International Fund for Ireland

Peace Walls Programme
Attitudinal Survey
Summary of Results
October 2017

A barrier at
Lower Oldpark

Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge and thank those 654 people from across the five participating Peace Walls Programme areas who took the time to respond to the face-to-face survey carried out over April to June 2017. The author also acknowledges and thanks the 219 people from the sixth PWP area who participated in the pilot survey over April to June 2016. Their collective responses form the basis of this report.

It is anticipated that the attitudes recorded here will serve as a useful attitudinal baseline for the International Fund for Ireland and those involved directly in the Peace Walls Programme. It is hoped that these findings will contribute to strengthening the impact of the Programme across each area and enable the reduction, declassification or removal of peace walls with community consent in the future.

The author greatly appreciates the commitment shown by staff and volunteers from the participating community organisations for undertaking the primary data fieldwork, without which this report could not have been written. Additional appreciation is given to Amanda Ashe, author of the initial Imagine pilot study report.

The author would also like to thank Rhonda Lynn, Programme Manager (IFI/PWP), and Monina O'Prey, Managing Agent (IFI/PWP), for their guidance regarding the work of the International Fund for Ireland in relation to the Peace Walls Programme.

Patricia Mullan
Author and Statistician

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 International Fund for Ireland's 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 report reflects the collective results of six baseline attitudinal surveys carried out in local communities impacted by physical barriers. 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 voices are prioritised and after-care protection of life and property is in place and effective.

The results of the surveys 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.

Finally, I would like to thank the residents who participated in the survey process and Patricia Mullan for her work in analysing the surveys and compiling the local reports and this composite report.

Adrian Johnston
Chairman, International Fund for Ireland

Key Findings Summary

Patricia Mullan, Author and Statistician

Key findings: Summary
On average 63% of all respondents express safety and/or security issues as their key concerns at the barriers.
On average, 49% of all PUL respondents state that retention of the peace walls would have a positive impact on community safety in comparison to 46% of CNR respondents.
Of four key functions identified across the five area, three roles (protection, prevention and psychological) are linked to safety and security concerns.
On average, 54% feel that the key functions of the peace walls are related to safety/security functions.
'Improved safety measures' is ranked as the primary factor that could influence positive attitudinal change to the removal of the peace walls across three of the five areas and the secondary factor in one area.
On average, 51% of all respondents state they have regular contact with the 'other' community compared to 26% having regular contact with those living on the other side of the peace walls.
On average, 29% of all respondents state they have rare or no contact with the 'other' community compared to 53% with those living on the other side of the peace wall
On average, 71% of all respondents report that interaction is 'always' or 'mostly' positive with only 2% reporting interaction as being 'always' negative.
On average, 66% of all respondents agree that no change to the barriers would have a negative impact on community relations.
On average, 13% of all respondents want the barriers to be removed 'now'.
On average, 26% of all respondents want the barriers to maintain their current status at the present time.
On average 31% of all respondents want this to happen 'sometime in the future' and 28% are content to see them declassified, reimaged or providing greater accessibility.
On average 68% of all respondents are in favour of the barriers being removed within the lifetime of their children or grandchildren.
On average, a majority in both communities want to see the barriers removed within the next generation (PUL=62% and CNR=73%).
Respondents to the survey also indicated that environmental/physical improvements to the area and regeneration with jobs and investment would be the second and tertiary factors to positively impact on attitudinal change to removal of the barriers.

The average key findings indicate an openness towards change to the barriers in some form with 44% of all respondents reporting they would like to see this happen 'now' or sometime in the future. Although residents are much more cautious regarding immediate change, a majority indicate that future change in some form is an option for them and report that they do not wish their children and/or grandchildren to continue living with these barriers. This provides the PWP with a clear and significant constituency across the PWP areas with which to work towards the re-imaging, reduction or removal of the peace walls. However, is also clear from the findings that three issues within these areas need to be addressed more fully.

The first of these is the on-going safety and security concerns reported across the five areas. On average, 63% of respondents name safety and security issues as their key concerns. Aligned with this is identification of three of four key functions of the peace walls as being linked to their safety and security roles. These findings are supported by a significant percentage across both communities reporting that retention of the peace walls would have a positive impact on community safety. This indicates that future work undertaken will need to address the reasons underpinning safety/security fears and, in particular provide greater reassurance and evidence that removal of the peace walls will not lead to deteriorating community safety. This need for greater reassurance is confirmed by residents naming 'improved safety measures' as the primary and/or secondary factor that could influence positive attitudinal change to the removal of the peace walls.

This illustrates the necessity of the commitments made within the Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) strategy regarding a Barrier Interface Support Package and the commitments made by the Department of Justice in relation to after-care packages being acted upon and met. Without these commitments being fulfilled, it is highly unlikely that residents will be convinced that alternative safety/security measures exist and will continue to rely upon the peace walls to meet their safety and security needs.

The second area that the PWP needs to focus upon is community relations. These findings indicate a clear future focus of the PWP is the need to address the significant percentages of respondents in both communities who have little or no contact with those on the other side of the barriers. Increasing relationship-building measures and developing greater understanding of the 'other' has the potential to enhance positive attitudinal change to barriers. Further community activities and events aimed at bringing people together with a view to building good relations and reducing levels of fear/suspicion is within the capacity of the PWP to facilitate. Lack of contact with the 'other' community can only act to exacerbate current mistrust and fears and if unaddressed could lead to the progress of the PWP being undermined.

Encouragingly, when interaction does happen, 71% of all respondents express the opinion that it is a positive experience and there is strong awareness that the retention of the peace walls is an obstacle to improved community relations. Increased provision of inter-community facilities and shared space, as already developed in some Peace Walls areas, will enhance good relations and contribute to creating the confidence and conditions for change to Peace barriers.

Finally, the data as a whole indicates that greater change could happen if residents were to be convinced that such change would have a correspondingly positive impact in their daily lives. Community benefit must be clearly demonstrable. In particular, enhancing collaborative efforts towards broader regeneration work would be advantageous to changing attitudes and providing hope for a more inclusive future.

