

URBAN VILLAGES

# FOCUS

## MAGAZINE

ISSUE

10

DECEMBER  
2020

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to Young People**

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A note of thanks to community groups that have helped by providing photos for this edition at a time when, due to the pandemic, we have been limited in our ability to visit projects to capture images. Please note that some photos in this edition are not socially distanced because they were taken before the COVID-19 crisis emerged.

## About Us



The Urban Villages Initiative is a headline action of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy. It is designed to improve good relations outcomes and develop thriving places.

The Urban Villages Initiative is shaped and delivered in partnership with local communities and has three core aims:

- To foster positive community identities
- To build community capacity
- To improve the physical environment

The Urban Villages Initiative is continuing to invest in the five areas by supporting organisations in the development of projects aimed at improving the lives of people in these areas.

For more information contact: [info@urbanvillagesni.org](mailto:info@urbanvillagesni.org)

**Front Cover:** Pupils from Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir in the Derry/Londonderry Urban Village area celebrating becoming a School of Sanctuary.



# Welcome

We would like to thank First Minister Arlene Foster and deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill for opening our latest edition of FOCUS Magazine with their joint message.



Welcome to the latest edition of FOCUS Magazine, which is packed full of inspirational stories about the fantastic work that people are doing to build community cohesion in Urban Village areas.

This edition captures the amazing work carried out in the five Urban Village areas during the Covid-19 pandemic. It highlights how communities have risen to the many challenges thrown up by the public health emergency and adapted their projects and delivery models in order to keep supporting the most vulnerable in their areas and continue their transformational work safely.

The following pages include many great examples of how the innovative use of online platforms have enabled people to stay connected, to keep learning, to overcome isolation, stay healthy and be entertained.

The steadfast commitment of everyone involved in these projects in continuing to serve their communities throughout this difficult time is truly admirable. Thank you for your commitment to creating a place where everyone can live better together. We will continue to support you in your endeavours.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition of FOCUS Magazine and find the stories in it as inspirational as we have.

Finally, thank you for your commitment to stick to the public health advice. Please continue to keep yourselves, your families and others safe, and hopefully we can all look forward to better times ahead in 2021.

THE RT. HON. ARLENE FOSTER MLA  
FIRST MINISTER

MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA  
DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

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**URBAN VILLAGE AREAS - Derry-Londonderry: Bogside, Fountain & Bishop Street. South Belfast: Sandy Row, Donegall Pass & The Markets. North Belfast: Ardoyne & Greater Ballysillan. East Belfast: Newtownards Road, Grampian Avenue to Bridge End. West Belfast: Colin Area.**

# Support to help get you a job

The Urban Villages Initiative is working in partnership with Belfast City Council to help more people in Urban Village areas find employment.

This includes providing match funding to several European Social Fund (ESF) projects to deliver enhanced employability support directly into Urban Village areas.

## Abbie Morris finds her vocation

Abbie Morris, 18, from the Colin Urban Village area left school at 16 after completing her GCSEs. Unsure of what she wanted to do next, Abbie tried a number of jobs but didn't enjoy them. She was also acting as an unofficial carer for family members and found that these demands, while working in a job, were too much and she left her employment.



While previously Abbie had always had a drive to pursue and develop herself, she felt her recent experience of employment had left her *“with little confidence or motivation to get straight into work...”* knowing she wanted support she *“...started JobWorks+ to help find this motivation.”*

Abbie connected with the JobWorks+ team and following mentoring and skills training, she reflected on her experience as a carer and decided to pursue a career in the Care sector. With encouragement and guidance from her JobWorks+ mentor, Abbie is now working as a Care Assistant in a local Care Home.

Abbie Said *“I appreciate all the time and effort in helping me find a job, the mentor helped me get through job hunting, applications and filling forms and I can't thank you enough.”*

*“ I never thought of working in a care home but I've always loved helping people and thought I'd give it a try, and with all this going on it's made me realise they need help now more than ever.”*

When asked what changes she has noticed about herself since participating on the JobWorks+ programme, Abbie said *“I've looked at life in a more positive way, as if anything is possible, and it's really changed me for the better... I'm not so quick to jump in and be negative anymore.”*

See P28 for more information and other training opportunities.

# Fourteen more schools celebrate becoming 'Schools of Sanctuary'

The First Minister and deputy First Minister attended an online event that was held as part of Good Relations Week 2020 to celebrate with 14 more schools serving Urban Village areas as they have become Schools of Sanctuary.

The Schools of Sanctuary programme is about developing welcoming and safe schools for all children and young people, their families and wider



community. It aims to value and celebrate cultural diversity by developing intercultural skills and thinking.

First Minister Arlene Foster said: *“Today we have another 14 schools celebrating becoming a School of Sanctuary. There are now a*

*total of 42 schools that have achieved School of Sanctuary status. This is a truly wonderful achievement that recognises the key role that the children, young people, teachers and the whole school community, have taken in promoting good relations and making sure that every new student is valued and fully included in school life.”*



# OUR Generation – Growing Up Better, Together

Launched at the end of September at an innovative virtual event, this EU PEACE IV project has been developed to tackle mental health and well-being in children and young people in Urban Village areas and the Border Regions.

An extensive scoping study process has been carried out in all of the Urban Village areas to build connections and to inform the shape and design of the programme.

Young people from across the target locations were asked to develop a strapline for the OUR Generation project. They were asked to use words that captured the aims of the programme while being easily understood by other children and young people. The selected slogan “**Growing Up Better, together**” was revealed at the launch event.



Programme delivery will be through education, youth and community settings across the five Urban Village Areas and also the Border Region.

Junior Minister Gordon Lyons said: *“The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people’s mental health is of increasing concern. What is evident in this programme is the strength of commitment to work with young people to make a difference in their lives and to support them to help each other; building resilience in their young lives and building peace across their communities.”*

Junior Minister Declan Kearney commented: *“Poor mental health is a barrier preventing our young people*

*and communities from thriving in a post-conflict society. This new project will help to support children and young people in Urban Village areas and border counties, working with them and with existing community programmes in a co-design process. They will use creativity and innovation to encourage more joined-up approaches to reach those most in need and to support peace building.”*

Siobhan O’Neil, Interim Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland added: *“I’m delighted to have contributed to the design of this ground-breaking project integrating peacebuilding and emotional wellbeing. Our vision is that the next generation will be strong, resilient and empathic, and in a position to deliver a better Northern Ireland”.*


deputy First Minister Michelle O’Neill said: *“School of Sanctuary status is something these schools have all been working towards over the last year, and continued through these challenging times of the coronavirus pandemic. All children and young people deserve a warm and welcoming environment that supports them to thrive as individuals. I’m really impressed by the schools’ commitment to create truly inclusive places where everyone can feel safe and accepted regardless of what they believe or where they are from.”*

The Education Authority’s Intercultural Education Service, with funding from the Urban Villages Initiative and working collaboratively with the City of Sanctuary, has provided training and support to help the schools become places of sanctuary.

