



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND



Twaddell Ardoyne Shankill Communities in Transition (TASCIT)

Peace Walls

Attitudinal Survey

Summary of Results

October 2017

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The terms PUL and CNR are commonly used in Northern Ireland when referring to both communities. They have been used in this report:
PUL Protestant Unionist Loyalist
CNR Catholic Nationalist Republican

Foreword

Today, almost 50 years since the first Peace Wall was built, more than 100 physical structures remain as visible symbols of continued division and segregation. The IFI Peace Walls Programme is currently working with local communities impacted by approximately 66 of these barriers. There should be no place for physical separation barriers in a truly reconciled society but we have not yet reached that stage and, given that the risks associated with barrier removal processes lie almost exclusively with those residents and communities most impacted by their presence, it is right that we prioritise their views and concerns while supporting them to bring about positive change if and when they decide the time is right.

The vast majority of physical barriers are located within communities that have suffered disproportionately during the conflict. These interface areas continue to endure high levels of multiple deprivation including educational under-achievement, mental and physical health inequalities, inadequate facilities, poor delivery of public services, physical blight and neglect. Investment potential remains limited with significant Agency and political collaborative will and effort required to change this negative dynamic. At this stage in our Peace Process, and four years since the Together Building a United Community (TBUC) pledge on the removal of barriers by 2023, local communities deserve to know what is planned in terms of delivery, how they will be involved in the decision-making and what protections will be offered to them.

This TASCIT baseline attitudinal survey report is one of six carried out in local communities impacted by physical barriers as part of the International Fund for Ireland's Peace Walls Programme. Unlike other studies, these surveys concentrate on the views of those most affected by change to the barriers, the people who live closest to them and who would be taking the biggest risks. The surveys show that fear continues to be a key issue for many, yet most want to see physical change in place for future generations. Positive change will only be enabled when agencies work together to ensure local voice is prioritised and after-care protection of life and property is in place and effective.

The findings from TASCIT include:

- While 18% of respondents (mainly CNR) would like to see barriers removed now, 19% want to see them retained in their current form (mainly PUL). An encouraging 65% wish to see them removed in the lifetime of their children or grandchildren, with 21% keen



for removal in the future and a further 38% keen to see re-imaging or greater access in the future. 65% indicate safety or security concerns as their key concern and this would require work with statutory agencies to ensure that any potential changes would put appropriate safety measures in place to meet these concerns.

- The findings also indicate that the PUL community is more resistant to change and fear loss of territory and cultural identity. Demographic changes have contributed to this but the area has also been significantly impacted by the conflict and lack of uplift from the peace process. The CNR community also refers to ongoing fears around contentious parades and seasonal tensions. Clear challenges exist for the work of the Peace Walls project to enhance community relations and build confidence but the survey results indicate where change might more readily happen in the short-term and the group has planned accordingly.

These results are significant and indicate that communities are willing, with support, to work towards positive change. While challenging, it underscores that if progress is to be realised, community goodwill and ambition must be met in full by tangible action from relevant statutory authorities backed by strong political leadership. Ring-fenced resources and funding is part of delivering change as is the need for a detailed and considered strategy that aligns the efforts of those who own the physical structures, including the Department of Justice, local authorities, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and others. Without this, we may ultimately be taking communities to a place where they cannot advance any further, causing frustration and anger and effectively negating progress made.

Adrian Johnston

Chairman, International Fund for Ireland



TASCIT Foreword

Four years ago, the TASCIT partnership began a consultation process within their respective communities of Ardoyne, Upper Ardoyne, Twaddell and Woodvale to determine the level of support within each community for the transformation or removal of interface structures of separation – be they walls, fences or gates. Significant resistance to the idea of barrier removal was recorded as was scepticism as to the potential for any change to happen at all. Most participants simply did not believe that the time was right for change but acknowledged that it might happen sometime in the future. However, thankfully, there was a willingness to articulate their views and engage in dialogue with us and our statutory partners.

