



Everyday  
Peacebuilding



## International Fund for Ireland Annual Report & Accounts **2024**



### International Fund for Ireland

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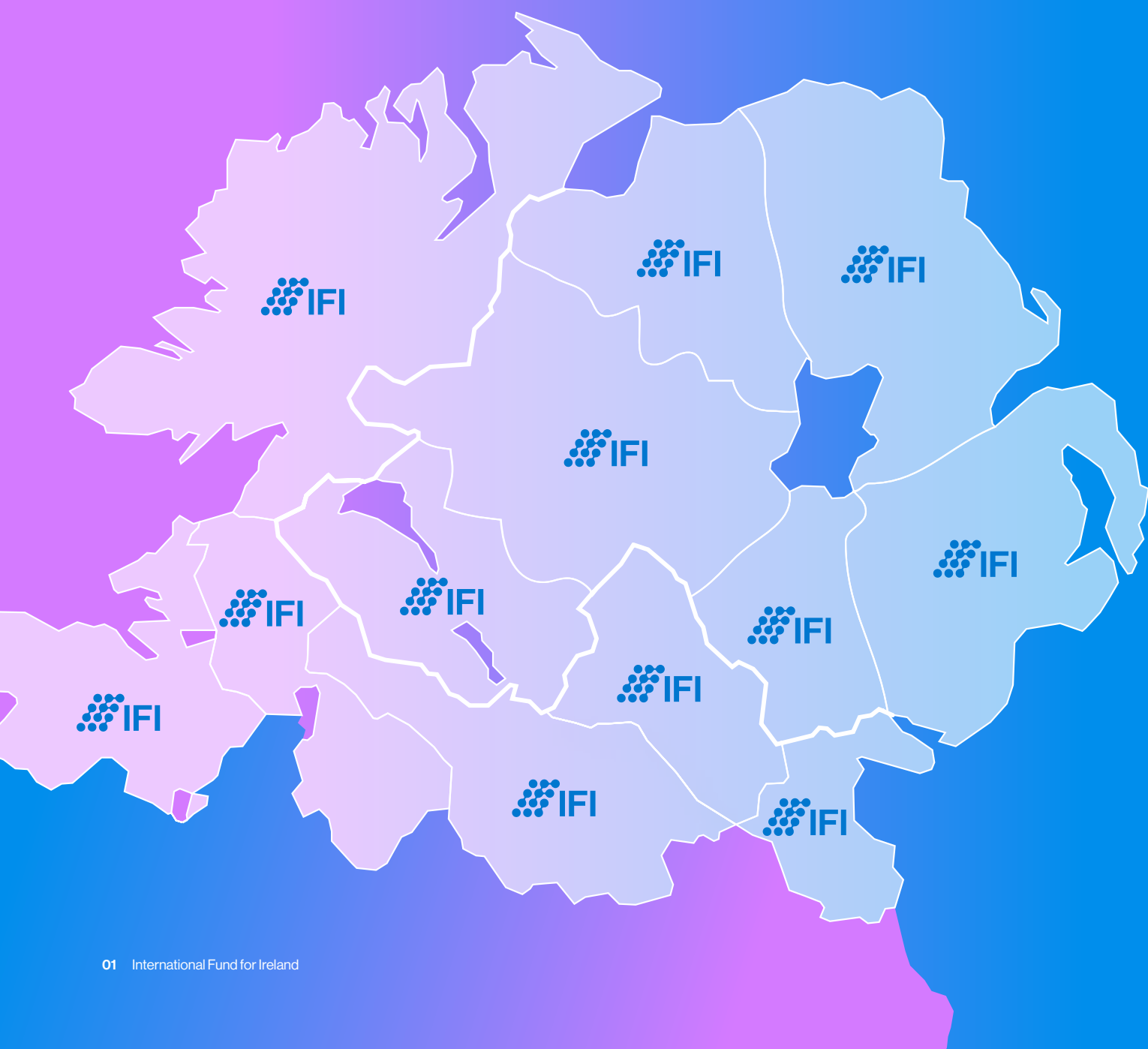
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# Our Key Priorities

The IFI delivers peace and reconciliation work across Northern Ireland and the six southern border counties as illustrated in the map.



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IFI Chair, Paddy Harte

# Chair's Foreword

As we move into the latter stages of the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) current Strategy - '*Connecting Communities 2021 - 2025*', the way we deliver peace and reconciliation across Northern Ireland and the southern border counties (SBC) has evolved considerably since its launch.

IFI and the projects we support have continued to adapt to the changing landscape faced by local communities, and with it, expectations of how sustainable peace and reconciliation can be delivered and for this to take place, it will be everyday peacebuilders who will drive the change.

The recent inclusion of peace as a cross-cutting theme in the NI Executives' draft Programme for Government (PfG) is to be welcomed. The challenge is for all of us is and how this worked out practically for the benefit of local communities, will be the real test.

Significant progress has been made in our pursuit of a lasting peace, and over the last year, we have seen further tangible outcomes and successes through the IFI's four core programmes.



ABOVE: L to R IFI Chair, Paddy Harte, Honorary Consul for New Zealand, Caroline Keenan and New Zealand High Commissioner Phil Goff pictured at an interface in Belfast.





ABOVE: IFI Chair Paddy Harte, speaking at a project event.

Of course, we are all too aware that the benefits of building a reconciled and peaceful society are not experienced equally across all communities. For some, the journey has been slow, however the key is building foundations that lead to a lasting peace and this is a process that cannot be rushed.

In order to truly demonstrate the impact of the work of the IFI, and by association justify the support gained from our international donors – the proof lies in the impact on people's lives and the local communities in which they live. This report shows a snapshot of some of these success stories.



ABOVE: A picture paints a thousand words- US President Joe Biden pictured with IFI Chair, Paddy Harte and former US Ambassador to Ireland Claire Cronin at the Whitehouse.

The IFI's Communities in Partnership Programme (CiPP) has facilitated cross-border training and mentoring sessions for more than 2,700 participants, where people of all ages engage with each other and share perspectives on what peacebuilding means to them and what they can contribute to the process.

More than 46,000 people were involved in capacity building through events and training programmes organised under the Peace Impact Programme (PIP) over the last year. Projects across Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Strabane, Enniskillen, Dundalk and West Cavan have availed of tailored support for areas that continue to work towards greater understanding and building a more shared and reconciled society.

The Peace Barriers Programme (PBP) continues to make real progress in addressing the physical barriers of division that are visible in some parts of Northern Ireland – the work of the projects funded through this programme is a prime example of a peacebuilding journey, working in partnership and consultation with local communities to ensure that any change to or removal of existing barriers is only achieved through their support and commitment. A total of 2,226 residents took part in various discussions relating to peace barriers in their areas over the reporting period.



ABOVE: IFI Chair pictured at a Board Meeting with former US Ambassador to Ireland Claire Cronin, New Zealand Ambassador to Ireland, Trevor Mallard and former Canadian Ambassador to Ireland, Nancy Smyth.