Sara Long, Chief Executive of the Education Authority, *“We are proud to be involved in the development of this programme, and I would like to thank everyone involved, including the dedicated school staff and the many talented children and young people who have showcased the fantastic work that has gone into their school being recognised as a School of Sanctuary.”*

*The 14 new Schools of Sanctuary are:*

- All Saints College*
- Ashfield Girls’ High School*
- Ballysillan Primary School*
- Carr’s Glen Primary School*
- Edenbrooke Primary School*
- Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir*
- Glenwood Primary School*
- Killowen Primary School*
- St Colm’s High School*
- St Eugene’s Primary School*
- St Joseph’s Boys’ High School*
- St Paul’s Primary School*
- St Vincent de Paul Primary School*
- Tonagh Primary School*

 Watch the schools celebrating receiving their Schools of Sanctuary award <https://youtu.be/SGP33hCIDKk>

# 'Buddy Up!' even when we can't physically be together

During Good Relations Week 2020, Community Relations in Schools (CRIS) released content from their newly developed 'Buddy Up!' online programme.

The Urban Villages Initiative has supported CRIS to deliver the 'Buddy Up!' programme in schools and communities working with children across the five Urban Village areas over the past year. CRIS have worked alongside school partnerships as they have strengthened their collaboration.



'Buddy Up!' online is a way of extending support to school partnerships and their pupils, even when we can't physically be together.

With interactive video lessons and activities, Buddy Up! online will provide opportunities for school partnerships to continue Good Relations work together from their own classrooms.

Chapter Three of Celebrating Diversity Online will teach pupils all the tools they need to become an 'Empathy Explorer'. It uses songs, stories and a special puppet show to explore the practical ways in which children can build their empathy skills, within the classroom and beyond.

▶ Watch the Celebrating Diversity film online <https://youtu.be/2IOG2pK-qgk>



Match-funding has been provided by The Northern Ireland Executive Office to focus this programme on Urban Village areas, and the Department of Rural and Community Development in Ireland, to deliver in the Border Counties.

Underlining the importance of the call, Gina McIntyre, CEO with the SEUPB, said: *"This is a highly significant funding call, which offers a great opportunity to assist local communities in developing the skills they need to drive forward innovative solutions to local issues."*

*"The funding on offer, will both complement and build upon the social economy and entrepreneurship models of community development, with the additional important benefit of creating a more cohesive society by bringing local communities together with a shared aim of improving their area."*

## Community Cohesion through Social Innovation

**A European Union funding call worth €1m was launched to help build the capacity of local communities in Urban Village areas and the Border Region, to develop social economies, entrepreneurship and innovation.**

This project will support community-led approaches to social innovation. The successful applicant will engage with a wide range of people involved in meaningful peace and reconciliation activity, and will

include an outreach programme that creates sustained contact between people from different backgrounds.

The project will have a specific focus on the needs of minority groups as well as groups who traditionally have been marginalised by society. It will create opportunities for these groups to have a greater degree of participation and integration within wider community life.

This project and the OUR Generation Project are managed by SEUPB.





Colin  
**WEST  
BELFAST**

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**URBAN  
VILLAGES**  
INITIATIVE  
SUPPORTED BY

## Colin Community Comes Together During COVID-19 Crisis

**Local community organisations and individuals from across the Colin Urban Village area came together to help protect the most vulnerable in the local community during the pandemic.**

Working from Sally Gardens Community Centre they maintained an almost constant rota of packing bags of groceries and essentials daily, which were distributed to over 400 households locally each week.

Brendan McAteer, Community Safety Officer, Colin Neighbourhood Partnership commented, *“The response from people in the community was amazing, people who were volunteering who had maybe been furloughed, and there were others doing a 9 to 5 job, then coming over to provide whatever help they could.”*

## Good Morning Colin Responds to Pandemic Challenges

**Good Morning Colin (GMC) continued to provide a reassuring telephone call service for older and vulnerable people in the local community throughout the lockdown period.**

Unable to operate in an office setting, calls continued 7 days a week as volunteers worked from home. During this time there was a large increase in referrals for this service and many additional clients were registered to receive calls and support from the project.



More than this essential contact, GMC formed part of the community response to COVID-19 by delivering food parcels to older people and families during the lockdown. They also secured 70 activity packs that were delivered to GMC clients, which received extremely positive feedback.

Isabel Flood, Coordinator of GMC, maintained regular contact with the carers group and

when restrictions were eased, Isabel arranged a meet up in Colin Allotments, so they could benefit from real connection and support from the project.

The volunteers at GMC were also happy to meet up when restrictions were eased, it was important for them to come together as a team after working from home for several months. All gatherings followed the Government guidance.



Colin  
**WEST  
BELFAST**



## Saints YC Providing Vital Support to Young People

**After consultation with young people and parents online, Saints Youth Centre recognised there was an overwhelming need and desire for young people to engage in youth provision over the summer months as the COVID restrictions were relaxed.**

Saints YC were addressing a key concern, to help strengthen the young people's mental well-being and safety while emerging from lock down.

A four-week programme was funded by the Urban Villages Initiative and supported by Translink Safety bus.

Approximately 40 young people between the ages of 9 to 13 years old registered, including some identified with targeted needs.

Young people were encouraged to be active on a range of trips and activities, while re-establishing friendships and relationships with their peers and staff.

This funding also supported further development of the senior members. They completed many hours of Millennium Volunteering with the younger members, they are a valued asset to Saints YC.

The feedback was positive, with one parent saying *"The club is amazing for kids during COVID-19, this gave my son some reality back in his life, I'm so thankful."*

Another parent commented *"I was over the moon when Saints YC organised trips for the kids. Lockdown really had a massive impact on everyone's mental health. I have seen a huge difference in my children after they got the chance to attend."*

## The Show Must Go On! Movie Time at Colin Town Square

**As lockdown restrictions eased, the team at Colin Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP) were at the ready to host a two-day movie event in Colin Town Square. The six free outdoor screenings included popular films, like: Sing, Jungle Books, Into the Woods, Coco and Pan.**

The weather was against us! but the rain didn't dampen spirits at the socially distanced movie screenings and the audience made great use of the ponchos provided. This event was supported by the Urban Villages Initiatives as part of the Colin Events Programme.







## Adapting to Deliver Building Your Future Employability Project

**Poleglass Community Association (PCA) @ Sally Gardens**

**In the absence of face to face recruitment events, PCA have used Facebook and their online training platform as key tools for engagement with both current and new potential participants. Courses have been continually posted and many have been successfully delivered online.**

During lockdown, some participants completed an online cookery programme. They received weekly cooking instruction videos, which they had to make, then they took photographs of their masterpieces and sent them to the tutor.

They were able to complete both units of their qualification through information received in the videos and regular sessions on telephone and/or in group chats.

Regular group and one to one mentoring sessions have happened both via Zoom and in person each week at the Colin Allotments. These sessions have proved to be beneficial to the participants and helps with recognising who needs additional support and/or signposted.

The Horticulture project has been successfully delivered at Colin Allotments while ensuring that Government guidelines have been followed in all activities.

To find out more contact Roisin McGarry, by **Telephone: 028 9062 7250** or **Email: roisin@sallygardens.org**

## Colin Community Promote Positive Mental Health by Walking & Talking

**For the second year running, the Colin Community took to the streets on World Suicide Prevention Day to raise awareness of mental health and suicide prevention.**

The “Walk & Talk” event organised by Colin Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP) invited the local community to join the short walk. Local groups in attendance included the essential services, local schools and sports clubs.

Umberto Scappaticci, Community Development Worker, CNP, commented *“We are here promoting the importance of walking and talking. We’ve come through an extremely hard time and people’s mental health will have been affected during the lockdown.*

*“We are advising people to talk about it and to air how they are feeling. If they are feeling low, to contact Lifeline to talk to someone. Talk to anybody and share how they are feeling, don’t let it build up.*

*“It’s very important that we get out and show the people that this community is 100% behind suicide awareness and prevention. We’ll do all we can in CNP along with the community in this area to support people.”*

Lifeline offered support and guidance on the day and reinforce the key message of just talk. Every person who participated in the walk was given a Lifeline card to keep.