As a result, TASCIT initiated further community consultations to ascertain what might make the ‘time’ right. Residents were consistently reassured that change would only happen with their consent and if the proposed changes would bring positive changes to their lives. This began to shift resistance and scepticism to exploring possibilities, problem-solving and eventually led to positive changes in some instances. For example, in 2016, residents took the courageous decision to allow a high 30-year old brick wall in front of their houses to be demolished and replaced by railings and decorative panels. Attendant safety measures to their homes were also enabled. This consent and new confidence was achieved by agreeing the details and timeframe for the work and then keeping the residents regularly informed of progress. It marked the removal of the first NIHE peace wall in over 30 years and was a landmark achievement for all concerned.

Other significant plans have been developed and TASCIT will work with local communities in the coming year to implement them through local consultation to reach the agreement/ consent of those residents most impacted by the potential changes. TASCIT has taken on board the fears and concerns of residents and will plan accordingly to build confidence and inter-community relations. TASCIT will also work with its statutory partners as their support and resources are critical to progress.

The recent attitudinal survey was directed specifically at those most impacted by barriers, allowing us to hear their views face to face. We now have an update on their views, concerns, fears and hopes and can plan accordingly. The survey shows that much remains to be done to increase confidence within and between communities. We must enable inter-community interaction and directly address fears, real or perceived, as to the impact of change on their safety and security. Each wall/barrier has a unique set of circumstances so working directly with those most impacted will guide us in developing solutions and plans for each.

This is a challenge for all concerned and the TASCIT partnership, with our statutory partners, are committed to meeting that challenge by working closely with the local communities impacted. We would like to thank those residents who took the time to participate in the survey and look forward to following up with you in the coming period.

On behalf of the TASCIT Partnership,
Rab McCallum,
Co-ordinator.

Introduction

Since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, considerable progress has been made to address the legacy of division with successive Northern Ireland Life & Times (NILT) surveys signifying public approval of improved community relations and a desire to move towards a fully-realised shared society.¹

However, Northern Ireland remains a society dominated by the existence of the 'Peace Walls' with such structures providing a constant physical reminder of the divisions that remain.

The Peace Walls Programme (henceforth PWP) is an initiative developed and funded by the International Fund for Ireland (The Fund) since 2011/2012 to assist communities most impacted by the peace walls and physical barriers due to their proximity to these structures.

It aims to empower these residents to reach a position where they feel safe and ready to begin the dialogue necessary for the successful dismantling of interface barriers and have confidence in and a positive attitude to barrier reduction and/or removal.

The PWP operates within a policy context dominated by the 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC) Strategy' (NIE, 2013). Central to this strategy is a policy commitment to remove all interface barriers by 2023 in consultation with those most affected (i.e. those living closest to the barriers) and the implementation of an 'Interface Barrier Support Package' to enable this to happen.

Gormley-Heenan et al. (2015) have highlighted that the TBUC strategy faces a number of difficulties regarding its capacity to realise this commitment. This is in part due to the continuing inconsistency as regards what constitutes a 'peace wall' with the figures differing between 53 (Department of Justice figures, 2013) and 116 (Belfast Interface Project figures, 2017).