Whilst evidencing the positive outcomes that change could bring for the people living in this area is essential, doing so also presents a challenge to the PWP. Given the socio-economic deprivation and the lack of regeneration to date in many of these areas, the necessity for significant and long-term political and stakeholder buy-in to transform these areas is crucial and has been reported as not fully present in many of them to date.

Contents

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

A security fence at the Fountain area of Derry-Londonderry.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Peace Walls Programme

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 impacted by peace walls and physical barriers. It aims to enable and empower residents living in such areas to reach a position where they feel safe and ready to begin the dialogue necessary for the successful dismantling of interface barriers. Since its launch, the Programme has enabled the development and deliverance of projects across Northern Ireland to begin addressing concerns and move further towards the eventual removal of all such barriers.

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. An essential part of the programme is to engage with as many people as possible who live beside, or in close proximity to, the peace walls with the aim of developing an effective, consensual approach towards their removal and/or reduction.

The Fund remains committed to its belief that any discussions to remove interface barriers can only move forward with residents' support and involvement and at a pace dictated by those most affected. In its 2016-2020 Strategy, the Fund renewed its commitment to supporting communities to convert the confidence and relationship- building that occurred in the first phase of interventions and move closer to creating the conditions where the actual removal or reduction of peace walls is possible.

The timing of these surveys coincides with the PWP moving into this second phase. Its purpose is to baseline the current attitudes of those living within the six PWP areas towards the removal/reduction of peace walls and provide PWP staff with information that can be translated into future interventions which reflect the needs and wants of the communities living there.

2.0 Current Context

Since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, considerable progress has been made to address the legacy of division across Northern Ireland. Morrow et al. (2013) have described results from successive Northern Ireland Life & Times (NILT) surveys as signifying public approval of improved community relations and a desire to move towards a fully-realised shared society. However, they also acknowledge that addressing issues of division is an ongoing process that cannot be 'taken for granted' and that such change is 'vulnerable' during periods of political instability.[1]

Peace walls continue to provide a daily physical and highly noticeable reminder of the divisions that exist in Northern Ireland. These structures have increased in total since the Good Friday Agreement but, due to differences in opinion about what constitutes a 'peace wall', they currently number between 53 (Department of Justice figures, 2013) and 116 (Belfast Interface Project figures, 2017).[2]

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.[3]

Gormley-Heenan et al. (2015) have highlighted that this strategy faces a number of community-level challenges regarding its capacity to realise this commitment and identified four key difficulties:
- A concern in some communities that the policy will be implemented from the 'top-down' and acted upon without their input;
- A lack of clarity existed regarding the role communities and community leaders could play in the process, particularly in reference to their relationships with statutory bodies and participation in the consultation process;
- A need to formulate a 'tighter' definition of what community 'consensus' and 'confidence' meant in practice anx§d how this could be measured over time and assessed as having been met; and
- Concerns that the resources needed to deliver change may not be delivered by the relevant agencies when they are required.[4]

Previous attitudinal surveys on this topic (Ulster University, 2012, 2015) illustrate that attitudes towards the removal of the peace walls are indeed fluid and vulnerable to political and social volatility. In the 2012 survey, there existed optimism that the barriers would be removed eventually, with 58% stating that this was their wish 'now' or 'sometime' in the future'. Three years on, following the tumult of the 'flags protests' and the dispute over parading at Ardoyne/Twaddell (with resultant street violence), opinions had hardened in relation to the desire for the peace walls to be removed with a lesser 49% now stating this was their wish.[5]

Although disputes regarding flags and parades are not currently evident 'on the streets',

attempts to resolve these issues at a macro-level remained contentious with the collapse of the Hass-O'Sullivan talks (2013) and further polarisation within the Executive.

A decade on since the return of devolution, Northern Ireland has entered a further period of political instability with the collapse of the power-sharing administration at Stormont, the triggering of Article 50 to begin exiting the European Union and increased speculation about a 'border poll' and the return of a 'hard' border with the Republic of Ireland.

The current situation raises further ambiguity regarding Executive funding of the TBUC strategy in the absence of a Delivery plan. As of September 2017, the value and content of the 'Interface Barrier Support Package' remains unspecified and Northern Ireland remains in political 'limbo' while talks to resolve the current political crisis are ongoing.

Serpentine Road
Belfast

3.0 Review of Programme to Date

3.1 Participating Organisations

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. Table one illustrates the six PWP areas, the facilitating community organisations and the year the project began in each area.

Table 1: Areas and Participants

	Area	Lead Organisation	Year
1	Upper Springfield/Black Mountain (West Belfast)	Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP)	2013
2	Bishop Street/The Fountain (Derry/Londonderry)	The BBI Peace Walls Project (formerly the TRIAX PWP)	2012
3	Lower North Belfast	Duncairn Community Partnership (DCP)	2012
4	Greater Whitewell	Greater Whitewell Community Surgery (GWCS)	2012
5	Lower Oldpark/Cliftonville (North Belfast)	The Imagine Project [6]	2014
6	Upper North Belfast	Twaddell, Ardoyne, Shankill Communities in Transition (TASCIT)[7]	2012

3.2 Area Profiles

Gormley-Heenan et al. (2015) recognise that attitudinal change to the removal of peace walls is dependent upon 'holistic' change (political, social, economic and cultural) within interface areas.[8]

This view is echoed by the Community Relations Council (CRC) in their response to the 'Inquiry into Building a United Community' (2014), stating that interface areas were hugely affected by the 'Troubles' and remain typified by social deprivation and a lack of inward investment. Poverty and social disadvantage are complex and multi-dimensional issues and, as the CRC has identified, inadequate housing, low educational attainment, poor employment opportunities and community safety are 'inextricably linked to the more fluid issues of identity, cultural expression and community division'.[9]

Therefore, removal of interface barriers must be considered with reference to the socio-economic conditions of the area. The NIMDM (2010) provides an overall measure of multiple deprivation and also measures deprivation across seven variables at a Super Output Area (SOA) level.[10]

Respondents to this survey are resident across twenty-two separate Super Output Areas (SOAs). In relation to these SOAs:
- Eighteen are in the top 10% of the most deprived areas to live in across Northern Ireland;
- Eighteen are in the top 10% of employment deprivation;
- Fourteen are in the top 10% of health/disability deprivation;
- Eleven are in the top 10% of education deprivation
- On average across all SOAs, 59% of children and 63% of older people are affected by income deprivation.