**The Lifeline crisis response helpline service number 0800 808 8000**







Bogside, Fountain & Bishop Street

**DERRY~  
LONDONDERRY**

# Streets Alive goes Virtual



## Streets Alive @ Féile 2020

Féile 2020, saw a range of musicians, artists, sporting heroes and others, coming together online, to create a bumper programme of magic, art, fun and debate, at a time when it has never been more essential.

Streets Alive highlights of this year's programme include:

### Wearing Is Caring

An online campaign encouraging social distancing and mask wearing.

### Outdoor Exhibitions

Local streets were used for exhibition spaces to celebrate local people and their creativity.

### Féile TV

Féile TV hosted a range of live music concerts, health and sport events, debates and arts & crafts workshops.

### Ice Cream Carnival

A socially distanced street party bringing a carnival of chaos to streets, squares and greens across the Bogside and Fountain neighbourhoods.

### Fire in the Sky at Féile 2020 - Finale

Féile 2020 came to a close with an evening of online music concerts and an inspired multi-site firework display to be enjoyed from home.

Féile TV broadcast a film from St Mary's Chapel with local opera singer Danny Wade singing 'A Time To Say Goodbye' supported by a cast of residents from across the area.

▶ Click link to watch: <https://www.facebook.com/gasyardwallfeile/videos/665934784272200/>

**Streets Alive is a collaborative project, engaging across local communities to deliver a wide events and festival programme. It is designed to bring communities and visitors together in positive, engaging events and activities, investing in creating thriving places in the Derry~Londonderry Urban Village area.**

The programme was significantly affected by the COVID 19 crisis this year, so the team drew on their collective creative resources and moved quickly to deliver their programme differently, adapting and transferring the majority of their activities to a digital platform.

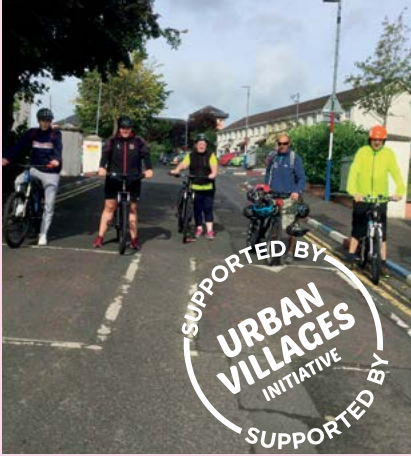
▶ Watch Streets Alive film here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bS6AmEVjwcl>

## Streets Alive @ the Fringe Festival

The New Gate Arts Fringe Festival ran successfully, despite 30 of the 46 events moving online. The festival celebrated local culture and heritage, building a better understanding of it, and ensuring that cultural diversity was celebrated.

The restrictions reduced many of the traditional cultural events that were planned, so in response the Fringe Festival moved online; it included musical performances, music and dance tuition, a virtual tour, a book launch, lectures and theatrical performances. The festival also included a week of outdoor dance events, an outdoor cinema, a soccer school and a firework display.





## Essential Support from Cathedral Youth Club

During lockdown, Cathedral Youth Club distributed essential food parcels for families at risk and those in isolation. This contact was so important to those shielding as it provided a link to the outside world and volunteers from CYC helped in any way they could including collecting groceries and prescriptions.

Cathedral Youth Club also delivered craft packs for primary school children and essential health packs for teenagers. In total over 1,600 packages were delivered during the Covid 19 lockdown.

A socially distanced afternoon tea party in the Allotments was enjoyed by local senior citizens and included entertainment and freshly cooked food using produce from the Allotment's, which they said, helped their mental health and well-being.

The young people had a great surprise as part of the Streets Alive programme, the Feilé's Ice Cream Carnival rolled into the Fountain. The ice cream and circus display were enjoyed by everyone, young and old.



## Lockdown resources for Schools, Pupils and their Families

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum (BBHF) have worked alongside schools in the Derry-Londonderry Urban Village area, encouraging better physical and mental health while identifying young people and their families that would benefit from support of the Resilience Programme.

The Health Forum developed bespoke isolation packs for local schools as well as additional online resources. They encouraged young people to engage in activities such as yoga, mindfulness and other games that would have been part of their usual Resilience programme at school.

They also developed bespoke resources for parents while the schools were closed, and hundreds of isolation and resilience packs were delivered to schools, pupils and to their families during lockdown.



Aileen McGuinness, BBHF, said *"We have continued to support the schools, pupils and families that we are working with and will strive to continue to deliver this service."*

*"We would like to thank the Urban Villages Initiative for the ongoing funding and support that they have provided throughout this time and especially to the schools and families that we work with, their support has allowed this programme to be as successful as it is."*

Cathy Arthur, Principal of Fountain Primary School said; *"The Resilience programme provided a well-attended after school club based on literacy, numeracy and ICT and during lockdown the packs provided a range of practical activities helping to engage children and therefore add to their sense of well-being."*

Antoin Moran, Principal of Nazareth House said; *"Our school has benefitted from participation in the Resilience Programme run by the Bogside and Brandywell Health Forum for the past 4 years. The programme provides a positive intervention into the lives of our pupils in terms of their mental and physical health as well as their academic progress."*



As Northern Ireland looks to a brighter future, the Apprentice Boys Association continues to play an important role in building and maintaining peace.



# Shared History Outreach Project

The Shared History Outreach Project was set up by the Museum of Free Derry and the Siege Museum to encourage community groups and others to visit both museums. The project supports greater mutual understanding and respect for the differing perspectives of history in the two communities.

The museums cover two important periods in the history of Derry-Londonderry; the Siege of Derry and the civil rights and early conflict era, taken from the perspective of those well placed to tell the stories.

Participants in this project get to see examples of two different communities telling very important aspects of their own history. The museums represent the different sides of the community, who in the past could never have worked together, and now work constructively without any dilution of each other's significance or identity.

Developed from an earlier Urban Villages Initiative pilot project in 2017, this project plans to draw hundreds of participants from different community and cultural backgrounds each year.

Visitors will have a guided tour of both museums followed by an in-depth discussion on how once very divisive issues have been largely resolved in Derry, discussions include parading and Bloody Sunday.