You will also read about the range of training and personal and professional development opportunities our young people have achieved with the Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP). More than 1,100 accreditations alone in this reporting period – a true testament to the commitment and hard work of participants.

Whilst it is important to measure the statistics and figures behind these programmes and what they are delivering, what you will get from reading this report are the stories behind the statistics – the relationships and friendships that have been built, the change to people's lives and their communities, the understanding and respect for others' cultural expression – it is these journeys that stand the test of time.

With more than 50 countries holding elections in 2024, it has been a year for people to have their voice heard across the world. Closer to home, changes to administrations in the USA, UK, Ireland and the EU offer new opportunities for the IFI to continue to engage stakeholders and raise awareness of the work of peace and reconciliation across the island of Ireland.

The American Management and Business Internship Training Programme (AMBIT) facilitated engagement in Boston and

Washington DC earlier this year where participants met a range of organisations and stakeholders, sharing experiences and best practice on shared issues relating to reconciliation.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the commitment and hard work of the IFI Board. Without their counsel and experience in helping to build a more reconciled and peaceful society, the IFI would not have been able to facilitate the real change we are seeing in local communities.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support from our sponsoring governments and International donors. Without their ongoing support we would not be able to carry out our work.

Thanks are also due to the International Observers, Joint Chairs and Members of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Committee. I would also like to commend the Secretariat, our Programme Managers, Managing Agents and partners for their ongoing commitment to facilitating and building the foundations for everyday peacebuilding.



ABOVE: IFI Chair Paddy Harte, pictured at the John & Pat Hume Foundation's Youth Peace Summit along with other guests and speakers.



ABOVE: Congressman Richard Neal and IFI Chair Paddy Harte pictured in conversation during a trip to Washington.



# The Board

**The Board of the International Fund for Ireland is appointed jointly by the British and Irish Governments. Representatives of the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia and New Zealand attend meetings of the Board.**

The United States of America, the European Union and Governments of Canada, Australia and New Zealand were represented this year by: Ms Stella O'Leary, Mr Tom Foley, United States of America; Ms Joanne Knight, European Union; Mr Brian Doherty, Canada; Mr Gary Gray, Australia and Sir Trevor Mallard, New Zealand.



## Anne Carr – Board Member

Ms. Carr has a long history in community peacebuilding and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. She is a founding pioneer parent of integrated education, having been instrumental in the inception and development of All Children's Integrated Primary School, Newcastle, Co. Down, founded in 1986 and Chair of the Board of Governors for fourteen years. She was Regional Co-Ordinator of the Women Together for Peace organisation from 1990 – 2001 and co-founded the Community Dialogue organisation in 1997. She was their Regional Dialogue Development and Research Co-Ordinator for many years and is still active as a Board Member and volunteer dialogue practitioner today. She was the first elected Councillor for the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, serving on Down Council from 1997 – 2001. In 2008 she received the N. I. Community Relations Council Award for Outstanding Achievement in the field of Community Relations and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.



## Avila Kilmurray – Board Member

Dr. Kilmurray was a founding member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, she was involved in negotiations for the Good Friday Agreement. Currently, Avila is a Programme Manager with The Social Change Initiative, an international NGO working to strengthen civil society activism and advocacy in human rights, migration issues and peacebuilding.

Avila was the Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, she also acted as Regional Coordinator of the Rural Action Project (NI) and was Development Officer with the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action; a founder member of the Foundations for Peace Network - a peer learning network of independent foundations working in conflict-affected environments and serves on the Board of the St. Stephen's Green Trust (Ireland). She is also a member of the Transition Assistance Practice Expert Group of IFIT that supports peacebuilding initiatives on a global basis.



## Paddy Harte – Chair

Mr Harte has been a member of the Board of the International Fund for Ireland since March 2015 and was appointed Chair in March 2019. He has more than two decades of experience and expertise in economic development and peacebuilding work.

He is a former Board Member of the cross-border finance company Ulster Community Investment Trust (now Community Finance Ireland) and the Collins Institute think-tank. He has served on the boards of a number of economic development boards including chairing the very successful Donegal Gathering. He has also worked as a leadership coach with a coalition of cross-party MLAs at the William J Clinton Leadership Institute, Belfast.



## Sadie Ward-McDermott – Board Member

Mrs Ward-McDermott has been working in Education and Training for over 25 years. Sadie started her career as a teacher and then took a post with the Louth VEC (Vocational Education Committee) working as an Adult Education Officer.

Sadie is currently employed as Director of Further Education and Training with the Louth Meath Education and Training Board. This work encompasses working in partnership with other agencies, to deliver peace programmes alongside provision on behalf of Government in the following areas: adult and community education, programmes targeting young persons not engaged in education/training, training to enable up-skilling of current workforce, supporting employers to grow skills development in company, and Further Education Colleges.



## Bernie Butler – Board Member

Mrs Butler is a successful business person in the Food sector, as the CEO and one of the founder members of the family run business Good4U with sites in Sligo and Tyrone. Bernie has been at the cutting edge of the food industry for the past 30 years.

In addition to being a Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, Bernie serves her local community as a member of the Sligo Economic Forum. Other positions held by Bernie include: Chair of Fáilte Ireland North West, Chair of The Model, Sligo, one of Ireland's leading contemporary arts centres and well known art collections, Member of the Creative Sligo Initiative, and Board Member of St Angela's Food Technology Centre Sligo.



## Peter Osborne – Board Member

Mr Osborne has been involved in political engagement, policy, participation, dispute resolution and reconciliation. He leads Rubicon undertaking a number and range of audits, strategies, mediations and planning. Peter is chair of the regional board of Remembering Srebrenica; and chairs the ARK Advisory Board, a joint social policy initiative by Northern Ireland's two universities (QUB and UU).

Peter was an elected representative for 12 years during which time he was a delegate to the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation and to the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement process. He was a director of the Building Change Trust; led the founding of the Open Government Network; chaired the Community Relations Council and chaired the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland.



The International Fund for Ireland was established as an independent international organisation by the British and Irish governments in 1986. With contributions from the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, the total resources committed by the IFI to date amount to £780m/€974m/\$979m



## OBJECTIVES

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE IFI ARE:

- To promote economic and social advance; and
- To encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between Unionists and Nationalists throughout Ireland.

\*THE STERLING/EURO CONVERSION RATE AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 IS APPLIED THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT

## Introduction

**The Board of the IFI is appointed jointly by the British and Irish Governments. It is assisted by an Advisory Committee comprising of officials appointed by the two Governments.**

The administration of the IFI is provided by a Secretariat, headed by Joint Directors General, based in Belfast and Dublin. A range of bodies act as Managing Agents for the IFI in Northern Ireland.

In addition, the IFI has three Programme Managers, located across the southern border counties, who act as local contact points and assist prospective applicants to identify and develop proposals. They also monitor the ongoing operation of projects, providing assistance as necessary. This Report, which covers the period 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024, is presented by the Board to the Government of the United Kingdom, the Government of Ireland, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the IFI's donors in accordance with Article 12 of the Agreement of 18 September 1986, as amended, by which the International Fund for Ireland was established.