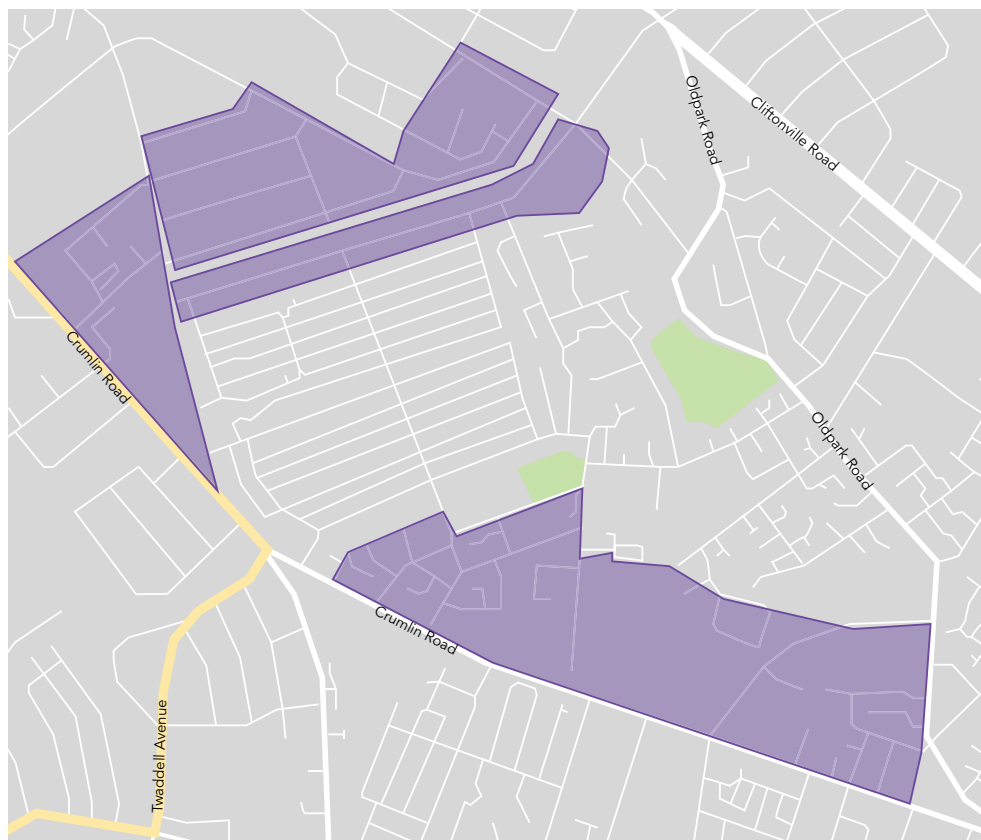
Moreover, there is a lack of clarity in relation to the role communities can actually play in the process, how their viewpoints can be measured over time and how 'confidence' and 'consensus' can be considered to have been met.

Naming a deadline has raised a concern within some communities that implementation of the strategy will occur from the 'top-down' and be acted on without relevant consultation and input from those most affected.²

Additionally, as of June 2017, the NI Executive has failed to agree on the value of an

'Interface Barrier Support Package' which underscores scepticism within communities that resources will not be made available for change to occur.

These concerns are strengthened by the current political instability within Northern Ireland caused by the absence of a power-sharing administration at Stormont.





Flax Street,
Belfast

The Peace Walls Programme

Engagement with the PWP occurs through grassroots programmes aimed at developing and delivering a range of confidence and relationship-building interventions within and between interface communities. These are facilitated by community representatives in collaboration with relevant statutory agencies.

The Programme has been in operation in the Upper North Belfast area since 2012 with Twaddell Ardoyne Shankill Communities in Transition (henceforth TASCIT) acting as the delivery agent. TASCIT consists of four partnership groups, namely North Belfast Interface Network (NBIN), Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne (CRUA), Twaddell/Woodvale Residents Association (TWRA) and Lower Shankill Community Association (LSCA).

The target areas include several interfaces and many peace walls/barriers. They include communities that as recently as 2013 were involved in protests regarding parading, identity issues and street violence. The Twaddell Peace Camp at the Ardoyne roundabout also

impacted on community relations. While promoting positive cross-community engagement remains challenging, it is taking place and opportunities for dialogue and working on common issues are being availed of by local groups, including TASCIT.

Since 2012, TASCIT has made progress on some identified sites with the most significant being the removal of an interface barrier fence in front of the houses on Crumlin Road. The current phase of the programme includes continuing work at eleven interface barriers.

TASCIT has developed plans for change at eight sites and has been successful in the removal of one barrier. Change has been driven by consensus and achieved through consent from residents. TASCIT has held fourteen public meetings and engaged 530 residents in consultations.

The four partnership groups within TASCIT have established local advisory groups with key stakeholders from each community to monitor its PWP. They have also consulted with local councillors and political representatives. A joint Steering group comprising two representatives from each partner group oversees the PWP.

A TASCIT Reference group has also been established with statutory representation that includes the Department of Justice, the NI Housing Executive, Belfast City Council, the Department for Communities, the NI Executive Office and the PSNI. All elected local political representatives (at Councillor/MLA/Executive level) have been consulted on local area plans through local advisory groups or one to one meetings. However, having embedded the PWP in the area, TASCIT has identified external issues that have caused delays or prevented progress across the Programme.