Adrian Kerr, Museum of Free Derry said, *"This is a great project for us, it's helping us to bring in an audience from the local area that we generally don't get."*

*"For the participants it's an opportunity to not only learn the history and get a discussion on some very important local issues, but also to see how the two organisations, the Museum of Free Derry and the Siege Museum, can work so well together to deliver important social outcomes."*

*"By the end of the project a lot of people will have had the opportunity to engage with the organisations involved and with each other, about issues that we have resolved to a degree, and ones on which there is still work to do."*

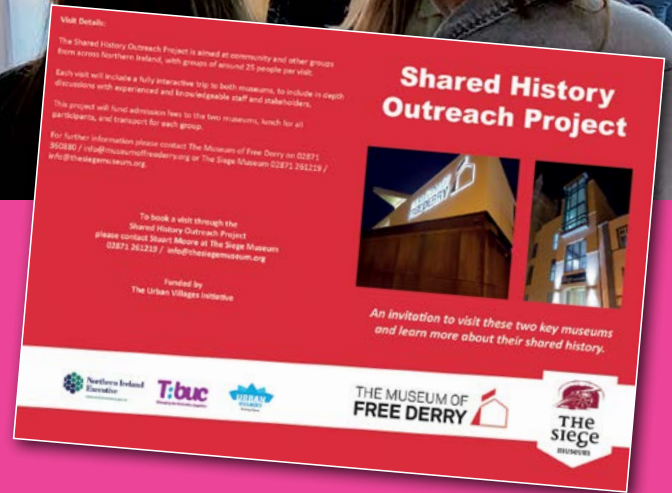
Stuart Moore, Siege Museum, said, *"The Urban Villages project is an exciting and challenging opportunity for the Siege Museum."*

*"The experience obtained through engagement with visitors from different Urban Village locations and interface areas is a great opportunity to share our road to peace in a positive and constructive manner."*

*"The outcome of the discussions and conversations will encourage and assist all groups with the knowledge and the confidence to engage in dialogue and find an amicable resolution to our difficulties."*

Under the Shared History Outreach Project, groups will have admission fees to both museums covered along with lunch and a contribution towards transport costs.

If you or your group would like to visit this project - contact Stuart Moore at the Siege Museum: [info@thesiegemuseum.org](mailto:info@thesiegemuseum.org) or Adrian Kerr at the Museum of Free Derry: [adrian@bloodySundaytrust.org](mailto:adrian@bloodySundaytrust.org)







Urban Villages Initiative in EastSide

## EAST BELFAST



# Bridging the Gap

**The Bridging the Gap programme is delivered by Walkway Community Association. It is a project that supports young mums and young men from the local area to fulfil their potential and create opportunities by gaining skills and self-confidence, while building relationships.**

The project provides essential crèche facilities so that the young mums can take part in a range of engaging and interactive experiences; that build capacity and self-esteem, reduce isolation, addresses mental health issues and improves employability through learning and training.

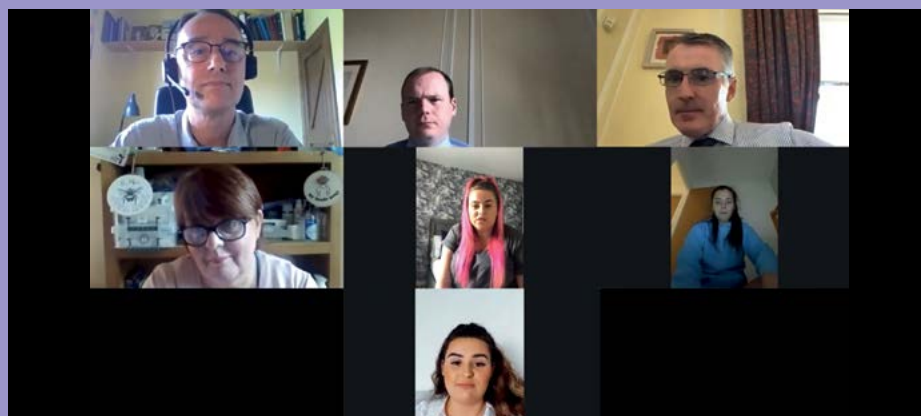
All participants in the programme are from the EastSide Belfast Urban Village area, and come together from different backgrounds, living better together and improving relationships between communities.

Recently some of the group had an opportunity to meet with Junior Minister Gordon Lyons and Junior Minister Declan Kearney in an informal online community engagement, they talked about the benefits of the programme and the positive impact it has made on the young people's lives.

Ministers heard how the group adapted in response to the Covid-19 crisis, and how the young participants were supported not only by the range of Bridging the Gap programmes, but also how they help each other stay strong.

They heard how qualifications achieved on the programme are helping the young mums to pursue their own career pathways.

Tammy, Bridging the Gap, *“Through the programme, I received help with my CV and I completed an OCN in Health & Social Care which helped me to get back into employment. My kids enjoy going to the crèche in Walkway and they have the opportunity to meet people from all backgrounds which they wouldn't have at school or anywhere else.”*





# YOU CAN “Feel Good with Food”



The Feel Good with Food project supports families and older people from different backgrounds and communities to learn together; improving their wellbeing through healthy eating, preparing healthy, nutritious meals with easily accessible and cost-effective ingredients.

This online cookery series is for individuals, families and community groups. Sessions are delivered on Zoom and hosted by nutritionist, Kim Close from The Kitchen Academy, and self-confessed “foodie”, Rosemary Morrison.

Kim and Rosemary demonstrate a series of delicious dishes, which are tasty, value-for-money, and easy to make.

Each online session lasts less than an hour, they take place just before lunchtime, and you can either cook along with the hosts, or opt to make the recipe later.

From tasty meatballs to succulent stir-fry’s, there is a dish to please everyone.



A maximum of 20 people per session. Contact Rosemary for further information on how to book your group. Email [Rosemary.directus@gmail.com](mailto:Rosemary.directus@gmail.com) call 07732104364 or visit “Feel Good with Food” on Facebook to join the group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/feelgoodwithfood/>

Feel Good with Food is supported by the Urban Villages Initiative and delivered by East Belfast Enterprise.



## Scaffolding Project – Re-Cycle School Uniform Scheme

**The Scaffolding Project is an EastSide Partnership project that delivers programmes and activities which aim to alleviate the impact of poverty by supporting families and**

**individuals in east Belfast, while also raising awareness of the issues.**

One of the programmes is the Re-Cycle School Uniform scheme which has been growing from strength to strength since 2017. This year, Covid-19 presented real challenges, but despite this, the community generously donated many items of pre-owned school uniforms to support the scheme.

Items of clothing were quarantined and laundered ready for distribution. The project created an online ‘click and collect’ shop to facilitate distribution which allowed people to browse the website and book collection times online. The shop was a great success with 391 items of uniform given away to families across the EastSide Urban Village area.





# Gail's story @ Turas



Seven years ago, Gail McCune, a local east Belfast woman, decided to attend an Irish language class in the Skainos Centre on the Newtownards Road. Although a little apprehensive at first, Gail discovered a love for the language which has inspired her to continue her study of Irish.

Gail has now achieved a Distinction in the Irish Language Diploma and last year she embarked on a degree course in Irish and Archaeology at Queen's University.

Gail's decision to attend that first beginners' Irish class, which was provided by East Belfast Mission's Turas project has proved to be life changing for her.

Linda Ervine, TURAS, said *"With thanks to support from the Urban Villages Initiative, Turas has been able to provide scholarships for a number of local people who are undertaking university courses in Irish."*

*"This year, 3 people from the project will be doing a Diploma in Irish at Ulster University, while a further 5 people are enrolled on degree courses in Irish at both Ulster University and Queen's University."*

If you would like to get involved in Irish Language classes with TURAS contact Linda Ervine on 028 9045 8560

▶ Watch Gail's Story <https://youtu.be/5HIp37XWmAM>

Barbara Smith, EastSide Partnership, said *"The Re-Cycle School Uniform scheme is so important as local families in need of support really appreciate help with otherwise expensive school uniforms. This would not have been possible without the support of local people, participating schools and EastSide Learning. I would also like to thank the Urban Villages Initiative, East Belfast Community Development Agency and James Brown & Sons for their continued support."*



For more information on the Scaffolding project, contact Barbara Smith, Email: [barbarasmith@eastsidepartnership.com](mailto:barbarasmith@eastsidepartnership.com)



Ardoyne &  
Greater Ballysillan

## NORTH BELFAST



# Champions of Change

**TAMHI along with 22nd Ladies FC and Shamrock Ladies FC have been supported by the Urban Villages Initiative to deliver a project in the North Belfast Urban Village area aimed at improving and developing community relations in the area.**

This innovative project will develop; a mental health awareness programme open

to coaches and players across the Urban Village area; local outreach activities; a dedicated female development programme involving the ladies teams of both clubs and the provision of cross-community football tournaments.