The Programmes within the IFI's Connecting Communities Strategy cluster around four key areas, which include: Communities in Partnership, Peace Barriers, Peace Impact and Personal Youth Development. All programmes are characterised by:

- a clear focus on reconciliation as the overriding objective;
- a focus on community transformation rather than conflict management;
- an emphasis on engaging with individuals and communities that have not previously, or only partially, participated in peacebuilding and community development activities;
- an independent and credible approach with strong international backing;
- a cross-community, cross-border approach;
- a willingness to take risks on behalf of local communities;
- early support for community initiatives;
- co-operation with other funders and leverage of funds from other sources;
- a willingness to innovate and to break new ground in support of reconciliation;
- and – a responsive approach to donor priorities.



# Communities in Partnership Programme



**It has been clear for some time that Brexit is likely to have significant consequences for the island of Ireland. Borders are in danger of, once again, becoming a significant barrier, physically and psychologically, to harmonious relationships on these islands.**



ABOVE: The CiPP Programme encourages meaningful cross-border relationships.



ABOVE: Guests attend a session delivered through the CiPP Programme.

The issues impacting border counties (north and south) are still evolving but it is likely they will represent significant challenges for governments.

These issues pose the risk of individuals and communities becoming isolated and alienated. The IFI is continuing to further its mission of encouraging contact and dialogue across this island. The IFI is working to ensure that the bonds of friendship, neighbourliness and partnership built over the past number of years continue to flourish.

Our Communities in Partnership Programme (CiPP) aims to embed cross-border co-operation. It seeks to build resilience in the face of uncertainty and friction, and support the development of local leadership.

In line with our strong belief that communities are best placed to design their own future, groups are encouraged to put forward initiatives that show innovation and creativity in addressing the challenges they face.

Projects involved in the programme must meet two criteria; build genuine connections on a cross-border basis and provide meaningful benefit to the communities involved. These bring people together to serve their communities in imaginative ways such as:

- Using culture and the arts to create a space for people to deepen their understanding of the past and set a path for their future
- Launching initiatives that strengthen civic engagement thereby empowering communities to face difficult conversations and set a path for their future
- Facilitating contact and discussion between diverse groups working on peace and reconciliation across the island
- Creating projects that engage and empower young people from both sides of the border
- Taking practical steps to improve people's social and material wellbeing
- Creating the conditions necessary for the development of social enterprise and innovation.



# CiPP Projects

During this financial year the IFI has committed financial assistance to the following projects:



- Belfast City**
- 1. The John and Pat Hume Foundation, Belfast
  - 2. Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, Belfast
- Causeway Coast and Glens**
- 3. The Breen Centre, Armoy
- Derry City and Strabane**
- 4. Bogside & Brandywell Initiative, Derry
  - 5. Manchester United Foundation, Londonderry
- Mid Ulster**
- 6. Ballinascreen Community Forum, Draperstown
- Monaghan/South Armagh**
- 7. Monaghan Integrated Development, Castleblayney
- Down**
- 8. Artsawonder, Rostrevor
- Donegal**
- 9. Donegal Local Sports Partnership, Letterkenny
  - 10. Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland, Limerick
- Cavan**
- 11. Cavan County Local Development, Cavan
- Louth**
- 12. Omeath District Development, Omeath

In the last reporting year our Communities in Partnership Programme has delivered:



projects were funded by the programme, two of which started a second phase within this period (Oct 2023 - Sept 2024)



cross-border partnerships formed



new cross-border relationships facilitated



people attended engagement events



participants at training courses / events



training and mentoring sessions delivered



communities linked cross-border



of the projects have started within the last quarter (since July 2024)

## Our Aim

To embed lasting relationships on a cross-border basis by supporting cooperation and innovation between groups and organisations North and South on projects that have a meaningful benefit for local communities.

Note – the numbers presented above are totals, and the number of unique individuals may be lower



## North West Cultural Partnership (NWCP)



ABOVE: Ulster Scots dancers from North West Cultural Partnership attended a special event at 10 Downing Street where they performed for former British Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak.

As part of North West Cultural Partnership's (NWCP) latest work, it has joined forces with the County Donegal-based Inishowen Development Partnership with the goal of correcting many of the wrongly held beliefs surrounding the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (PUL) and Catholic, Nationalist, Republican (CNR) cultures.



ABOVE: Paralympic gold medal winner Jason Smyth (far right) spoke at the 'Embrace' Communities in Partnership Programme event.

All thanks to £130,000 from the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Communities in Partnership Programme (CiPP) they were able to roll out the 21-month cross-border 'Embrace Project'.

According to Brian Dougherty – a well-known and respected community worker in Derry-Londonderry, and the CEO of NWCP who works alongside Georgina Kee-McCarter, Tracey McCrory, and Becky Taggart – the project is another vital way of advancing public awareness by encouraging and fostering enhanced understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of dance and music on both sides of the political divide. To do this, it has been working with those from the Maiden City's Protestant Fountain Estate and Donegal's north-eastern corner of Carndonagh, Clonmany and Moville where the demographic is mostly Catholic. As well as allowing Embrace Project participants to deepen their understanding of the past, activities have also helped lay the groundwork for a more positive future.

"Our ethos has always been about using culture – and cultural output – as a means of civic engagement which has many benefits, primarily dispelling myths around pro-Union culture and traditional Irish culture," says Brian. "Using the vehicle of cultural output made through music, dance and performance allows for inclusivity; it brings people who would not have the chance



ABOVE: Taoiseach Simon Harris, TD visited New Gate Arts and Culture Centre to hear plans for future cross-border cultural collaborations with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Shared Island.

to perform and work, together. That has a larger impact in terms of the all-important peacebuilding element by giving young people living on either side of the border the chance to really find out what each other's culture is all about. We can only really broaden people's perspectives by challenging misconceptions, which we are doing.

"We've been working with the Irish government for a number of years now to also dispel those myths and use this as a platform to have broader discussions on political, civic and constitutional issues. All this work is part of a longer-term aim where we work towards having a Dublin City Tattoo at Collins Barracks in 2026 and this project assists and dovetails with that because we are introducing some of the hardest to reach young people on both side of the border and helping them break down barriers. We would hope that this project can be used as a pathway, so that come 2026, the same young people the Embrace Project has been working with will be involved in the Tattoo in some form," adds Brian.

The Embrace Project comprises four elements. 'Up North' is the first and it engages with 750 pupils from seven Donegal schools through an interactive 'Ollie and Annie' video series. Other activities gave people the chance to sample Highland dancing, traditional marching band music, and a Robbie Burns-based interactive drama. The second aspect – a Talent Development Programme – incorporated flute ensemble workshops. Members travelled to Newtownards last April to receive



tuition from the Northern Ireland Flute Band Association before participating in their first solo B-flat flute competition.