The first of these has been the difficulties TASCIT has faced accessing the funds necessary to follow through on proposed plans. Lack of resources, amongst other issues, stalled work at Flax Street. The failure of the Department of Justice (DoJ) to put in place an 'aftercare' package for residents has also impacted negatively on progress particularly at the Hesketh Road/Ardoyne Road site. TASCIT considers this package as key to encouraging residents to subscribe to the removal of the physical structures that have provided them with a sense of security over many years.

The TASCIT Reference group has at times failed to provide the necessary commitment in terms of time and resources when needed. Some agency commitments made at meetings have been overturned resulting in local anger and frustration. A lack of information-sharing on issues that impact the TASCIT target areas combined with uncertainty about who has responsibility for carrying out 'protective' work on private properties has also frustrated progress.

The growing housing crisis in North Belfast is also a key socio-political issue impacting progress at some TASCIT sites. This causes particular tension over the development of Hillview Retail Park with the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican (henceforth CNR) community campaigning for much-needed social housing over retail development.

The demographic shift in the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (henceforth PUL) community

has resulted in narrowing community majorities, leaving a sense of erosion of community identity and creating potential for increased tensions and division.

Despite commitments in both the Programme for Government (2011-2015) and within the TBUC strategy document (2013) that change to the barriers will only happen in consultation with communities most affected, there remains limited quantitative data on residents' views to such change.³

To address this and in order to aid planning and development of the second phase of the programme and deliver the wider outcome of the PWP, TASCIT gathered survey data from 212 of the most impacted residents at five identified sites.

This is a continuation of work undertaken by TASCIT to promote engagement between and within communities and to provide opportunities for residents to voice their concerns about barrier removal, ensure any future alterations are resident-led and move towards overcoming the psychological barriers that hinder change.

TASCIT has previously carried out a scoping exercise in all four affected communities, namely Twaddell, Ardoyne, Upper Ardoyne and Crumlin Rd /Woodvale to access residents' initial response to barrier removal.

Those surveys indicated levels of support for potential transformation at twelve interface sites which in turn set out short, medium and long-term objectives for the first phase of the Programme.

The objective of the recent survey was to baseline the attitudinal position of residents from both community backgrounds to establish an area-specific profile and provide PWP staff with information to aid the development of future initiatives from an evidence base.

This research briefing paper outlines some of the key findings from the survey in relation to residents' key concerns about the peace walls, their current attitudes towards the role of the peace walls, the current status of community relations in the area and views on the future status of the barriers. They are presented in relation to results from all respondents and from both communities (when relevant) and are discussed in greater detail in the remainder of this briefing paper.

They indicate both the opportunities and challenges that TASCIT face in meeting the aims and objectives of the PWP within this area.



Community Safety: Perceptions & Realities

Community safety and security remains a central issue in the area and greater fears exist within the PUL community.

59% of all respondents have lived in the area for over ten years [Table 5].

67% feel 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' living in the area [Chart 1].

65% of all respondents express safety and/or security issues as their key concerns [Table 6].

'Improved safety measures' are ranked as the primary factor that could influence positive attitudinal change to the removal of the peace walls [Table 15].

18% of the PUL community report feeling 'very safe' in relation to living in the area in comparison to 44% within the CNR community [Graph 1].

68% of the PUL community identifies ongoing/current safety concerns or concerns about the wall being altered as their key concerns in comparison to 51% of CNR respondents [Table 6].

74% of PUL respondents state that retention of the peace walls would have a 'positive' impact on community safety in comparison to 25% of CNR respondents [Data analysis].

A key finding within the data is that community safety and security remains a central issue in this area and as such provides an obstacle to the reduction and/or removal of the peace walls and the progress of the PWP.

Just over two-thirds reported that they felt safe living in this area, there is a sense from the

data that residents believe the peace walls continue to play an essential protective role in their lives with almost two-thirds of all respondents (65%) naming safety and/or security issues including change to the barriers as their key concerns.

Of nine identified safety/security concerns, five (violence at the interface, behaviour of others, attacks on property, ASB and hate crime) can be considered 'actual' safety and security fears. The remaining four concerns can only be linked indirectly to safety concerns as they are concerned with 'fears' of possible violence at the interface and/or the impact on community safety should the barriers be removed.⁴

Actual safety/security concerns are named by 29% of all respondents whilst a further 35% named concerns about potential violence and future change.