The teams participated in a Ladies Football pre-season tournament involving clubs from both the Colin and South Belfast Urban Village areas. The cross community tournament hosted a number of friendly games played over a 4 week period and concluded in a celebration day at Clarendon Park in August.

The two teams have been taking part in shared education projects, joint training sessions

and have planned a number of joint activities. Working with TAMHI, the clubs have also started to plan their intervention-based programmes to target issues in their communities.

Joe Donnelly, TAMHI, said *“We have been working on an intervention plan that will help improve the lives of people in our local communities by tackling issues such as poor mental health, financial hardship, drugs and alcohol addiction and breakdown in relationships. When it comes to mental health I have found all communities are united in doing more.”*

# Self-isolation youth work

**When lockdown was announced in March, all face-to-face youth services had to stop, a major disruption at a time when young people were greatly in need of support in the North Belfast Urban Village area.**

Ardoyne Youth Club sprang into action and created a Facebook group for youth workers to exchange ideas, questions and experiences on new ways to creatively engage with young people.

The brainchild of Thomas Turley, the ‘Self-Isolation

Youth Work’ Facebook page quickly took off, gathering nearly 1,200 engaged and energetic members from across the region. It became a hub of activity where workers shared their most creative and innovative projects and supported each other through the challenges of the pandemic.

Membership includes youth workers, teachers, scout leaders, regional organisations, local youth clubs, schools, uniformed organisations and many others. This reflects youth work practice across all

communities and has been well received as a valuable resource by all involved.

The page continues to thrive and act as a reference point for youth providers and a model of good practice across different communities and cultures.

Find out more: [Facebook / Self Isolation Youth Work](#)







## Ardoyne Association – Addressing compassion fatigue

**Volunteering has played a central role in the Covid-19 community support response across North Belfast. In a long-term crisis, frontline staff and volunteers can feel the strain and suffer compassion fatigue. To avoid burn-out, it's important to set boundaries and achieve a good work-life balance.**

In August and September, with support from the Urban Villages Initiative, Ardoyne Association offered three 'Compassion Fatigue' training sessions to 30 participants.

Trainees included Ardoyne Association street representatives, North Belfast Advice Partnership foodbank volunteers, advice staff from Ligoniel Improvement Association, Ballysillan Community Forum, the Vine Centre and Ardoyne Association.

Jackie a street rep, said: *“the training allowed me to prioritise my own needs and find time for myself. It was very beneficial and refreshing.”*

More info on Compassion Fatigue training is available here [www.compassionfatigueireland.com](http://www.compassionfatigueireland.com)

## WOMEN'STEC – creating a safe training environment

**During lockdown, the challenge for WOMEN'STEC, as for most training organisations was to keep supporting their students. WOMEN'STEC offered online tutorials as well as providing support and advice for members experiencing difficulty and stress.**

At WOMEN'STEC, the Urban Villages Initiative supports a Women's Training programme and the **#notjustforboys project**. These projects attract women and girls from across the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas into new skill-based training programmes which also places an emphasis on good relations, personal achievement, capacity building and cultural diversity. It also creates potential pathways towards employment in non-traditional industries.

The WOMEN'STEC building and workshops are now safe for use, appropriate safety measures are in place and training classes have resumed.

Quality Assurance Officer Vilma Bisson said, *“WOMEN'STEC are fortunate to have a large building with multiple entrances and exits (the building was previously a primary school), this has enabled us to have a limited number of people taking part in classes. We are delighted that we can welcome some of our students back to participate in the activities and classes that we offer.”*

A new group has started a 14-week personal development programme as part of the Women's Training Programme.

This is what participants said:

*‘I live on my own as I lost my husband recently. I feel excited about coming here and everyone in the group has been so supportive to me.’*

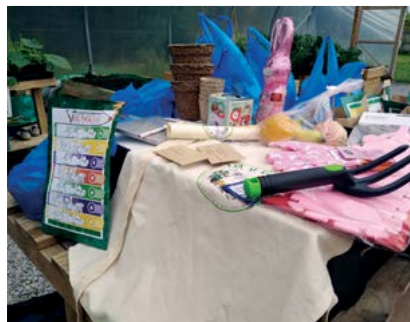
*‘We have all become friends and we don't think about what religion anyone is’.*

You can find a full list of current and upcoming courses here: [womenstec.org/our-courses](http://womenstec.org/our-courses)





# COVID-19 Response - North Belfast Urban Village Area



**In response to the COVID-19 crisis, North Belfast community groups across the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas quickly stepped up their support services, developing a united response, together with their neighbours in Woodvale, Oldpark, Lower Shankill and Cliftonville.**

A number of Urban Villages supported groups formed the 'Crisis Intervention Team' initiative to deliver a range of vital services in the area including food parcels, home cooked meals and a prescription delivery service for the isolated, sick and vulnerable members of the community.

North Belfast Women's Initiative and Support Project (NBWISP) had to relocate its services to East Belfast

but continued to provide support to the North Belfast community, working together with Good Morning North Belfast and others. NBWISP delivered food parcels to over 1,800 recipients, including families, older people and children.

See how they did it: <https://youtu.be/HNSGAh4JLVI>

Each week, Marrowbone Community House prepared hot meals for the Community Foodbank, made soups for Community and North Belfast Foodbanks, delivered meals and parcels to families and vulnerable people in Ardoyne and Marrowbone. They also worked in partnership with Sunningdale Community Centre, to organise meat deliveries in Marrowbone and Sunningdale.

Bill McComb, Marrowbone Community Association, said; *"The local community really rallied around the most vulnerable in our society and I was delighted that we were able to be a part of that response. We worked with a range of community organisations from across the community and it highlighted how our existing relationships with our neighbours can be strengthened when we all work together."*

Joan Totten, Sunningdale Community Centre, said; *"The COVID-19 crisis affected everyone in exactly the same way, regardless of your background. It was great that there was such a strong community response and through working together we were able to support those most in need."*





Sandy Row,  
Donegall Pass  
& the Markets

## SOUTH BELFAST



## Sure Start - Play & Discover

**The Accidental Theatre on Shaftesbury Square is home to a new and exciting programme from South Belfast Sure Start called 'Play and Discover'. It is open to children over 1 year old and their parents from the South Belfast Urban Village area of Sandy Row, the Markets and Donegall Pass.**

The 6 week program will run every Thursday at the theatre, a perfect location for children with its bright rooms and inviting shared spaces.

Group numbers are kept low to ensure quality time is spent with the children and to keep

to social distancing guidelines. Sure Start are very fortunate to have Speech and Language Therapist Jill Wells supporting each session.

The program uses play to promote communication skills and teaches parents strategies to build on this within the home. The play environment is open and inviting, and resources have been chosen which help develop play skills.

During the course of the programme, parents get to chat to each other over a cup of tea, giving them the opportunity to build relationships, while providing

support and advice to each other, which in turn reduces social isolation.