Having benefited from one-on-one help from renowned professionals, highland dancers created their own choreographies and were even given the opportunity to perform at 10 Downing Street in London, with the then Prime Minister Rishi Sunak among those in attendance. Last March – as part of the St Patrick’s Day celebrations – a group of forty musicians from the Marching Bands Association of NI took part in the main Dublin parade, while a group of 21 dancers completed three performances in Collins Barracks’ Festival Quarter. In September, a further six musicians and seven dancers from the project also performed in the heart of Dublin, in front of hundreds of people, as part of the city’s Culture Night.

The third element explored costume design in a series of four workshops at the Sollus Centre – the first purpose-built Ulster Scots cultural centre in Northern Ireland – photography and pod cast workshops. The fourth and final strand of the Embrace Project, which involved students from Hofstra University in America – Long Island’s largest private university – and centred on dialogue and discussion. Themes that were explored covered parading, young people’s concerns about the future, cultural expression, and how sporting codes can be used as a peacebuilding tool. Other activities included heightening peace awareness through education and volunteering, and special visits from distinguished or well-known guest speakers such as retired Irish sprinter and former Paralympic gold medal winner, Jason Smyth MBE.

“Our challenge now is to have the resources to do more of this,” says Brian, who welcomed the Taoiseach, Simon Harris, to NWCP’s offices in the Fountain during a one-day visit to Derry-Londonderry in September. “The programme is incredibly innovative because it breaks down boundaries, it looks at joint collaborations, it modernises Irish dance and music and Highland dance and music and combines the two. The big hurdle we have now is maintaining the momentum and making sure the young people we have, who

have signed up to the programme, stay involved, that they are not lost, so they can continue this pathway.

“As I have said, this is groundbreaking work and that is highlighted by the fact both the British and Irish governments asked us to perform at events hosted by them. Without the Communities in Partnership Programme those opportunities just would not have been possible because of the sums of money that is involved. Even before that, the collaborations with the young people would not have existed and we would not have had the resources to put on viable performances, performances that were of a very high standard thanks to our creative base at Newgate and working with extremely talented partners.”

He adds: “If they work well, which it does, the impact of the Communities in Partnership Programme should never be felt in isolation – it should not just be about the participants but rather the positive message it sends out – and the Embrace Project is a perfect example of how the funding from the International Fund for Ireland has allowed us to do that. It has opened doors for us that we did not think were possible and would not have happened without the investment we received.”



ABOVE: Performing at Culture Night in Dublin.

## The John and Pat Hume Foundation



ABOVE: A youth panel discuss reconciliation and finishing the job of peacebuilding.

Launched in 2020 in honour of two champions of peace and reconciliation, the John and Pat Hume Foundation has been working to advance non-violent peaceful change for both present and future generations, while continually promoting the bonds of reconciliation.





ABOVE: Young people involved have a safe platform to discuss sensitive issues.

Through the Communities in Partnership Programme (CiPP), the John and Pat Hume Foundation, together with Community Dialogue, led the Peace Summit Partnership, including the Holywell Trust, YouthAction NI, the Integrated Education Fund, NI Youth Forum, Ulster University Holywell Trust and the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

25 years on from the Good Friday Agreement it was important to ask what remains to be done, how we achieve this, and who is responsible for implementing the next steps.

There was a recognition that society, now more than ever, needs visionary leadership for peaceful change. The Peace Summit, is a process rather than a one-off event, which listened and continues to listen to voices of hope and refocus attention on the Peace Process to ensure we finish the job of reconciliation.

Tim Attwood, from the John and Pat Hume Foundation, explains: “The Peace Summit Partners peacebuilding initiatives are primarily based in Northern Ireland and Ireland. The key focus of the work is promoting peace and reconciliation in a region that has historically been marked by sectarian conflict and political instability. Society, now more than ever, needs visionary leadership for peaceful change. However, we assert that peace is more than the absence of conflict; it requires active engagement in reconciliation, addressing socio-economic disparities, and dismantling sectarian structures.

“The IFI has been a steadfast partner of the Partnership – it has provided essential funding that has enabled the Partners to carry out our mission. The continued support has been instrumental in ensuring the sustainability and expansion of our programmes, particularly in times when securing funding for peacebuilding activities has been increasingly challenging. This partnership underscores the importance of why stable, long-term funding is key to achieving lasting peace and reconciliation.”

“The partners then delivered a successful and thought-provoking Peace Summit, in UU Magee, that gave both young and old a voice; brought people from different political and religious persuasions together; and heard from an array of influential and grassroots peace experts that coincided with the 25th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement – a process John Hume was a key architect of.”

As part of this process there was deep and meaningful consultation with peacebuilders, local communities, and young people from across Northern Ireland and the Border region in the Republic, through youth engagement workshops, peace practitioner workshops, community dialogues, citizen juries.

The ‘Youth Peace Summits’ – were a six-part project that worked with 450 young people across Northern Ireland and southern border counties to develop three, eight-minute drama pieces to be performed at the Peace Summit. ‘Citizen Dialogue’ facilitated dialogue sessions between those from the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (PUL) and Catholic, Nationalist, Republican (CNR) areas as well as those from ethnic minorities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and those who have made the country their home. ‘Peacemaker Engagement’ was a four-part session that engaged with 100 people involved in peacebuilding and good relations in Derry-Londonderry, Belfast and Enniskillen with ‘Peace Summit Thirty’ the final element. Using a residential model, 30 people from different backgrounds came together to explore the Good Friday Agreement and concerns around legacy.

“Our engagement with several hundred people found that Northern Ireland still faces a myriad of challenges, many of which are deeply intertwined with the region’s history of conflict. Sectarian tensions, economic disparities, trauma from past violence, and political instability pose significant barriers to lasting peace,” says Tim.

“These challenges are further compounded by the segregated nature of Northern Irish society, where physical and social divisions persist – particularly in single-identity areas. In these areas, control by paramilitary groups exacerbates social and economic problems, and hinder efforts to foster reconciliation and improve the quality of life for residents.

“The engagement of young people through initiatives like the Youth Peace Summit has brought new energy and perspectives to the peacebuilding process, ensuring that the next generation is equipped to carry forward the work of reconciliation. Raising issues such as racism, mental health, environmental problems, and the specific challenges that are faced by those living in segregated, paramilitary-controlled areas, have helped highlight the need for a more inclusive and supportive environment for those people who are often excluded from mainstream peacebuilding efforts. Our efforts to highlight the specific challenges that continue to be faced by marginalised groups – such as women, LGBTQ+ individuals, young people and those who living in poverty – demonstrate our dedication to ensuring that peacebuilding efforts are both comprehensive and inclusive.”



ABOVE: Former SDLP party member Sean Farren (centre) was among special guests at the Peace Summit.



ABOVE: South African human rights activist Candice Mama addressed guests at the Youth Peace Summit.





ABOVE: Tim Attwood from the Hume Foundation listens in during one of the round table discussions.

