughran is Programme Director for the North Belfast Developing Leadership CEP.

He has written this article in a personal capacity.

Contact: john@intcommbelfast.com
MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Interface

Promoting social and economic regeneration in Belfast’s interface areas

INTERESTED IN JOINING?

In 2004, BIP carried out an extensive survey of its members’ needs. Its aim was to gather perceptions as to how conditions had changed in interface communities over the previous decade and for our members to outline how BIP might better support them in their work. The findings of the survey have shaped and informed the work of Belfast Interface Project to date.

Almost four years on from the completion of that survey and given the dramatic changes in the wider political environment, we feel that it would be very useful to carry out another. The 2008 survey will focus on the effectiveness of the services that we currently provide and how best to improve on them.

Community Evaluation Northern Ireland (CENI) has been commissioned to produce this work. CENI will carry out the survey through a mixture of face to face interviews, postal questionnaires and a telephone survey.

We hope that BIP members will participate fully in order to ensure that the services we provide will support the needs of our membership in the future.

Belfast Interface Project has three categories of membership:

- Community group
- Associate
- Individual

If you support our mission statement, meet our criteria (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, Gary Mc Clean, can come out to meet with you.

NEW MEMBERS

Benmore Community Development Association
Denmark Street Community Centre
North Belfast Women’s Initiative and Support Project

WEBSITE UPDATE!

Available for download:
- Parades and Protests: an annotated bibliography (2007)
- Working at the Interface: Good Practice in Reducing Tension and Violence (2006)
- Inner East Outer West: Addressing conflict in two interface areas (1999)

If you’re interested in joining BIP, please get in touch. We will send you an information pack or our Development Worker, Gary Mc Clean, can come out to meet with you.

NEW MEMBERS

Benmore Community Development Association
Denmark Street Community Centre
North Belfast Women’s Initiative and Support Project

INTERESTED IN JOINING?

Belfast Interface Project has three categories of membership:

- Community group
- Associate
- Individual

If you support our mission statement, meet our criteria (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, Gary Mc Clean, can come out to meet with you.

NEW MEMBERS

Benmore Community Development Association
Denmark Street Community Centre
North Belfast Women’s Initiative and Support Project

WEBSITE UPDATE!

Available for download:
- Parades and Protests: an annotated bibliography (2007)
- Working at the Interface: Good Practice in Reducing Tension and Violence (2006)
- Inner East Outer West: Addressing conflict in two interface areas (1999)

Parades and Protests: An Annotated Bibliography

This annotated bibliography aims to provide a resource to people wishing to trace and understand the dynamics of current parades-related disputes and the various initiatives that have been taken in relation to these.

It summarises all of the main writings on the current cycle of parades and protests. These include academic studies and documents written by advocates of parading and by their opponents, and also a large number of policy documents that have been generated by the disputes over the past decade.

The document includes a number of studies that provide a historical background to parading in Northern Ireland, and also works that focus more on the Loyal Orders that are responsible for organising the parades.

As with our earlier ‘Interface Issues’ bibliography BIP has brought together a library of hard copies of the source materials. This library is housed in our offices and is available for consultation. Please give us a ring if you’d like to know more.

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

How to contact Belfast Interface Project

3rd floor
109-113 Royal Ave
Belfast BT1 1FF
(t (028) 9024 2828
(f (028) 9031 4829
e info@belfastinterfaceproject.org
www.belfastinterfaceproject.org

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.