After the 6 week programme ends, there will be coffee mornings for the parents to catch up, and these groups will be invited on any other good relations programmes through South Belfast Sure Start.

If you are interested in attending and feel it would benefit your child, please contact **Anna Devlin Family Support Worker - Urban Village Initiatives on 07864 146458.**

## Youth Action Partnership (YAP) project with 5th Element.

**Young people from across the South Belfast Urban Village area involved in Alternatives YAP project teamed up with 5th Element and completed a number of workshops including an introduction to DJing.**



Consequently, young Josh Thompson was invited to do a live DJ session on Skank FM radio. The project also taught young people the skills needed to promote and market an event including printing and graphic design.



The project ended with a live event broadcasted on twitch through Alternatives and 5th Elements social media accounts.

Sandy Row,  
Donegall Pass  
& the Markets

## SOUTH BELFAST

# Be creative and try something new

**BSCR hosted 30 women and children from the Belfast Asian Women's Academy (BAWA) to take part in digital fabrication taster sessions, over three evenings.**

The women and children were taught how to design and digitally fabricate their own T-shirt. The three evenings were great fun and helped to promote positive wellbeing by getting the participants to be creative and try something new.



*'We all loved it! It was a fantastic experience to get a go at digital printing, something we have never done before!' Ana Peter Chair and Founder at Belfast Asian Women's Academy (BAWA).*

BSCR are looking forward to the next workshops with BAWA and are now looking at ways of promoting Asian Culture together, through Culture Days for young people.



# This is what good relations is all about

**As part of Good Relations Week, BSCR in collaboration with Sandy Row FC and Belfast Celtic delivered a cross community Digital and Wellbeing Sports Day for five young teams. The project helped to promote mental health & foster stronger relationships within the communities.**

The day allowed young people from both teams to come together and take part in a friendly football tournament, while also digitally fabricating their own Football club beanies and designing their own wellbeing football kits. The football kits helped young people to think about what makes them happy and helped to promote positive wellbeing.



There were 40 kids in attendance and the day had a real family feel to it. The weather was fantastic and all the kids left with a wellbeing goodie bag, a team hat, key ring and most importantly a big smile on their faces. This is what good relations is all about.

We hope this is the start of a long-term relationship between both clubs and BSCR, as we all work to make our communities better places for kids to explore their talents.







## Introducing the New Parent Support Worker

**Jamie-Lee is the new Parent Support Worker appointed to support the parents and carers of children who attend Arellian Nursery School and Blythefield Primary School.**

Working closely with families, Jamie Lee will empower and enable parents and carers to make the most of the educational experience for their children, while supporting them to develop their own knowledge and self-confidence.

Jamie-Lee will focus on improving and strengthening the 5 core developmental skills for young children, by organising and delivering a number of 'needs led' programmes for young people and their parents.

Jamie-Lee is also the contact for parents information for all of the South Belfast Urban Village area to sign post parents to local support agencies if required.

Jamie-Lee is based at BSCR, for further information or support please don't hesitate to **contact her on: 028 90244449** or **email: Jamie-lee@bscr.co.uk**

## Give it a go for your wellbeing

**'Give it a go for your wellbeing' led by BSCR, invited 40 young people in Primary 5 and above to have the opportunity to try a range of different activities.**

In small groups, young people from across the South Belfast Urban Village area took part in a carousel of activities that they would not normally have the opportunity to do.

The main aim for this event was for the young people to recognise how trying new experiences can positively impact their mental wellbeing.



The activities were based around the **Take 5 steps to wellbeing** (Give, Active, Connect, keep Learning and Take notice). Activities ranged from, creating digital art pieces, learning African drums and taking part in a circus school, as well as developing team work and leadership skills through football.

*"I liked trying the different things, I really loved the drums and drawing pictures of things that make me happy."* Young person who attended the day.





# A Thriving Mixed Use Community Facility @ Marrowbone Community Hub Teach Eilís

**Work is now complete on the restoration and redevelopment of the vacant former parochial hall in the North Belfast Urban Village area.**

It has been transformed into a thriving mixed-use community facility for the area, including youth facilities and outdoor space.

This £1.3M investment by the Urban Villages Initiative in partnership with the Department of Education and the Social Investment Fund has created a fantastic new community hub, which will provide a wide range of activities to the whole community.

The new facility will be home to Sacred Heart Boxing Club, a youth club and a dance studio. There are also meeting spaces and rooms for training as well as a multi-purpose area for community events.

A new 'Men's Shed' group is also being established, only this group will welcome women, and will be known as the

'Wellbeing Shed', where men and women who are interested in gardening, sewing, crafts and DIY can join in together.

A new covered outdoor space has been created with a pizza oven and raised flower beds, which will allow for outdoor gatherings, while following the current COVID-19 restrictions.

The project delivery partner was Belfast City Council.

Bill McComb, Marrowbone Community Association Said. *"This wonderful new facility will enable us to carry on providing vital services for people who live in the local area for years to come. It will also allow us to continue building cross community partnerships with our friends in Sunningdale Community Centre in Ballysillan and we look forward to welcoming them here when restrictions are relaxed. I would like to thank everyone who helped make this happen and for the support we have received to get to this point today."*





# New Park in Colin

**Work is progressing well on the New Park in Colin, the new pathways are taking shape and the four park zones are beginning to emerge, the pump track will be the first to be installed.**

This new transformational destination park will provide a high quality, safe space for locals and visitors to the Colin area; it will have something for all ages.

The zones will include, a play park, teen space and pump track, event space, and environmental learning and wetland habitat. Programmes and events in the park will provide shared, inclusive activities, bringing people together in this fantastic, new park space.

### Supporting local community

The contract between the Urban Villages Initiative, Belfast City Council and Forrme Construction includes a social benefits clause.



There have been some training and job opportunities that have been made available to local people on this exciting project.

As part of this support, this year's Christmas tree to be located at the Colin Town Square is being donated by Forrme Construction.

# North Belfast Public Realm Scheme is Improving the Physical Environment

**The Crumlin Road & Ligoniel Road Junction public realm scheme is well underway, and real improvements can already be seen at this prominent junction in the North Belfast Urban Village area.**



This environmental improvement works and remedial works to adjacent derelict sites will create a safe and welcoming environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

A co-design process has been used to involve community

in the design of the semi-permanent hoarding screens that will frame the junction.

This Urban Villages project is being delivered in partnership with the Department for Communities.



# Improving the Physical Environment Connecting People and Places in the EastSide Urban Village Area

**The Urban Villages Initiative has invested in a series of connected capital projects across the EastSide Urban Village area.**

When complete the public realm works at Ballymacarrett Walkway which lead from CS Lewis Square will continue across Dee St, a long Island Street through to the renovated Titanic Halt with its mural art; then along the recently upgraded Fraser Pass and on to Pitt Park which is the next redevelopment project.

This will see a transformation to the area making it a more safe and welcoming area for everyone, locals and visitors to travel through the area and access local amenities.

Mirroring this physical connectivity across the EastSide Urban Village area is the development of community tourism products that link and span the area. The EastSide Voices Tours, the Heritage and Churches Trails, the A/R project and the Greeter scheme all connect into an area-based approach that supports community to deliver thriving connected places.

For more information on the EastSide Tourism project, contact Chris at Eastside Partnership, Email [chris@eastsidepartnership.com](mailto:chris@eastsidepartnership.com)

# Redevelopment of Pitt Park



**The redevelopment of Dr Pitt Memorial Park (Pitt Park) will provide a shared space for local community and visitors to the area, it will have space to host events and activities.**

The newly revitalised Pitt Park will be an attractive, safe and accessible area where families, children, and people of all ages can get active, have fun and enjoy the rich heritage of the area.