3.3 Progress to Date

To date each participating organisation has delivered substantial interventions in their particular areas leading to the successful alteration/removal of some interface barriers and the amending or re-imaging of others. Each project has reported that such success has only been possible with full consultation with residents most impacted at every stage of the process.

These have included:
- Conducting a range of community consultations/community surveys and development workshops/scoping exercises around issues relating to the peace walls, the environment, community safety and the conditions needed to transform barriers without compromising security;
- Creating visioning tools of what sites would look like with proposed changes and greater regeneration;
- Facilitating cross-community events aimed at promoting joint problem-solving and community planning;
- Holding information events to allow for resident feedback; and
- Developing successful relationships with relevant local groups and partnership-working with relevant statutory bodies and political representatives.

On-going engagement has enabled and empowered residents to express their hopes, fears and aspirations as well as comment on the state of community relations, their sense of safety and confidence levels in future change. It has provided a deeper understanding of the aspirations of those living in interface areas and encouraged a greater desire by residents to become more active in leading and influencing change within their area.

Importantly, it has also already resulted in physical changes across the six areas including:
- Removal of eleven fences and/or walls;
- Reduction/amendment of Walls/barriers at several sites;
- Re-imaging of eleven barriers and/or walls;
- Enabling greater access at two sites;
- Development of shared spaces at two sites. This includes the development of 'The Girdwood Community Hub' which was officially opened in January 2016 and the Valley Leisure Centre which was previously described at a local level as a 'no-go' area for one community. BMSSP is also working closely with Belfast City Council and others to draw in Peace IV funding to develop a shared-space centre at one of its sites.

Each local PWP is acutely aware of the difficult and complex context in which they operate and all have faced significant challenges in facilitating their PW programme. Similar challenges were identified by Gormley-Heenan et al.

- Inability to access the necessary funding from relevant bodies to follow through on proposed plans when agreement within the community has been reached;
- Failure to date by the Department of Justice to agree an 'after-care' package which provides appropriate and timely security measures and response times causes problems when changes to barriers are being negotiated locally, resulting in less appetite for change.
- Uncertainty regarding the roles and responsibilities of statutory representatives and government departments regarding 'protective work';
- Disconnect between residents/local groups and statutory sector representatives;
- Impact of external political issues and events, including flags, parades and other legacy of conflict issues that have yet to be resolved at a macro-level;
- Lack of political will and leadership in some local areas to address wider issues surrounding the removal of the peace walls;
- Sectarianism threats to PW Programme staff in some instances, plus local gate-keeping by 'key players' in some areas have also frustrated progress.

Moving into the second phase of the PWP, the lead organisations have identified forty-six peace walls/structures across their six areas where they hope to create change and are working with local residents to create the confidence and conditions where their reduction, removal or de-classification might be enabled.

View onto
Crumlin Road,
Belfast following
the removal of
a long standing
Peace Wall
in 2016.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Survey Aim and Objectives

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 the communities most affected, there remains limited quantitative data on residents' views to such change.[11]

To address this and in order to aid planning and development of the second phase of the PWP and deliver its wider outcomes, attitudinal surveys were conducted with residents across all six areas. The aim of these surveys was to garner community attitudes towards the peace walls from the perspective of residents most impacted due to their proximity to the forty-six structures identified by PWP staff.

The objectives of the survey were to:
- Gather and analyse attitudinal positions of residents from both communities within the area;
- Establish a baseline profile to provide PWP staff with area-specific information to aid the development of future initiatives that may support change in attitudes;
- Utilise this baseline profile to measure future attitudinal change in the follow-on period; and
- Identify potential areas of concern that need to be addressed in order to deliver the wider outcome of the PWP, namely that 'interface communities have confidence in and a positive attitude to barrier reduction and/or removal'.

4.2 Survey Content

In 2016, the Imagine Project carried out a comprehensive 'Pilot Survey' across the Lower Oldpark and Cliftonville areas and gathered data from 219 of the most impacted residents. Their questionnaire was modelled on the one used by the Ulster University in 2015.[2]

Analysis of the Pilot Survey indicated that some of the 'closed' questions used in the questionnaire limited residents to a set of specified options and did not enable 'area-specific' issues to be identified.[13]

In 2017, this questionnaire was modified by the PWP groups to include programme-specific questions and included 'open' questions to provide respondents with the opportunity to name issues without direction or influence from the field researcher.

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

It included questions on the following:
- Key concerns and community safety levels;
- Perceptions of the function(s) of peace walls and observations regarding the impact of their presence;

- Interaction with the 'other' community/community on the 'other' side of the peace wall; and
- Outlook on the future of the peace walls and views about how to transform them.

A copy of the questionnaire used in this study is included in Appendix 1.

4.3 Sampling Design

The defined population for the study was residents aged 16 and over who were considered most impacted by the barriers due to their proximity to the forty-six peace walls identified for this phase of the PWP.

Sampling was completed by PWP staff using their extensive knowledge from working and living in the local areas. They firstly defined these areas, identified each peace wall/barrier within the area and finally selected all streets located in close proximity to each peace wall/barrier. Postcodes were then assigned to each identified street. Across the six areas 1753 households were identified that were most 'impacted' by the peace wall/barriers. These addresses then became the survey target group.

4.4 Survey Implementation

PWP staff took responsibility for the primary data collection and carried this out with the support of local volunteers over April to June 2016 (pilot study area) and again over April to July 2017. The questionnaire was conducted face-to-face with residents. Residents did not receive any incentive to participate in the fieldwork.