25 years on from the historic Yes Referendum in 1998, The Peace Summit Partners launched a final report from 'Peace Summit 2023 – A Call for Action'. A renewed commitment is needed, through civic and political work, to tackle current and future challenges. The political institutions need to function cooperatively, socio-economic issues must be tackled urgently while inviting meaningful civic engagement. The call for action offers a roadmap of issues that must be addressed through active, engaged, and visionary government and supported by a robust, vocal, and independent civil society.

Dympna McGlade, Community Dialogue, said: "The last 25 years have brought relative peace, and we should never take this for granted. The Peace Summit has had a deep and constructive engagement with young people and peacemakers on the unfinished business of peace and reconciliation, the final report recognises the achievements and has produced important recommendations and a call for action for the next 25 years."

“  
The Communities in Partnership  
Programme remains highly  
relevant to the current needs of  
Northern Ireland.  
”



ABOVE: Guests listen to discussions around the Peace Process.

"The Peace Process must now shift its focus from maintaining the status quo to addressing the underlying causes of division and instability. In NI the Programme for Government must serve as a roadmap to a more inclusive, integrated society, and the Peace Summit Partnership is prepared to support the Executive in shaping and implementing these necessary reforms."

Tim added: "The Communities in Partnership Programme remains highly relevant to the current needs of Northern Ireland. Its focus on collaborative efforts and community-led initiatives is crucial for addressing the deep-seated issues that continue to affect the region. With the ongoing support of the International Fund for Ireland, the Partnership continues to play a vital role in the peacebuilding process, ensuring that the progress made is both sustainable and inclusive."



ABOVE: The Peace Summit allows people to share experiences and form connections.

# Beyond The Ball



ABOVE: Participants pictured inside Manchester United's changing room.

Retired French international and former Real Madrid playmaker Zinedine Zidane once said football is the only thing that can bring an entire country together, regardless of political or religious differences. It is also widely accepted that the 'beautiful game' can help young and old feel a sense of pride and belonging, and foster a culture of unity, respect, and friendship.



This very ethos has played out on football pitches across Antrim, Londonderry, Donegal, Fermanagh, Leitrim and Louth, Sligo and Tyrone after the International Fund for Ireland joined forces with the Rio Ferdinand Foundation. Through its Communities in Partnership Programme, the IFI awarded nearly half-a-million Euros to 'Beyond The Ball'. It followed a successful 12-month pilot project between the IFI and the charitable organisation that was founded in 2012 by former Manchester United and England defender Rio Ferdinand, to give young people hope.

'Beyond The Ball' has prioritised connecting with young people from across the political divide and actively promoting cross-community reconciliation at a grass roots level. Efforts to expand the programme – which involved several key partners, notably the PSNI and An Garda Síochána – were accelerated following an attempt on the life of DCI John Caldwell in February 2023.

This led to several agreed aims to build genuine connections and benefit both communities, including launching a cross-border Youth Advisory Board, developing a model for east/west relations so participants can engage with similar Manchester groups, social action initiatives, cross-border tournaments, and Final Celebration Events curated by the young people. Due to the Rio Ferdinand Foundation being a clear, neutral brand, both police forces became strategic partners, with PSNI community officers taking on the role of coaches or referees as part of the original Leitrim-Fermanagh pilot project.

Garda and PSNI engagement with young people to positively impact on policy was a key ambition of the project from the outset. The relationship with policing colleagues on both sides of the border has gone from strength to strength and a recent Youth Advisory Consultation between the Garda National Community Engagement Bureau and Beyond the Ball highlighted the project's ability to connect with decisionmakers and make sure young people's voices are heard.



ABOVE: Former England and Man Utd defender Rio Ferdinand brought Sligo to a standstill.



ABOVE: Former Chelsea FC player Paul Canoville delivers a half-time team talk.

"The contribution of the RFF, and the young people you brought together for this event, will undoubtedly have a meaningful impact upon the work that we do in developing our Younger Persons Plan and the overall way we intend to provide a police service to the young people of Ireland," said Inspector Ciaran Nunan of Garda's National Community Engagement Bureau. "We learned so much from you all, and we will carry this with us as we continue to reach out to young people across Ireland."

Beyond The Ball project co-ordinator, Darryl Forsythe, says: "Our project uses sport – football – as a pathway to build the confidence, aspirations, qualifications, and life chances of participants by exposing them to new experiences, new opportunities and new relationships on a cross-community, cross-border basis.

"Regular year-round sports participation and cross-border tournaments, personal development and accredited training opportunities, social action projects whereby young people use their skills to benefit their own and the wider community, and a Youth Action Group to shape the direction of the project and engage with stakeholders and to give their voice a platform to influence their own lives are the activities we deliver. This latter aspect of the programme includes working directly with policing colleagues on a cross-border basis to break down barriers and build better relationships; with Housing Associations to understand how to build stronger and safer communities; and also with sports and education providers to build programmes that reflect the needs of young people.



ABOVE: Women's empowerment session guests pictured with IFI Board Member, Bernie Butler, TV personality Kate Ferdinand, Linfield Captain Ashley Hutton, and Sligo Rovers' Emma Hansberry.

"The first year of the project was a fantastic success. As many as 366 young people were involved, and an additional 350 young people took part in tournaments and cross-border events. So far, the project has achieved 227 qualifications and delivered 10 cross-community and cross-border events, including a policing and community safety consultation carried out in Belfast with PSNI and Garda involvement."

Aged between 14 and 19, a total of 30 young people from each of the five areas have been engaging in positive activities within their own communities, namely six courses per year that are intended to build personal development skills and confidence by covering a range of topics – from equality, conflict resolution and diversity – with direct input from Community Police Officers. To support Beyond The Ball officials, 10 volunteers were enrolled to assist with coaching and leadership components of the programme. This has opened the door to accredited training opportunities in Leadership, Equality and Inclusion with the Open College Network; sports leadership through the Community Sports Leaders Award; and footballing qualifications through the FA's framework in Northern and Southern Ireland.

Other cornerstones of Beyond The Ball include a cross-border advisory board that gives young people a voice and a platform to enact change; relationship building on an east-west basis through annual visits to Rio Ferdinand Foundation network events in London and Manchester; and a 'Girls' and Young Women's Dimension' that culminated in a





ABOVE: IFI Chair Paddy Harte (L) and former Man Utd player Rio Ferdinand pictured with participants at the Sligo event.

Celebration Event that welcomed Rio Ferdinand and IFI Chair Paddy Harte to The Showgrounds in Sligo. Hundreds cheered from the stands and sidelines during matchday, which was supported by Linfield and Northern Ireland player Ashley Hutton, and Paul Canoville – Chelsea Football Club's first ever black player. In all, 32 young people took to the field of play, with Rio Ferdinand leading out one team and Westlife's front man, Shane Filan, the other.

Darryl picks up the story, saying: "Our two East-West exchange programmes engaged 24 young women in peer leadership roles, and the end of year one celebration event with Rio Ferdinand attracted 1,500 attendees from across the programme to Sligo to take part in workshops and other activities. We are immensely proud of the young people that have engaged in the project and put aside differences to work together, and the Youth Advisory Group that has emerged will enable us to move the project forward in year two. We have had anecdotal feedback from parents that the project has changed the outlook and confidence of their children, we have seen friendships emerge across community and county lines, and young people have relished the opportunity to work with (and challenge) stakeholders, including policing colleagues on their interaction and communication.