The upgrade to Pitt Park will support and celebrate the local culture and heritage of the Ballymacarrett area, taking inspiration from the Yardmen and Harland and Wolff shipyard.

Together with our delivery partner, Belfast City Council, we recently held a public consultation for 8 weeks to hear the views of local community on the redevelopment of Pitt Park.

The feedback from this consultation will be published on the Belfast City Council website, and it will help shape a space that everyone in the local community can be proud of.

## Features of the upgraded Pitt Park will include:

- New pathways and paving
- Improved community hub space
- New and improved play spaces for all ages
- Accessible and safe entrances
- Celebrating local culture
- Preserving history and improving the physical landscape



# Prokick Gym

**Prokick Gym is the next EastSide Urban Village capital build project coming down the line. New premises have been secured for a state of the art gym on Laburnum Street.**

Plans have recently been submitted for planning permission, procurement for the main contractor is underway and the project will be delivered by Belfast City Council.

ProKick Community Gym has operated in East Belfast for the last 25 years, making a positive impact on the well-being of thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds, through the sport of Kickboxing.

The gym has helped young people from all sides of the community come together through innovative projects such as Peace Fighters. The new gym will offer much improved facilities that will enable more young people to come together in a safe and shared space for everyone.





## Titanic Halt connecting better with the City

This environmental improvement project has included a significant upgrade to the Titanic Halt and surrounding pathways.

Delivered by Department for Communities, it has created a safe and welcoming gateway to and from the EastSide Urban Village area; improving connectivity for visitors and locals whether travelling by train, at the Titanic Station, by bike, or on foot from the Titanic Quarter.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Keep an eye out, because a fantastic mural artwork is being developed, working with local community and it will be added to the underpass section.



## Ballymacarrett Walkway creating safer access

**This newly renovated Ballymacarrett Walkway has dramatically improved the physical environment and the connectivity for locals and visitors; creating safe, shared and welcoming access across the EastSide Urban Village area.**

This is the first section of this physical and environmental improvement project that will

link from C.S. Lewis Square via the Ballymacarrett Walkway across Dee St and along Island St to the Titanic Halt.

Working with EastSide Partnership and the community the Urban Villages funded design of the new mural depicting the Ballymacarrett rail crash in 1945.

A joined-up approach - this project is funded by the Urban Villages Initiative in partnership with Department for Infrastructure and delivered by Belfast City Council.

Head Coach Billy Murray said; *"This is a moment we've all been looking forward to. Set foot inside the current ProKick gym on Wilgar Street and you'll understand why it's time for a new one! Whilst it has produced 17 world champions and provided a much-loved space for thousands who have discovered physical and mental wellbeing within the infamous 'Tin Hut', it is time to move on."*







Note: This is a concept illustration not a final design image

# Donegall Pass Good Relations Hub

**Work is progressing on the development of plans for the regeneration of the former PSNI site on Donegall Pass. The new multi-purpose building will be a fully shared and inclusive facility for the South Belfast Urban Village area.**

The building will be a welcoming shared space providing opportunities for integration through community exhibitions, activities and events. It will also house a social enterprise training café and accommodation for a range of organisations providing vital community services, guidance and support as well as social and affordable housing.

Work will continue with a range of key stakeholders including the local community, political representatives, statutory agencies and others to make sure this project meets the needs of the local community and is a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

Urban Villages Programme Director, Linsey Farrell met Sharon O'Connor, recently

appointed Chair of the DPCE, on site to view the premises and to discuss progress on this transformational project.

Linsey commented, *“This is a great example of our area-based approach to delivering in Urban Village areas. There is so much potential for this capital project to really be transformational for people across this South Belfast Urban Village area.*

*“It will be a place of welcome and inclusivity for all cultures to connect, a place where training and capacity building will happen, where young children will be nurtured and SEN students and their parents will get the support they need.*

*“There is opportunity for this building to be a catalyst for change in the area, not just by its physical presence but by all that will happen within it, I am excited to see the development.”*

The project will be delivered by Clanmil Housing Association.





## New Gate Arts & Culture Centre will have a state-of-the-art shared performance space

Designs have been submitted to planning for a new state-of-the-art shared performance space at the New Gate Arts and Cultural Centre in the Derry-Londonderry Urban Village area.

The project will see the development of a new build multi-use space on an adjacent vacant site to the existing Centre. It will offer cultural and arts activities across the Urban Village area and beyond; providing training, events and activities for different cultures and communities, while providing a new large multi-use performance space.



This £1.7M investment is designed to not only enhance the local environment in the Fountain area, but to create a welcoming and shared space for locals and visitors alike to participate and engage in theatre, music, dance and much more. It will help to restore

pride and confidence among those living and working in this part of the city.

The community partner is the North West Cultural Partnership and the project will be delivered by Derry City & Strabane District Council.

## Meenan Square Redevelopment A Place for Everyone

**Work is currently ongoing to develop a business case for this significant redevelopment project to regenerate the Meenan Square site.**

This transformational project includes a mixed-use development, to include; community space, social housing and commercial units, offering a range of



facilities for the benefit of the whole community and returning Meenan Square to a thriving focal point.

The Urban Villages Initiative will continue to engage with the local community over plans for the site and will keep residents and other stakeholders updated on the project's development.

The Urban Villages Initiative is currently also working closely with our delivery partner, Apex Housing Association and local community partner, IONA Enterprises, to progress the project.

In October a planning application was submitted by Apex to enable the site to be erected to secure the site once it is purchased.



# Training Opportunities

Working in partnership with Belfast City Council, the Urban Villages Initiative is supporting a number of projects providing training and qualifications to help the economically inactive and socially-excluded groups to move into employment or further education and training. The project is also supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) and working in partnership with Belfast City Council.

Support includes:

- job coaching and mentoring
- personal development
- training and qualifications
- support with CV building, job searching and interview techniques
- pre-employment and in-work support
- building connections with employers such as work experience and site visits.

## Belfast Works Programme

The Belfast Works programme is a Belfast City-wide project, addressing the issue of long-term unemployment targeting those most removed from the job market. For more information visit: <https://belfastworks.co.uk/>

## Path 2 Employment Programme

The Path 2 Employment Programme is for people who are aged 18 and over and are unemployed or economically inactive. For more information call **028 9074 7676**

## JobWorks+ Programme

JobWorks+ is an employability programme aimed to meet the needs of young people aged 18-24 years who are not in education, employment or training. For more information call **028 9031 5111**



## Start your career in baking?

Get into Baking with Poleglass Community Association. This online course will help participants gain basic knowledge and skills with the option of progressing to further courses with Belfast Metropolitan College and South Eastern Regional College.

For more information contact Roisin on **028 9062 7250** or email [roisin@sallygardens.org](mailto:roisin@sallygardens.org)

## JobWorks+ - OCN Qualifications

Opportunities for 16-24 year old's to gain OCN Level 1 qualifications while building your CV, interview skills and techniques. Free Personal Training sessions and CSR card courses also available. Programmes currently delivered online.