4.5 Response rate

The total sample across the pilot study area (IMAGINE) was 438 households. There was a response rate of 50% (219 households). Across the remaining five areas, there was a sample size of 1315 households with an identical (50%) response rate (654 households).

4.6 Data Preparation and Presentation

The data collected was inputted into IBM SPSS Statistics 24 prior to analysis. Data outputs were exported into Microsoft Excel to avail of its greater formatting functions. Tables of key findings below are presented with the average responses from respondents across the five areas and by the average responses of respondents when stratified by religious identity so that any attitudinal differences between the two communities can be identified.

All findings are recorded as valid percentages.

4.7 Demographics of Respondents

Table 3 shows the demographics of respondents to the survey, stratified by gender, age and religious identity.

Table 3: Demographics of All Respondents

		Respondents (%)
Sex	Male	35.0%
	Female	65.0%
Age Category	16-24	8.0%
	25-44	37.0%
	45-64	37.0%
	65 or older	19.0%
Religion	Catholic	53.0%
	Protestant	47.0%

Census figures indicated an equal gender split across all six areas. Females were more heavily represented in these surveys (two-thirds) but one-third of all respondents to the survey were male. This reflects the research norm that females are more likely to respond to survey requests.

The views of younger people (those aged 16 to 24) were less captured with only 8% of respondents being from this age category. This may reflect that survey respondents were generally house-holders or tenants with the under-25's less represented in this category.

Due to this, responses from this age-group were negligible in many instances and no meaningful conclusions could be inferred from them. This is unfortunate because as indicated by Morrow et al. (2013), young people are both considered more responsive to change yet less willing to support mixed neighbourhood communities and are particularly vulnerable to rising fears and antagonism.[14]

It will be necessary for each lead organisation to supplement these findings with further research with this age-group to ensure their voice is more widely heard and understood.

Cross-community
events have
brought people
together

5.0 Key Findings

The purpose of the Baseline Attitudinal Survey was to provide each local Peace Walls project with area-specific information about residents' attitudes to Peace Walls/barriers in direct proximity to their homes. A number of key findings were identified through analysis of all survey responses and stratified by community background.[15]

For the purpose of this composite report, the key findings detailed below are the average responses from data across five of the six PWP areas. Data from the pilot study is not included in these tables excepting in instances were questions from the two survey examples are identical. These include questions relating to interaction levels and opinions on the future of the peace walls and will be highlighted in accompanying endnotes.

It is essential to add the caveat that these findings do not illustrate the complexities and nuances present within each of the areas but this approach enables a 'snapshot picture' to emerge regarding the attitudes of respondents across the active PWP areas to the peace walls and future change. They indicate both the overall opportunities that exist to progress the PWP and the challenges faced in doing so.

Area-specific data analysis and key findings are discussed in full in each area report and are available from the International Fund for Ireland.

For the purposes of discussing the average key findings of these surveys, the term 'peace wall' or 'barrier' will be used and relates to any wall or structure as defined by BIP (2011).[16] PUL refers to the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist community and CNR refers to the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican community.

5.1 Key Concerns and Community Safety Levels

Community Safety and Security Remains a Central Issue Across All Areas and is Slightly More Prominent in PUL Communities.
72% of all respondents have lived in their area for over ten years.
On average, 80% of all respondents feel 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' living in their area.[17]
On average 63% of all respondents express safety and/or security issues as their key concerns at the barriers.
On average, the three most prominent issues of concern reported are 'safety concerns' (11%), ASB (10%) and attacks on property and fears of violence at contentious times of year (8%).
On average, 26% of all respondents do not want change to the barriers in any form at the present time.
On average, 49% of all respondents state that retention of the peace walls would have a positive impact on community safety.
'Improved safety measures' is ranked as the primary factor that could influence positive attitudinal change to the removal of the peace walls across three of the five areas and the secondary factor in one area.

86% of CNR respondents feel 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' living in their area compared to 74% of PUL respondents.[18]

On average, 68% of PUL respondents express safety and/or security issues as their key concerns compared to 57% of CNR respondents.

On average, the three most prominent issues of concern reported in the PUL community are ASB (13%), 'attacks on property' (10%) and 'safety concerns' (9%).

On average, the three most prominent issues of concern reported in the CNR community are 'safety concerns' (12%), 'fears of violence at contentious times of year' (11%) and 'attacks on property' and ASB (7%).

On average, 49% of all PUL respondents state that retention of the peace walls would have a positive impact on community safety in comparison to 46% of CNR respondents.

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

Even though an average of 80% of all respondents reported that they feel 'fairly' safe or 'very' safe living in their area, there is a sense from the data that residents believe the peace walls continue to play an important role in their lives and continue to value the presence of the barriers. Of fourteen identified key concerns, nine relate to safety and security issues and total 63% of all respondents' viewpoints. These issues are related to concerns about actual violence, fear of future violence or change to the barriers.

In relation to safety/security concerns, 26% relates to concerns regarding 'actual' safety and/or security issues namely ASB, attacks on property, interface violence, and unspecified negative behaviour of the 'other' community. Thirty-two percent relates to fears of possible safety and/or security issues, namely fears of unspecified future violence, concerns about future violence at contentious times of years, the presence of youths loitering/gathering at the interface and 'safety concerns'.[19] Five percent relates to concerns about the impact on community safety should the barriers be removed.

Within the pilot study area questions in relation to key concerns were 'closed' so respondents did not have the opportunity to express opinions outside of the options given. However, over half of all respondents identified concerns about interface incidents (58%) and community safety (51%) as key concerns in their areas.

This suggests that the earlier high reported levels of safety across the PWP areas may in part be reliant on the existence of the peace walls. This need to 'feel' safe is understandable given that 72% of all respondents have lived in their areas for over ten years and in that time may have witnessed interface violence, seasonal tensions or contentious parades.

It is clear there remains a strong belief amongst respondents that the peace walls are a trusted form of protection. This is supported by the strength of feelings relating to the positive impact retention of the peace walls would have on community safety (49%)and

the significant percentage of respondents not wanting 'any' change to the barriers (26%) at this time.