ABOVE: Westlife star Shane Filan pictured at the Beyond The Ball event.

The project itself is now the subject of an evaluation by the University of Ulster to capture some of these stories and the quantitative and qualitative impact of the project that will be published early in 2025.

"This project encourages people from all communities to discuss issues that really matter to them and challenge sectarian and racist attitudes by promoting equality, inclusion, and diversity. Young people representing PUL, CNR and Ethnic Minority groups have crossed peace lines

*The Rio Ferdinand Foundation is seen as a neutral brand in many communities, and we create fun, safe and inclusive spaces for relationships to develop that may not exist otherwise.*



throughout Northern Ireland and Ireland to take part in weekly activities, workshops, and shared learning experiences together. We also encourage reflective practice and positive actions through a Youth Action Group and youth-led projects. This project has been instrumental in encouraging the next generation to address issues, reconcile differences, promote greater understanding, build trust and work on common goals to transform relationships and positive change towards peace. From our experience, the International Fund for Ireland's Communities in Partnership promotes genuine peacebuilding and reconciliation. It brings together young people and families in a neutral environment to work on projects that highlight shared values, interest, and concerns – and working together in a positive way to address them is key.

"The Rio Ferdinand Foundation is seen as a neutral brand in many communities, and we create fun, safe and inclusive spaces for relationships to develop that may not exist otherwise. Access to further education emphasises empowering

youth-led approaches towards peace," adds Darryl. "This has been further supported at a high level by key stakeholder such as the PSNI and An Garda Síochána, many cross-community partners and football clubs. Beyond the Ball not only encourages resolving conflict but also how to better build societies and policies while sustaining and ensuring safety and justice on a cross-border basis."



ABOVE: The East-West element of Beyond The Ball is introducing young people from different backgrounds and cultures.



ABOVE: Participants had a tour of Old Trafford as part of their visit to Manchester.



# CiPP Financial Assistance

During the financial year the IFI committed financial assistance to the following projects:

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
BELFAST CITY		
<b>The John and Pat Hume Foundation</b> info@humefoundation.org	The project builds upon the work of the Peace Summit 2023 project in addressing the unfinished business of peace and reconciliation. The proposal involves an extensive engagement process leading to the delivery of a Peace Summit (Youth focused) which took place at Ulster University, Magee in April 2024.	£119,983
<b>Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre</b> 4-6 Donegal Street, Belfast BT1 2FN	The Advanced Manufacturing Pathways Schools project will bring together 12 schools, six in Northern Ireland and six in Ireland through a series of project based cross-border and cross-community workshops and activities.	£133,331
CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS		
<b>The Breen Centre</b> 100 Glenshek Road, Armoy Antrim BT53 8RZ	This project will deliver two, 20-week programmes of activity to a total of 60 participants (30 per programme, 15 IDP and 15 BREEN).	£131,504
DERRY CITY AND STRABANE		
<b>Bogside &amp; Brandywell Initiative</b> Gasyard Centre, 128 Lecky Road, Derry, Co Londonderry BT48 6NP	Better Together will build on the lessons learned and experience gained over the last year to reinforce the relationships that have been established and expand these both geographically and thematically.	£203,824
<b>Manchester United Foundation</b> 26 Sir Matt Busby Way, Old Trafford Stretford Manchester M16 0RA	The project will connect three schools and communities on a cross-border and cross-community basis working across four key strands: 1. Social and Cultural Capital Experiences 2. Youth Voice and Ambassador 3. Education & Community 4. Community Cohesion	£309,683
MID ULSTER		
<b>Ballinascreen Community Forum</b> C/o Workspace (Draperstown) Ltd The Business Centre, Draperstown Londonderry BT45 7AG	The project will help develop the relationship between the Ballinascreen Community Forum in Co. Derry and partner organisations in Glenties, Co Donegal. Creating opportunities and space for participants to focus on common issues and enable them to learn about everyday life in each other's communities on a cross-border and cross- community basis.	£143,172

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
MONAGHAN / SOUTH ARMAGH		
<b>Monaghan Integrated Development</b> Unit 9, Drumillard Business Park, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan	This project will bring together four schools on a cross-border and cross-community basis. This will build relationships between both communities and promote peace and reconciliation through shared learning and common interests. In addition the project will bring together parents and families in the Monaghan/South Armagh border region.	€116,615
DONEGAL		
<b>Artsawonder</b> 50 Shore Rd, Rostrevor Co. Down BT34 3AA	This project connects former civil society and political leaders from communities across the island of Ireland north and south, leaders who were involved in the negotiations that led to the Good Friday and follow-on peace agreements. This project will facilitate contact and discussion between diverse groups working on peace and reconciliation across the island.	€410,140
<b>Donegal Local Sports Partnership</b> Office No. 7, River Front House, Pearse Road, Letterkenny Co. Donegal	This delivers a 'Community Activity Play' project that will benefit children and adults living in disadvantaged urban residential areas on each side of the border.	€185,086
<b>Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland</b> Ballyhoura Centre, Main Street Kilfinane, Limerick	The Discovery Programme will connect twenty social enterprises from different community areas north and south. Discovery is a capacity development programme specifically designed to support each social enterprise with the challenge of financial sustainability.	€286,882
CAVAN		
<b>Cavan County Local Development</b> Unit 6A Corlurgain Business Park, Ballinagh Road, Cavan	The project will help develop peacebuilding through climate change and a community-led approach in the cross-border region of Cavan and Fermanagh.	€290,623
LOUTH		
<b>Omeath District Development</b> The Dolmen Centre, Knocknagoran Omeath Co. Louth	The project will deliver a programme of good relations, cross-border and cross-community activity for women from both sides of the community. The project will provide the women in particular with the opportunity to increase their awareness of cultural identity and to develop themselves as peace builders within their communities.	€107,410



# Peace Impact Programme



The Peace Impact Programme (PIP) is designed to deliver real and positive community transformation through sensitive interventions in communities that have not previously, or have only partially, participated in peace building and reconciliation activities.



ABOVE: Police attend a crime scene.



ABOVE: Sensitive engagement is an important part of the PIP Programme.

These interventions are critical to building a truly integrated, shared and peaceful society. PIP works with communities to build sustainable peace and prosperity in areas suffering from high levels of economic and social deprivation, where there are low levels of engagement in peacebuilding and where the Peace Process has delivered limited benefits.

The programme places particular emphasis on engaging with disaffected and marginalised young people who are vulnerable to recruitment or attack by those opposed to the Peace Process.

The Peace Impact Programme has expanded and intensified efforts to build sustainable peace and prosperity in areas where there have been low levels of engagement in peacebuilding. Projects have developed innovative community-led solutions to address difficult issues linked to the legacy of conflict and many have successfully engaged with young people who are at risk of becoming involved in sectarian or anti-social activity.