This suggests that the earlier high reported levels of safety are in part reliant on the existence of the peace walls. This need to 'feel' safe is understandable given that over half of all respondents have lived in this area for over ten years and have witnessed sectarian violence, civic unrest, seasonal tensions and contentious parading. As noted above, this area includes communities that as recently as 2013 have been involved in protests regarding parading, identity issues and street violence.

Respondents also indicate that changing these attitudes is dependent on greater safety measures being in place before the issue of the peace walls being removed could be considered. This finding indicates that maintaining the barriers may be less attractive to respondents if adequate, alternative security arrangements were to be put in place.

When considered from a community identity basis, it is evident from the data that a substantial percentage of PUL respondents (68%) continue to have safety and security concerns and as such hold particular issues of trust relating to barrier removal. This is supported by almost three-quarters (74%) of PUL respondents reporting that retention of the barriers will have a positive impact on community safety which declines sharply to one-quarter of those within the CNR community.

Those from a PUL background report much greater concerns about fears of attacks upon their property (17%), fears of violence at the interface (15%), and the 'behaviour' of the other community (12%). These were reported on average at ten percentage points lower within the CNR community. Regarding the latter concern - the 'behaviour' of the other community – this is particularly problematic for TASCIT as it includes a specific inference from respondents who name it that any trouble caused at the barrier is one-sided and the sole responsibility of the 'other' community.

Concerns reported by those from a CNR background focus primarily on future violence at contentious times of year (19%). Corresponding comments indicate that many CNR respondents considered parading issues as unresolved and the marching season as heightening tensions in the area. Resolution of such issues at a macro-political level may be key to moving towards discussions of full barrier removal within this community. PUL respondents report this at a much lower level with just 8% naming it as an issue.



There are challenges for the PWP in that ‘feelings’ of safety are both subjective and open to influence. Building greater trust in the positive aspects of barrier removal and providing evidence of alternative and adequate security arrangements is essential for progress to be made which again underscores the necessity for the TBUC Barrier Interface Support Package to be agreed and put in place as soon as possible.

Future work will need to particularly focus on the reasons underpinning the fears of the PUL community and provide greater reassurance and evidence to them that removal of the peace walls will not lead to deteriorating community safety. TASCIT has already identified that demographic change in the area has had a negative impact on the confidence of the PUL community and need to plan to redress this. The differences in feelings between the two communities may require the PWP to deliver parallel single identity work as well as the promotion of collaborative work to break down barriers and build trust. These findings also underscore the need for renewed community and political leadership from within the PUL communities.

Fortunately, as the PWP is facilitated at a grassroots level, TASCIT are in a position to gauge how they can most effectively address these safety fears and security concerns.

Community Safety: The Role of The Peace Walls

Aligned with these findings is the differing role that residents believe the peace walls play in maintaining community safety. Many respondents from this area clearly indicate that they believe the peace walls retain a safety and security role. Almost half of all respondents (47%) believe that the main functions of the peace walls are to provide safety and security whether through preventing attacks on property, providing security or making people feel safer.

The majority of respondents view the function and positives of the barriers in relation to community safety and security but the PUL community report greater confidence in the barriers overall

47% of all respondents feel that the key functions of the peace walls were their security and safety functions [Table 8].

72% identify the positive aspects of the peace walls as being that they 'protected me/my family' (32%), make people 'feel safer' (29%) and act as a preventative measure (11%) [Table 10].

29% of the PUL community state that the barriers continue to exist for the same reason they were initially constructed – namely to provide security from the other community – in comparison to 15% of CNR respondents [Table 8].

70% of the PUL community identifies the main positives of the peace walls as being that they 'protect me/my family' (35%) and 'make people feel safe' (35%) [Table 10].

21% of the PUL community report the barriers have 'no negatives' in comparison to 3% of the CNR community [Table 11].

34% of the PUL community does not want any change to the barriers in comparison to 8% of the CNR community [Table 12].

74% of the PUL community believes that retention of the barriers would have a positive impact on community safety in comparison to 25% of CNR respondents [Table 14].