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.

Although both communities report high instances of safety and security concerns, overall the data indicates that these exist slightly more strongly within the PUL community. When considered from a community identity basis, it is evident 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.

Those from a PUL background report much greater concerns about 'actual' safety and security issues' (35%) than their CNR counterparts (19%). This is particularly in relation to ASB (13%) and attacks upon their property (10%).

CNR respondents have greater concerns about 'possible' violence at contentious times of year (11%). 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 4% naming it as an issue.

There are challenges for the PWP in that 'feelings' of safety and/or security are both subjective and open to influence. Building greater trust in the positive aspects of barrier removal and providing alternative and adequate security arrangements is essential for progress to be made which 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 provision of greater reassurance and evidence to residents that removal of the peace walls will not lead to deteriorating community safety. This will require the PWP to deliver collaborative work to build trust. These findings also underscore the need for political leadership on related issues and greater involvement by pro-activity from relevant statutory bodies.

5.2 Current Function(s) of the Peace Walls/Barriers

The Majority of Respondents View the Functions and Positives of the Barriers in Relation to Community Safety and Security and the PUL Community Report this More Strongly.
Of four key functions identified across the five area, three roles (protection, prevention and psychological) are linked to safety and security concerns.[20]
On average, 54% feel that the key functions of the peace walls are related to safety/security functions.
Within this figure, 25% report they play a preventative role, 14% report that they play a 'security' function and 15% that they play a psychologically supportive role.

On average, 75% of all respondents identify the positive aspects of the peace walls in relation to their safety/security functions.

On average, 62% of PUL respondents identify the key functions of the peace walls in terms of safety/security functions compared to 49% of CNR respondents.

On average, 17% 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 11% of CNR respondents.

On average, 79% of the PUL community identifies the positive aspects of the peace walls in relation to their safety/security functions in comparison to 71% of the CNR community.

On average, 29% of the PUL community does not want any change to the barriers at the present time in comparison to 23% of the CNR community.

On average, 18% of the CNR community report that the barriers have 'no purpose' and 22% that they have no 'positives' compared to 7% and 9% respectively within the PUL community.

The peace walls across Northern Ireland were first constructed as a response to inter-community sectarian violence and as a means of protecting the two communities from each other. The data indicates that on average 14% of all respondents continue to view the functions of the peace walls as existing for this initial purpose and, as such, hold particular issues of trust relating to barrier removal.

On average, over half of respondents (54%) identify the functions of the barriers in terms of their safety and security mechanisms. This compares to 15% of all respondents who identify their function in terms of segregating the two communities. Within this former figure 25% believe that they help to prevent violence and ASB, 15% believe they play a psychologically supportive role in by making people 'feel' safer and 14% believe the walls 'protect' people.

A much larger percentage 75% of all respondents identifies the positive aspects of the peace walls in relation to their safety/security functions including making people feel safer, preventing or limiting ASB and attacks on property and helping to 'keep the peace'. This continuing mindset that the peace walls play a positive role in enhancing community safety presents a challenge to the PWP in that alternatives to them must be found that are acceptable to residents.

On average, the PUL community reports these views more strongly. Sixty-two percent of PUL respondents state that the primary functions of the walls are to protect people, to 'keep the peace' and/or to make people feel safe in comparison to 49% of the CNR community. Furthermore 17% of this community continues to view the barriers as existing for the same reason that they were initially constructed in comparison to 11% of CNR respondents.

On average, 79% of the PUL community names the key positives of the barriers in relation to their safety and/or security functions in comparison to a still significant 71% of the CNR community. The PUL community is also less critical of the barriers with 7% stating

they have 'no purpose' and 9% stating they have 'no positives' in comparison to 18% and 22% respectively within the CNR community. This is an interesting finding indicating as it does that there already exists a significant minority in the CNR community who may be less difficult to persuade to consider the removal of the peace walls.

A continuation of the mindset that the barriers retain valuable functions and have strong positive impacts on community safety presents a major obstacle for the PWP. This is made doubly so because the reasons underpinning this perception are difficult to define. It may be based on past experiences, poor interaction with the other community, a lack of understanding and 'fear' of the other or fear of what change might bring and, as such, will be more difficult to transform in the absence of a robust Aftercare Package to build local confidence.

5.3 Interaction and Community Relations

Interaction with the Community on the 'Other Side of the Peace Walls' is Poor and Slightly Poorer within the CNR Community
On average, 51% of all respondents state they have regular contact with the 'other' community compared to 26% having regular contact with those living on the other side of the peace walls.
On average, 29% of all respondents state they have rare or no contact with the 'other' community compared to 53% with those living on the other side of the peace walls.
On average, 21% of all respondents state they have 'occasional' contact with the 'other' community with the same percentage stating this is the case in relation to those living on the other side of the peace walls.
On average, 71% of all respondents report that interaction is 'always' or 'mostly' positive with only 2% reporting interaction as being 'always' negative.
On average, 23% of all respondents indicate that such interaction is neither positive nor negative.[21]
On average, 66% of all respondents agree that no change to the barriers would have a negative impact on community relations.[22]

On average, 53% of the CNR community report that they have regular contact with the 'other' community in comparison to 48% of respondents from the PUL community.
On average, 28% of the CNR community state they have rare or no contact with the 'other' community compared to 30% of the PUL community.
On average, 23% of the CNR community report that they have regular contact with those living on the other side of the peace walls in comparison to 29% of respondents from the PUL community.
On average, 33% of CNR respondents report 'no' interaction with those living on the other side of the peace walls which declines to 27% of the PUL community.
The CNR community report higher levels of positive experiences regarding interaction between the two communities (CNR=74% to PUL=66%) and slightly lower levels of negative interaction (CNR=6% to PUL=8%).[23]

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.

A five-metre
high wall and
fence runs from
the junction of
Springfield Road
and Springmartin
Road to
near Upper
Ballygomartin
Road, Belfast.