Dates: **18 January, 15 February, 1 March 2021**

For more information contact Laura on **028 9031 5111** or email [lauragilligan@springboard-ops.org](mailto:lauragilligan@springboard-ops.org)



# News

## Junior Ministers Meet Community Led Projects Online

Junior Minister Declan Kearney and Junior Minister Gordon Lyons had the opportunity during Good Relations Week to meet and engage online with Community Led projects supported by the Urban Villages Initiative.

The Ministers heard from a variety of projects in Urban Village areas, about the fantastic work being done to build community cohesion through the delivery of a variety of capacity building projects.

Projects are reaching all age groups, gender and across cultures They include, working with youth both in community and school settings, employment & training and mental health & well-being projects.



Ministers heard directly from project leads and participants in the projects about the positive impact the programmes are having on people's lives.

The event also provided an opportunity to update Ministers on how groups have adapted to help the most vulnerable in their communities during the COVID-19 lockdown, and how they are operating in the new normal as they have risen to tackle the challenges that they now face.

### Projects showcased from Urban Village areas:

**Youth Action Partnership (YAP)**  
- SB Alternative in South

**Colin Community Capacity Building** - Poleglass Community Association in Colin

**Bridging the Gap** - Walkway Community Association - EastSide

**Streets Alive** - Gasyard and New Gate Arts & Cultural Centre - Derry-Londonderry

**The Wraparound Programme**  
- YEHA and Streetbeat  
- North Belfast

## The Urban Villages Initiative Reporting on Impact - Good Relations



91% participants met someone from a different background



84% participants experienced the culture and traditions of different backgrounds



81% participants feel more favourable towards people from a different background



89% participants are more likely to take part in shared groups / activities with people from a different background



88% participants feel more strongly that the culture and traditions of different backgrounds adds to the richness and diversity

"As part of the YAP programme, I was involved in mental health programmes and good relations projects to try and build better relationships between young people in the South Belfast area."

Bailey, 15yrs - Donegall Pass

The Urban Villages Initiative is a headline action of the Together: Building a United Community (T.BUC) Strategy. It is designed to improve good relations outcomes and develop thriving places. Good Relations data is gathered consistently across all five of the Urban Village areas in Belfast & Derry~Londonderry.

## Good Relations Impact Survey

We capture good relations outcomes in order to demonstrate the impact of the Urban Villages Initiative programmes and projects on people's lives and the places where they live.

We designed a Good Relations Survey to gather feedback from a sample of participants at 59 community led and cross-cutting projects that took part in programmes during 2018 - 2020.

The programme is really making a difference, key findings from this survey are presented in the infographic above.

# News



## Keeping Healthy Staying Safe

Keeping Healthy Staying Safe is a programme jointly funded by the Urban Villages Initiative and Business in the Community and being led by community.

Building on the successful partnership that delivered the 'Healthy Summers' project

last year, this programme is designed to support local people as they face food insecurity and issues of isolation; more so than ever during the current pressures of pandemic.

Donations will be made to support local community groups working across Urban Village areas, to deliver food supplies, meals, activities and essential PPE.

This will support young people, their families and the wider community to help to improve wellbeing, learn new skills, promote good relations and have some fun during this challenging time.

A range of groups in the areas will lead in the overall project aims and objectives. These are:

- North Belfast – Ballysillan Community Forum
- South Belfast – Belfast South Community Resources
- East Belfast – Ballymacarrett Friendship Trust
- West Belfast – Poleglass Community Association @ Sally Gardens
- Derry/Londonderry – Triax Neighbourhood Partnership Board

Local businesses Allstate Northern Ireland, Arthur Cox, Belfast harbour, Coca-Cola HBC Ireland and Northern Ireland, DuPont, George Best Belfast City Airport, Henry Brothers, Learning Pool, Portview, PwC, SHS Group and Spar have generously provided donations to match funding from the Urban Village Initiative.

## Keep in touch

Stay updated with what's happening in your Urban Village area. To join our mailing list send your contact details to [info@urbanvillagesni.org](mailto:info@urbanvillagesni.org)

**Focus Magazine** - Next issue – March 2021. If you have any local community stories or events that you would like included, just let us know.

**Ezines** - Ezines will keep you updated throughout the year on what's happening in your Urban Village area and beyond.

**Twitter** - Keep the conversation going @urbanvillagesni

**Youtube Channel** - View videos of the great community projects we support





# News Highlights



## Cancer Lifeline Support

Cancer Lifeline staff and volunteers didn't let lockdown stop their services. They provided socially distanced face to face support, as well as phone and online calls to cancer patients and their families.

## Celebrating Zambian Culture

The Hosford Health and Well-being Hub at Skainos Square offers support to those who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Supported by the Urban Villages Initiative, it provides weekly 'drop-in'

sessions with lunch, outdoor activities and art or horticulture therapy sessions. As part of the weekly cultural activities, participants recently enjoyed a session learning about Zambian culture and each received a Cultural Activity Box which included a range of dry and fresh ingredients and nutritional recipes.

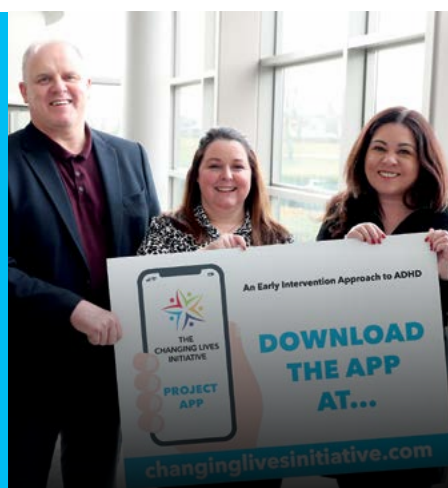


## Supporting those in Need

Community activist Joan Totten was very active during lockdown, tirelessly working with Good Morning North Belfast and partners across the whole of the North Belfast Urban Village area to ensure vulnerable people and those who had to self-isolate received the support they needed.

## Changing Lives App

The Changing Lives Initiative has launched an innovative App on ADHD to support families. The App helps families understand what ADHD is and provides practical strategies and tools for parents to use with their children. The App is particularly relevant for parents who have concerns about their child's behaviour but are not yet sure if their child may have ADHD.



Download the App for free at [www.changinglivesinitiative.com](http://www.changinglivesinitiative.com)



## Training through Lockdown

During lockdown, young people from YEHA's Wraparound and Aspire groups continued to meet virtually. Jodie Shevlin and Liam Shannon both completed an online OCN Level 2 Award in Youth Work practice, they started the ball rolling for a health and wellbeing youth podcast and drop-in, and are now trainee youth leaders with YEHA.

# StopCOVID NI

## DOWNLOAD THE APP NOW



**StopCOVID NI is a free health service app for your mobile phone. It will help us to protect each other and slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).**

The app is available, free of charge, from both the Apple App store and the Google Play store.

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

**WE ALL  
MUST DO IT  
TO GET  
THROUGH IT**



WE WANT  
TO HEAR  
FROM  
YOU...

URBAN VILLAGES FOCUS MAGAZINE will tell you what's happening and what the Executive is supporting across the Urban Village Areas in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry.

The local stories you have read have come from community groups and individuals in Urban Village areas. We want this magazine to reflect the great things that are happening where you live and welcome your comments and ideas!

If you would like to receive future editions of FOCUS Magazine, sign up at [info@urbanvillagesni.org](mailto:info@urbanvillagesni.org) or contact us at The Urban Villages Initiative, Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast, BT4 3SJ



Northern Ireland  
Executive  
[www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)

**T:buc**  
Changing for the better, together



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