The PUL community report a much stronger confidence in the ability of the barriers to 'protect' them and assuage safety and security concerns, whilst there remains a level of ambivalence within the CNR community that this is the case.

Twenty-nine percent of the PUL community believe the primary function of the barriers is to act as a security barrier in comparison to 15% of the CNR community. This indicates that many PUL respondents continue to view the barriers in the same terms as when they were first constructed.

Seventy percent of PUL respondents maintain that the positives of the barriers are that they 'protect me/my family' and help to make people 'feel' safe. Moreover, improved safety measures are considered the primary factor that could have a positive impact on attitudinal change towards the peace walls being removed. This much stronger belief in the PUL community that the barriers protect them needs to be addressed in order to reassure this community that the removal of the barriers will not cause a decline in community safety.

However, it must also be noted that a significant 19% believe the barriers have 'no purpose'



which is a positive foundation for the PWP. This is an interesting finding indicating as it does that there already exists a significant minority in the overall area who may be less difficult to persuade to consider the removal of the peace walls. Within this, it should be noted that the CNR community is much more likely to report that the barriers have 'no function' with 23% stating this in comparison to a lower 15% of PUL respondents. This is also true of the CNR community in relation to naming the positives of the barriers with a substantial 31% stating they have 'no positives' in comparison to only 5% of the PUL community.

These are significant findings for TASCIT indicating, as they do, the significant differences between the attitudes of the two communities regarding the capacity of the barriers to address safety and security concerns. The reported ambivalence by a large minority of the CNR community towards the peace walls offers an opportunity to the PWP in that if this viewpoint can be strengthened further, movement towards the removal of the barriers may develop correspondingly.

TASCIT needs to consider why the PUL community maintains such high levels of confidence in the barriers and consider what needs to be done to address this. TASCIT has already identified that demographic change in the area has had a negative impact on the confidence of the PUL community and need to plan to redress this. As noted above, this will require offering acceptable alternatives to the peace walls that can provide similar levels of safety and security, whether real or psychological and building trust that the barriers are not the only means of providing community safety.

Building greater trust in the positive aspects of barrier removal and providing evidence of alternative security arrangements is essential for progress to be made.

Interaction & Community Relations

Although the peace walls were first constructed to address safety and security concerns, such structures also need to be considered in relation to how they perpetrate segregation and division of communities by reaffirming territorial 'no-go areas' and subsequent beliefs that there is no need for communities to interact with each other or build better community relations.

Interaction with the 'other' community is poor as a whole and lessens in relation to the community on the 'other side of the peace walls' whilst quantity and quality of community relations is poor within both communities but poorer in the PUL community

37% of all respondents state they have contact with the 'other' community on a regular basis (very/fairly often) whilst 43% state that this rarely or never happens [Graph 3].

This declines sharply to 17% of all respondents reporting regular contact with the community on the 'other side of the peace wall' with 66% stating that such contact rarely or never happens [Graph 3].

63% of all respondents report that interaction is 'always' or mostly positive with only 5% responding that interaction is 'always' negative [Graph 6].

30% of all respondents report a level of ambivalence in relation to quality of interaction [Graph 6].

70% agree that no change to the barriers will have a negative impact on community relations [Table 14].

Respondents from the PUL community report lower levels of regular 'interaction' (26%) than rare or no interaction (51%) in comparison to the CNR community with 44% and 37% respectively [Graph 4].

Frequent interaction with those living on the other side of the barriers falls to 10% of PUL respondents compared to 23% of CNR respondents [Graph 5].

48% of the PUL community reports no interaction with those living on the other side of the barriers compared to 36% of the CNR community [Graph 5].

42% of the PUL community reports positive interaction experiences in comparison to 80% of CNR respondents [Graph 6].

43% of PUL respondents also report much greater ambivalence about the quality of interaction [Graph 6].

Despite better community relations overall throughout Northern Ireland, research by Ulster University (2012, 2015) indicates that interaction with the 'other community' remains lower at interface areas.