At present, whilst regular levels of interaction (very often/ fairly often) with the 'other community' (51%) are promising overall they do decline to 26% when considering regular interaction with those on the other side of the peace walls. Instances of no interaction rise from 13% as regards the 'other community overall' to 31% in relation to those on the other side of the barriers.

When considering interaction based on community identity, the CNR community report lower levels of regular interaction with those living on the 'other side of the peace walls' (23%) than is reported by the PUL community (29%). It is concerning that on average, one-third of all CNR respondents report 'no' interaction with those living on the other side of the barriers which falls to 27% of PUL respondents but both percentages are relatively high.

Such low interaction may be linked to services (education/childcare/health) in many areas remaining segregated with no necessity or opportunity for residents to meet. This presents challenges for the PWP and a range of stakeholder agencies.

Encouragingly, for the PWP, is that when interaction does happen, 71% of all respondents expressed the opinion that it is a positive experience with only 2% stating that it was 'always negative'. Additionally, the CNR community is more 'positive' about such interaction so increasing opportunities for interaction should be a pathway to improved community relations. The PWP should also remain mindful of the sizeable 23% of respondents who reported that interaction was neither positive nor negative which indicates that sustained interventions to increase interaction could have a correspondingly positive impact on this figure.

These findings indicate both challenges and opportunities for the PWP. They indicate that a future focus of the PWP is the need to address the significant percentages of respondents in both communities who have little or no contact with those on the other side of the barriers. Increasing relationship-building measures and developing greater understanding of the 'other' has the potential to enhance positive attitudinal change to barriers.

On average, 21% of all respondents meet 'occasionally so it is essential that respondents and their children receive more opportunities to interact if such trust is to be developed. Positively for the PWP, on average, 25% of all respondents already meet at community groups which rose to 35% at community events. Further community activities and events aimed at bringing people together with a view to building good relations and reducing levels of fear/suspicion is within the capacity of the PWP to facilitate. Lack of contact with the other community can only act to exacerbate current mistrust and fears and if unaddressed could lead to the progress of the PWP being undermined.

Additionally, there is strong awareness from all respondents (66%) that the retention of the peace walls is an obstacle to improved community relations and that increased community facilities and shared spaces as already developed in some PWP areas could act as a catalyst towards the removal of the peace walls.

5.4 Imagining the Future

Respondents Favour Change in Some Form to the Barriers at this Time and are Even More Hopeful in Relation to the Future. Desire for Change is Stronger within the CNR Community.
On average, 25% of all respondents want the barriers to maintain their current status at the present time.
On average, 13% of all respondents want the barriers to be removed 'now'.
On average 31% of all respondents want this to happen 'sometime in the future' and 28% are content to see them declassified, reimaged or providing greater accessibility.
On average 43% of all respondents cannot envisage a time when the barriers would not be there but 19% were unsure and 37% could envisage this scenario.
On average 68% of all respondents are in favour of the barriers being removed within the lifetime of their children or grandchildren.[24]
On average 29% of all respondents name 'keeping the two communities apart' as the main negative of the barriers. A further 5% state that the barriers prevent normalisation and create tensions in the area.
On average 22% of all respondents believe the barriers are ugly and stereotype their area.
On average 11% of all respondents have issues with the barriers due to them limiting access to other services/areas and opening hours.
On average 67% believe retention of the peace walls would have a negative impact on jobs and investment within their areas.

On average, 23% of the CNR community report that they want to retain the status quo for now compared to 29% of PUL respondents.
On average, 18% of the CNR community want to see change happen to the peace walls 'now' compared to 7% of PUL respondents.
On average, 37% of the CNR community would like to see the barriers removed 'sometime in the future' in comparison to 24% of PUL respondents.
On average, the PUL community are more open to change regarding appearance, accessibility and declassification (37%) than their CNR neighbours (20%)
On average, the PUL community is less optimistic about envisaging a time without the barriers (24%) in comparison to 49% of CNR respondents
On average, a majority in both communities want to see the barriers removed within the next generation (PUL=62% and CNR=73%).
The CNR community believe more strongly that retention of the peace walls would have a negative impact on daily living conditions.

This is an extremely important finding for the PWP in that on average, 72% of all respondents want to see change to the barriers in some form at this time, be that reimaging, reduction or removal now or 'sometime' in the future. However, the PWP also needs to remain mindful that only 13% of all respondents want removal 'now' and 26% of all respondents do not wish to see any change to the status quo.

There is a level of cautious welcome for change to the barriers with 31% wanting to see the barriers removed at some point in the future. Twenty-eight percent of all respondents

agree that that declassification, reimaging or provision of greater access is acceptable to them and which provides a route-map for the PWP towards longer-term removal. This finding ties in with 22% of all respondents naming the appearance of the barriers and the stereotyping of their area due to their presence as a key negative aspect with a further 11% having issues with the limited access caused by the barriers.

Although there remains a level of pessimism that the barriers will ever be removed with 43% of all respondents being unable to envisage such a situation, there was also an expressed hope by 68% that more permanent change could happen within the next generation. This indicates that residents hope for change but this is countered by current safety and security concerns, fear of the other community and anxiety about what change might lead to.