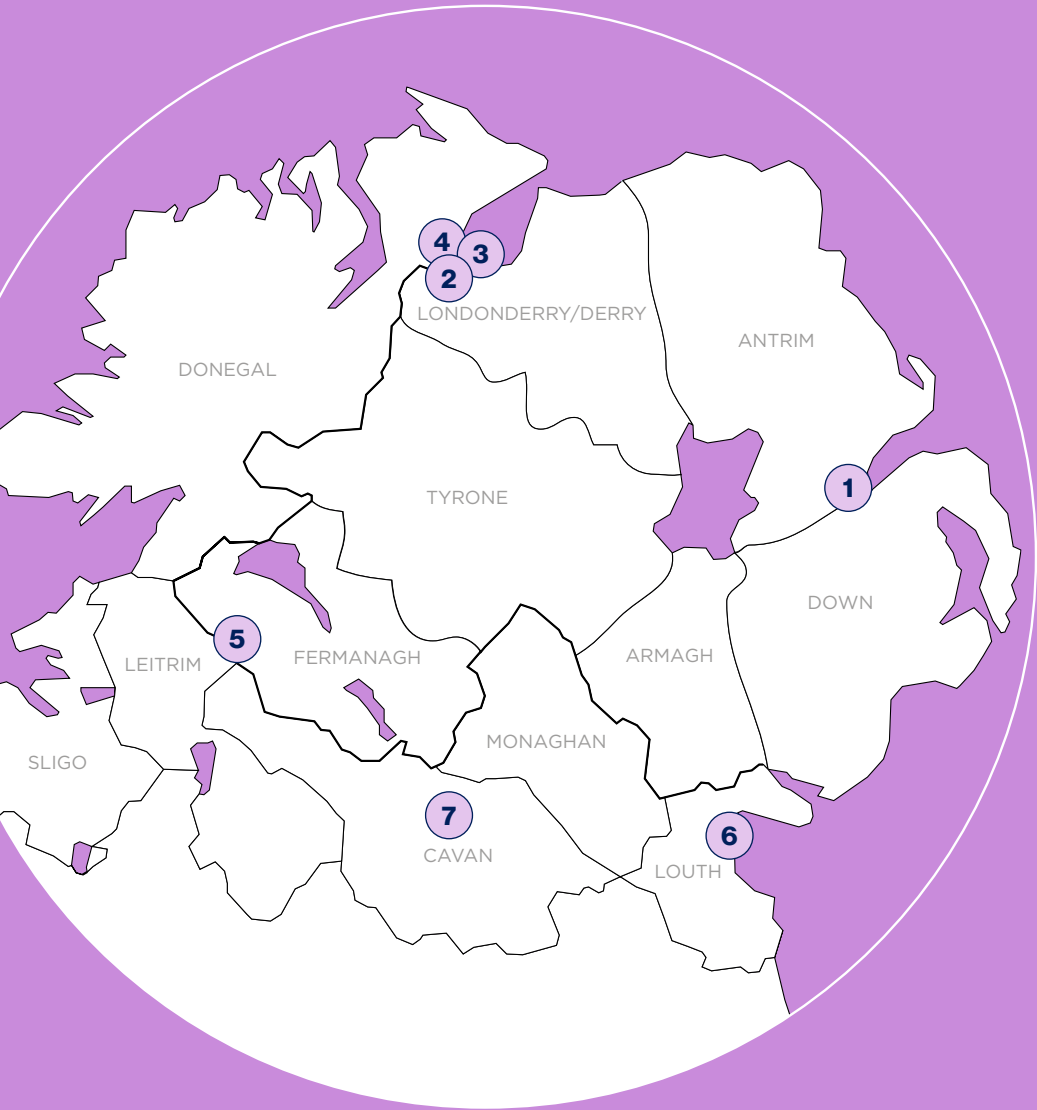


ABOVE: Murals depicting issues affecting communities in NI.



# PiP Projects

During this financial year the IFI has committed financial assistance to the following projects:



**Belfast City**

- 1. Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association (TWRA), Belfast

**Derry City and Strabane**

- 2. Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership, Derry
- 3. St Columbs Park Reconciliation Trust, Londonderry
- 4. North West Cultural Partnership - Bready & District Ulster Scots Development Association, Derry

**Ballinmore, Enniskillen**

- 5. Ballinmore Area Community Council Clg, Ballinmore

**Dundalk**

- 6. Ait Na nDaoine, Dundalk

**West Cavan, West Fermanagh**

- 7. Cavan County Local Development, Cavan

Launched in 2013, The Peace Impact Programme (PIP) has achieved significant success within communities where there has been limited or no previous participation in peacebuilding activities. In the last reporting year:



people from NI were involved in capacity building, events and training



projects were funded by the programme, of which three were in southern border counties



inter / intra cross-border relationships were established / maintained



core and general events and activities were delivered



participating in peace or capacity budling for the first time in southern border counties



undertaking capacity building / employability training in southern border counties



certifications / accreditations secured by southern border county participants



accreditations and qualifications were achieved by people in NI

**Our Aim**

To build sustainable peace and prosperity in areas suffering from high levels of economic and social deprivation, where there are low levels of engagement in peacebuilding and where the Peace Process has delivered limited benefits.

*Note – the numbers presented above are totals, and the number of unique individuals may be lower*



## Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association (TWRA)



ABOVE: Woodvale Community Hub in North Belfast.

Based in Twaddell Avenue, close to the Ardoyne roundabout, workers at Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association (TWRA) walk past one of the most infamous interfaces in Northern Ireland most days as they arrive at the office. For many years, Twaddell Avenue made the headlines when protestors set-up camp on ground between the Loyalist Greater Shankill and Republican Ardoyne.



ABOVE: Shankill Juniors Football Club's annual awards ceremony was sponsored by TWRA.

Last summer, fears grew of a return to those scenes in North Belfast when news emerged that the agreement that quelled those protests had ended following a breakdown in engagement between the respective parties. This came as a direct result of Ligoniel Loyal Order requesting to walk past the Ardoyne shops on the return leg of their annual Twelfth of July demonstration around Belfast. An application was eventually approved by the Parades Commission two months later for a march, albeit with strict terms for organisers and participants, ensuring the event passed off peacefully.

TWRA's Bobby Rodgers said the 10-week period gave cause for concern at a time when significant progress was being made on the ground with those residents from the Woodvale and Shankill, Ballygomartin and Crumlin Road areas.

"It could potentially derail the good work that's happened over a lot of years – work that has gone unnoticed and in direct opposition to positions that have been adapted by some political parties that are represented in the areas concerned," says Bobby. "But TWRA will continue to advocate for talks in a subtle and under-played way – something that was, for a number of years, quite successful. To be truthful, success for one side can be interpreted



ABOVE: Primary School children receive transfer test tuition at Woodvale Community Hub.

as a loss for the other side, we have the opportunity to change perspectives around that, which is what we are working towards."