These findings indicate both challenges and opportunities for the TASCIT PWP. At present, interaction levels with the other community are poor overall in this area and significantly lower in relation to the community on the 'other side' of the barriers. Two-thirds of all respondents reported 'rare' or 'no' contact with their neighbours. Services, education, childcare, social and community activities remained mainly segregated. Interaction, when it does happen, is reported at much lower positive levels than in the other areas in which the PWP is operational.

While it is likely that relations have worsened and opinions hardened in recent years due to the protest Camp at Twaddell and ongoing tensions in relation to parading and emblems, it



is clear that poor inter-community relations is a longer-term issue for the TASCIT PWP areas given the high levels of non-interaction – 48% of the PUL community and 36% of the CNR community report never meeting their neighbours on the other side of the barriers. Twelve percent of the PUL community also names the ‘behaviour’ of the other community as a key concern and 8% name maintaining separation as a key positive of the barriers. Changing these attitudes will be a challenge to the TASCIT PUL representatives given the lesser positive interaction reported by PUL respondents and the lesser interest expressed by them to learn more about and become more involved in the PWP

An essential future focus for the PWP is the need to work to promote better inter-community relations given the significant percentage of respondents who have little or no contact with their neighbours from the other community. Providing more opportunities for the two communities to meet each other at community events or social activities may help with the building of better inter-community trust. The significant level of ambivalence in relation to interaction (30%) could be developed into better community relations and is within the capability of TASCIT to develop.

Given that there is also significant awareness within the area that retention of the peace walls has a negative impact on community relations, work to develop shared community facilities and shared spaces, coupled with wider regeneration and a renewed emphasis on relationship-building with improved home safety arrangements, may well increase the potential for positive attitudinal change to the peace walls. However, it is also important to note the context within which TASCIT is working. This survey collates the views of people living in some of the most high-profile areas in terms of the impact of the conflict. Seasonal conflict and tensions remain a part of their lived experience. There is a strong feeling that they have not benefitted from the so-called peace dividend and that their areas deserve investment and support. The findings of this survey indicate that the TASCIT PWP has a significant task ahead to broker change in communities that continue to be impacted by the conflict.

Looking to the Future

Respondents are cautious about change to the barriers at this time and require a 'reason' for change with the PUL community expressing greater caution

19% of respondents wish the barriers to maintain their current status [Table 12].

18% of respondents want the barriers to be removed 'now' and 20% want this to happen 'sometime in the future'.

42% are content to see the barriers de-classified, re-imaged or providing greater accessibility.

44% of respondents cannot envisage a time when the barriers will not be there but 19% remain unsure [Graph 7].

65% of respondents are in favour of the barriers being removed within the lifetime of their children or grandchildren [Graph 7].

There is a level of ambivalence regarding the negative impact retention of the barriers would have [Table 14].

Regeneration with jobs & investment, environmental & physical improvements to area, better community facilities/services and better housing provision are named as the second, third, fourth and fifth factors that would have a positive impact on attitudes towards barrier removal [Table 15].

34% of the PUL community does not want any change to the barriers in comparison to 8% of the CNR community [Table 12].

30% of Catholic respondents want the wall to be removed 'now' but this declined to only 1% of Protestant respondents [Table 12].

Both communities agreed that they would like to see the barriers come down sometime in the future (PUL=17% and CNR=23%) [Table 12].

Respondents from the PUL community expressed a strong interest in making changes to the appearance of the existing structures (35%) in comparison to their CNR counterparts (9%)

This was reversed in terms of enabling greater access (CNR=25% and PUL=10%)


64% of the PUL community cannot envisage a time without segregation barriers in comparison to 29% of the CNR community [Table 13].

Half of PUL respondents want to see the barriers removed within the next generation but a further 28% remained undecided [Table 13]. This was in comparison to 76% of the CNR community who do wish to see this.

Across seven of eight factors, the PUL community reported that the impact of retaining the barriers would be 'positive' while this was the reverse within the CNR community [Data analysis].

Political volatility and demographic change can cause greater levels of anxiety within segregated communities and contribute to greater concerns about changing the status quo. This may be happening in this area but, as noted above, there are also longer-term issues of low interaction and mistrust between the two physically segregated communities.

There was a level of cautious welcome for change to the barriers with 18% content for the barriers to come down immediately and a further 20% wanting this to happen at some point in the future. Only 19% stating they wanted 'no change'. TASCIT can further use this survey data to pinpoint the barriers where there is most appetite for change to guide their future work.