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. Moreover, once again respondents are aware that the peace walls impact negatively on community relations with 29% of all respondents identifying the key negative of the peace walls as 'keeping the two communities apart'.
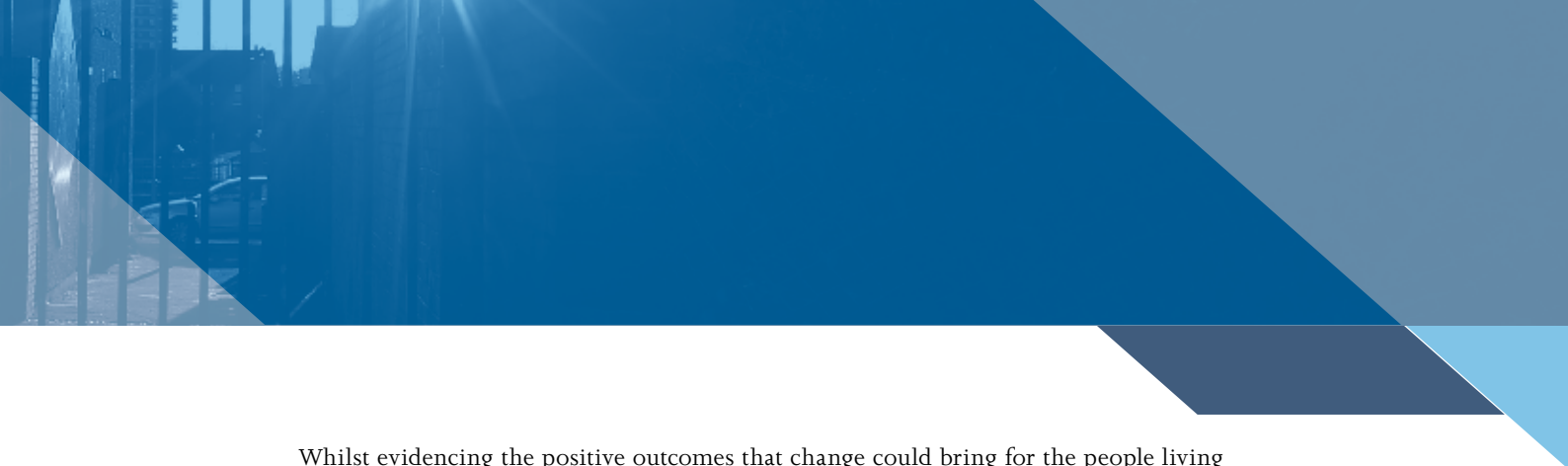
When stratified by community identity, the overall data is suggestive that the CNR community is embracing change towards the removal of the peace walls more strongly than the PUL community but that both communities harbour greater optimism about change for the future.

On average, 18% of CNR respondents report that they wish to see change to the barriers 'now' in comparison to 7% of PUL respondents. A further 37% of the CNR community want to see them removed 'sometime in the future' compared to 24% of the PUL community. On average, the PUL community (37%) are more in favour of changes to the barriers (re-imaging, accessibility & declassification) in the interim period. This provides a clear direction for the PWP regarding which approach to progress is favoured by the two communities.

The PUL community are also much less optimistic about being able to envisage such change and imagining their area without the peace walls (24%) than their CNR counterparts (49%). However a majority in both communities want to see the barriers removed within the next generation (PUL=62% and CNR=73%).

Respondents to the survey also indicated that environmental/physical improvements to the area and regeneration with jobs and investment would be the second and tertiary factors to positively impact on attitudinal change to removal of the barriers. This provides the PWP with an opportunity to highlight the positives that such change could bring to this area by continuing their support for regeneration work particularly as such change would be considered advantageous in changing attitudes.

Whilst evidencing the positive outcomes that change could bring for the people living in this area is essential, doing so also presents a challenge to the PWP. Given the socio-economic deprivation and the lack of regeneration to date in many of these areas, the necessity for significant and long-term political and stakeholder buy-in to transform these areas is crucial and has been reported as not fully present in many of them to date.

6.0 Conclusion

The key findings outlined above provide clear challenges for the PWP in developing its work but also offers a baseline position to both extend work and to measure future attitudinal change as a result of targeted initiatives developed by them and other key stakeholder agencies to deal with the pressing concerns raised by residents across the six areas.

The greatest challenge for the PWP is the continuing concerns about safety and security issues and the mindset that the barriers are essential for residents' protection because of past lived experiences. This is clear from the significant percentage of all respondents (26%) favouring no change to the barriers and the high percentage (49%) of respondents believing that retention of the barriers has a corresponding positive impact on community safety. Only when change to this mindset is achieved will there be any real desire to consider alternatives to the segregation barriers.

There are also challenges to overcome to encourage improved inter-community relationships and trust. In particular, poor interaction levels between the two communities with those living directly beside them needs addressed if negative attitudes towards the 'other' are to change. Provision of greater opportunities to meet in safe spaces may lead to positive attitudinal change both towards each other and towards removal of the peace walls.

These findings indicate that these interface communities are yet to be convinced that change to the barriers will bring positive change to their area as a whole in terms of community safety and regeneration. Many interface communities remain isolated from wider attempts to rejuvenate Northern Ireland economically and, as such, have locked residents into continuing deprivation. Joint development of plans for much-needed community regeneration may not only enable improved community relations but may encourage residents to develop stronger feelings regarding the positive impacts of barrier removal.

It should also be acknowledged that this baseline data highlights opportunities for development and progress. The most important of these is that, despite their lived experiences, there remains determination within these interface areas that the peace walls are a matter they want to see addressed in their lifetime rather than passing it onto the next generation to resolve.

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. It is clear that the process towards total removal of the peace walls will be dependent on the continuation of the PWP's work in building greater community confidence and local consensus that change to the barriers can and will bring positive outcomes for the communities most affected. It is also contingent on the resources and support being in place to enable the physical changes to take place quickly as and when the community agrees.

The findings also underscore the reality that attitudinal change to the removal of peace walls may be dependent upon much longer-term 'holistic' (political, social, economic and cultural) change. This is tempered with the reality that the PWP cannot deliver this in isolation and any such change will require greater inter-agency collaboration, resources and support for this work, particularly in relation to regeneration work requiring long-term commitment across the political spectrum combined with a route map for the way forward and enhanced agency support and engagement with peace walls groups/communities.

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Endnotes

1 Morrow, D., Robinson, G., and Dowds, L. (2013) The Long View of Community Relations in Northern Ireland: 1998 – 2012.p.1.

2 Belfast Interface Project. (2017) Interface Barriers, Peacelines and Defensive Architecture.p.5.

3 Northern Ireland Executive (2013) Together: Building a United Community Strategy.p.62.

4 Gormley-Heenan, C., Morrow, D., and Byrne, J. (2015) Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (2): the challenge of delivery. pp. 1-6.

5 Byrne, J., Gormley-Heenan, C., Morrow, D., and Sturgeon, B. (2015) Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results. p.26.

6 IMAGINE is a partnership between Lower Oldpark Community Association & Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum. It is also the pilot study area.

7 TASCIT consists of four partnership groups - North Belfast Interface Network, Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne, Twaddell /Woodvale Residents Association and Lower Shankill Community Association.

8 Gormley-Heenan, C., Morrow, D., and Byrne, J. (2015) Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (3): the challenge of engaging communities. p.5.

9 Community Relations Council (2014) Submission to the Committee of OFMDFM inquiry into Building a United Community. p.18.

10 The most deprived SOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived area has a ranking of 890.

11 Ulster University have conducted such studies in 2012 and 2015

12 Byrne, J., Gormley-Heenan, C., and Robinson, G. (2012) Residents Questionnaire.

13 These questions related to key concerns, functions of the peace walls and impact (positive and negative) of the peace walls.

14 Morrow, D., Robinson, G., and Dowds, L. (2013) The Long View of Community Relations in Northern Ireland: 1998 – 2012, Research Update 87. p.1.

15 All key findings are presented as valid rounded percentages. Some findings amalgamate these percentages.

16 Belfast Interface Project (2012) Belfast Interfaces: Security Barriers and Defensive Use of Space. p.11.

17 Previous statistics relates to average across all six PWP areas

18 Relates to average across all six PWP areas

19 'Safety concerns' is included in this latter category as qualitative data gathered across all areas imply it is fear of 'what may happen' rather than actual violence that is the concern.

20 The fourth key function identified is 'segregation of the two communities'.

21 Previous statistics relates to average across all six PWP areas

22 Relates to average across five PWP areas

23 Previous statistics relates to average across all six PWP areas

24 Previous statistics relates to average across all six PWP areas

Appendix

Peace Walls Programme

Community Attitudes to Peace Walls Survey (2017)

Name of Peace Walls Project:	
Location of Peace Walls/Barriers:	
Number of Houses in Survey:	
Post Codes:	

LENGTH OF TIME LIVING IN THE AREA/OPINION ON THE AREA

Q1. What is your age-group?
(Please tick appropriate box)

16 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 +

Q2. What is your gender?

Male		Female		Other	

Q3. Number in household (including yourself)? Total =

	Under 12	13 - 18	19 - 30	30 - 60	60 +
Male					
Female					

Q4. A: How long have you lived in this area? (Please tick appropriate box)
B: How long have you lived at this address?

	Up to 1 Year	1 - 5 Years	6 - 10 Years	10 - 25 Years	Over 25 Years
A					
B					

Q5. Do you live directly at or close to a Peace Wall/Barrier?

Yes		No		Don't Know	

Comments: (for example: which barrier and what distance):

Q6. How safe do you feel living near a barrier/interface?
(Please ring on scale 1-10 where 1 is very unsafe and 10 is very safe)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Comments:

Q7. What would you say are the key causes for concern at the barrier/interface?

Comments:

Q8. How often have you interacted with people outside of your own community background in the past 2 years? (Please tick appropriate box)

Very Often	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

Q9. How often have you interacted with the community on the other side of the nearest peace wall/barrier in the past 2 years?
(Please tick appropriate box)

Very Often	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

Q10. Where do you meet people from the other community?
(Tick appropriate box)

Shops		Work		School/ College	
Creche/ Nursery		Health Centre		Sports	
Community Facility/Group		Community Events		Other (Specify)	

Comments:

Q11. Has the interaction with the other community been positive or negative?
(Tick appropriate box)

Always Positive	Mostly Positive	Neither Positive or Negative	Mostly Negative	Always Negative

Comments:

FUNCTION OF THE PEACE WALL/BARRIER

Q12. What is the current function of your nearest Peace Wall?

Comments:

Q13. What are the positive or negative impacts of barrier/wall?

Positives	Negatives

IMAGINING THE FUTURE

Q14. Thinking about these statements, which one comes closest to your view of the Peace Wall/Barrier in your area?
(Please tick appropriate box)

I would like the Peace Wall/Barrier to come down now.	
I would like the Peace Wall/Barrier to come down some time in the future.	
I would like it de-classified as a Peace Wall/Barrier as it no longer serves that purpose.	
I want to keep the Peace Wall, but have it opened for some accessibility.	
I would like things left the way they are now.	
I want to keep the Peace Wall, but change how it looks to make it more appealing.	
I don't know.	
Other comments or quote:	

Q15. Can you picture a time when there will be no segregation barriers in this area?

Yes		No		Don't Know	

Q16. Would you like your children or grandchildren to live with segregation barriers?

Yes		No		Don't Know	

Q17. If the Peace Wall(s) remain, do you feel it will have a Positive or Negative impact on the following?
(Tick P or N as appropriate)

	P	N		P	N
Jobs and Investment			Access to Shops/Post Office		
Health and Well-being			Access to Social Activities		
Access to Services			Community Relations		
Access to Schools			Community Safety		
Comment or quote:					

Q18. Which of the following do you think might contribute to positive attitudinal change to the removal of Peace Walls/Barriers?
(Rank from 1- 7 in order of priority)

Improved Safety Measures		Better Community Facilities/Services	
Environmental and Physical Improvements to Area(s)		Regeneration with Jobs and Investment	
Better Housing Provision		Better Policing	
Cross-community Political Working			
Other? Please comment or quote:			

Q19. Would you like to be informed about community consultations or planning opportunities around peace walls/barriers?
(PleaseTick)

	Yes	No
Community Consultations/Meetings		
One-to-one meeting with Peace Walls Programme Staff		
Planning for change and/or creating new visuals to address blight.		
Work with the community on the other side of the Peace Wall to develop regeneration plans.		

Q20. Is there anything else you would like to be included in the PW Programme?

Yes	No
Comments:	**Comments:**

Thank you for completing this Survey.

If you would like more information regarding anything in this survey or would like to arrange a meeting to discuss any aspect of the Peace Walls Programme, please fill in your name, address and contact details below and we will contact you as soon as possible.

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

PWP person completing the questionnaire with contact details:

Name:	
Contact:	

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