Thirty-nine percent agree that reimagining or provision of greater access was acceptable to the community and this also provides a route-map for TASCIT towards longer-term removal. This finding ties in with 38% of all respondents naming the appearance of the barriers as a key negative aspect and 28% naming that it limited access to other areas/services.

There was a level of pessimism that the barriers would ever be removed but this exists side-by-side with an expressed hope that more permanent change could happen within the next generation. Addressing security fears and brokering agreement on appropriate security measures could help to reduce fear within and between communities and potentially create the conditions where people feel ready to consider barrier reduction or removal.

When stratified by community identity, the data indicates that the PUL community is significantly more reluctant to embrace change towards the removal of the peace walls at present and much less optimistic about change than their CNR counterparts. The PUL community is significantly more in favour of retaining the status quo (PUL=34% and CNR=8%) and less optimistic about envisaging a time without the barriers (PUL=64% and CNR=29%).

Respondents from both sides of the community report more strongly that they would like to see their children or grandchildren live without the barriers although those from the CNR community favoured this significantly more (76%) than those from the PUL community (50%). However, there is also a sizeable number of undecided (28%) in the PUL community in relation to this question. This suggests that TASCIT needs to focus on the positive aspects that barrier removal could bring to the area in order to convince this substantial percentage within the PUL community that such movement is viable and worthwhile.

There is also a level of ambivalence regarding the impact that the removal of the barriers will have on improving living conditions in the area. On an identity breakdown, the PUL community report that the impact of retaining the barriers would be 'positive' across seven of eight factors while this was the reverse within the CNR community.

Comments about the need for greater regeneration and improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the area provide TASCIT with an opportunity to highlight the positives that such change could bring to this area through promoting their regeneration ideas and engaging both communities in planning and campaigning for positive change and investment. This would require significant political and stakeholder buy-in as to transform the areas sufficiently to enable barrier removal and site regeneration would take a high level of political will and agreement alongside the significant investment that has been absent to date.

Church
Car Park

Church
Car Park

**ROAD
CLOSED**



Conclusion

The survey data provides clear challenges for TASCIT PWP in developing their work in this area but also offers them a clear baseline position to both extend their work and measure future change from initiatives developed to deal with the pressing concerns raised by residents in the area.

A key challenge for TASCIT PWP is to develop work that can help to change the current mindset within the PUL community that the barriers are essential for their protection and safety. Only when this is achieved will there be any real desire to consider alternatives to segregation barriers. Parallel work is also required in the CNR community as, while not as embedded, there are huge challenges to overcome to encourage positive attitudinal change towards barrier removal and improved inter-community relationships and trust.

Poor inter-community interaction in both communities with those living on the other side of the barriers needs addressed to begin the process of better relations and provide for opportunities to plan for much-needed community regeneration together.

The findings indicate that residents, particularly in the PUL community, are yet to be convinced that change to the barriers will bring positive change in terms of regeneration and improved living standards. This underscores the reality that attitudinal change to the removal of peace walls in this area may be dependent upon much longer-term 'holistic' political, social and economic change.

That said, the data also highlights opportunities for development and progress. Hope still exists that change to the barriers will happen for future generations. TASCIT PWP must continue to build greater community confidence and consensus that change to the barriers can and will bring positive outcomes for this area. This however is tempered with the reality that any such change will require much greater inter-agency collaboration, political leadership and resource support.

Taken as a whole, these findings underpin the importance of the approach taken by the PWP, in that change to the peace walls can only happen with community support and involvement and at a pace dictated by the communities most affected.

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Footnotes

1. Morrow, D. et al. (2013) The Long View of Community Relations in Northern Ireland: 1998 – 2012. p.1.
2. Gormley-Heenan et al. (2015) Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (2): the challenge of delivery. p.4.
3. Ulster University have conducted such studies in 2012 and 2015
4. These are concerns about the wall being removed, concerns about future violence (specified or unspecified), safety concerns, and youths gathering at the interface. Safety concerns are included in this as qualitative evidence from the surveys indicates that this is a fear of potential violence rather than actual violence.





INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

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