Parading of course is one of many matters that can raise tensions in the area where TWRA operates. While marches are predominantly a seasonal issue, matters needing to be tackled around the clock include issues that stem from the Northern Ireland Protocol and the subsequent Windsor Framework; growing calls for a Border Poll; and doubts over the Belfast Good Friday Agreement some 25 years on from it being signed, sealed, and delivered.

However, as part of the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Peace Impact Programme (PIP), Bobby can advocate for how this provides a stabilising influence, especially at a time when local people's attitudes have hardened around political governance, and how this comes to the surface through an increase in community tensions. As part of a new two-year programme, TWRA has received just over £213,000 to bring the total amount of support delivered through PIP since 2015 to £862,873.

The current funding is being directed at addressing conflict; the regeneration of the former protest camp at Twaddell; the delivery of Women in Leadership; and Supporting Young People. As well as tackling common social, economic, and health-related barriers, the programme is diverting funds to respond to new and emerging issues, including how to prevent illegal money lenders from exploiting vulnerable young women, and ensuring





ABOVE: Scottish boxers from the 'Rob Roy' club pictured during a visit to Belfast.

those young people who are most susceptible to criminal elements within their community receive the support they require to succeed in life.

Two members of staff – who work alongside TWRA's executive and committee – offer legacy workshops to help local residents better understand the conflict, conflict transformation training, study visits for young people, personal development support, reimagining projects, leadership support for emerging leaders, Cultural Awareness programmes, and cross-border engagement with other groups.

"With regards to the regeneration of the former protest site, TWRA hired a consultant to deliver two presentations of what a development plan could look like," explains Bobby. "A working group was set up to oversee this project and they have met twice and have taken part in at least one presentation. With regards to the Women's Group, TWRA has hired two facilitators to engage with it, resulting in a programme of activities being drawn up. The group has visited Carson Women's Group in Ballymena

and will be hosting a return visit for them soon. We also organised a 'debt-management' presentation facilitated by the Vine Centre in Belfast. TWRA has also been involved in a development process in conjunction with Woodvale Community Hub (WCH) – a group formed in the Woodvale area which aims to involve, amongst many other groups, local dissatisfied young men who are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and, possibly, paramilitarism. We've organised some trips and some funding, constitutional and steering group advice to WCH.

"This year also saw the Woodvale 2024 Festival. Started in 2015, this is a community festival which runs during July, and we attempted to introduce positive events into a period which, traditionally, has seen increased community tensions that sometimes result in anti-social behaviour and rioting. The festival has been a great success with international music acts performing, cultural activities, amusements and football tournaments, farm days, art workshops, DJ workshops, family

“IFI support for TWRA over the years has had a massive impact on the lives of a lot of residents – from the cradle to those of pension age.”

days and facepainting, with this all culminating with an environmentally friendly – and safe – bonfire. Woodvale Festival 2024 also saw the first open air boxing tournament at Woodvale Park in over eighty years. This tournament drew competitors from as far afield as Glasgow – it was a great success and one which will – most definitely – be replicated in other parts.”

Asked if PIP is still relevant, Bobby says unequivocally: “Of course it is – maybe more so than ever – but what is peace? Is it living relatively violence free? Is it being tolerant and acceptant of others? Is it caring for 'others'? Is it being honest and standing up and saying, 'That is not right'. Is it sharing resources? Is it wanting what others have or wanting others to have what we have? These are all big questions which will have different answers depending on your background, age, social and economic status. We need to keep 'impacting' and working for the future because as the late David



ABOVE: Participants during a visit to the Irish National War Memorial Gardens in Dublin.

Ervine once said: “There is no point replacing a dissatisfied 1/3 with a dissatisfied 2/5.

“IFI support for TWRA over the years has had a massive impact on the lives of a lot of residents – from the cradle to those of pension age. Bringing people together and getting them to listen to each other is the first step towards peace and reconciliation but both sides have to be prepared to accept other opinions without feeling threatened – being led by a political ideology doesn't afford this interaction. TWRA attempts to prepare our community to engage genuinely whilst at the same time striving to improve the conditions that the individuals and groups live in. Peace and reconciliation will not occur if one side believe they are a disadvantage before engagement starts. Success is multi-layered, we try and improve all aspects of people's lives whilst attempting to bring people together in order to share the future in a fair and equitable way.”



ABOVE: Members from Scottish boxing club 'Rob Roy' visiting Woodvale Park prior to taking part in the Woodvale Festival (2024).



ABOVE: Young people renovating and developing part of their community.



## Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership



ABOVE: Julieann Campbell, project coordinator, and Chair of Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership Tony O'Doherty, pictured at the launch of the new Empower Project in Creggan.

The 'Empower Project' operates in one of the largest Catholic, Nationalist and Republican (CNR) areas of Derry-Londonderry where groups who are opposed to the Peace Process can often set the agenda, solve disputes, and even serve community justice to those individuals deemed to be involved in anti-social behaviour.

Creggan is a growing housing estate thanks to the completion of two recent developments with a third now well underway, and there is also a widely held belief among people in Northern Ireland's second largest city that it is one of the safest communities for the reasons just mentioned.

However, there is an alternative, according to Empower Project co-ordinator, Julieann Campbell. Working with residents and groups, she believes they can create an environment where issues are dealt with through non-violent means. Managed by the Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP), and launched only last summer, it is one of the newest Peace Impact Programme (PIP) initiatives to receive financial support from the International Fund for Ireland (IFI).

Similar to Creggan Enterprise Limited (CEL) which has been successfully funded by the IFI for many years, Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership is now also getting the opportunity to take part in peacebuilding and reconciliation activities, from which positive leadership, a sense of empowerment, and a much-needed boost in community spirit often stems. This is especially true as the Empower Project works in an area that has, for many years now, experienced high levels of economic and social deprivation due to the Peace Process having delivered few tangible benefits.

"Although vibrant and tight-knit, Creggan is an area of significant poverty and deprivation," says Julieann. "It consistently ranks among the North's top 10 per cent of multi disadvantaged areas for economic deprivation, education, skills, employment, and health. This creates an environment where groups opposed to the Peace Process thrive. For all these reasons, the Empower Project is much needed, and can help residents take on more active roles in their community. Empower delivers three key elements: Empowering Women; Community Cohesion; and Mediation and Negotiation. It offers a safe space where no person or group feels marginalised, and where residents feel supported and welcome.

"PIP is extremely important for marginalised areas like the Creggan, where traditional methods of peacebuilding can be more difficult due to widespread poverty and deprivation coupled with the influence of groups and their 'community justice'. While many choose to look away and ignore contentious issues in such areas, PIP delves deeper and explores solutions. There is a lot of difficult work ahead if we are to positively impact these communities and offer alternatives to the current status quo."

Julieann and her team have made positive progress despite the political disconnect that exists that often sees co-ordinated house raids and arrests by the PSNI; stop and searches involving young people; and illegal parades that tend to be followed by planned riots.



ABOVE: Women attend a session delivered by the Project.



ABOVE: The Empower Project has given women living in the Creggan area a voice.

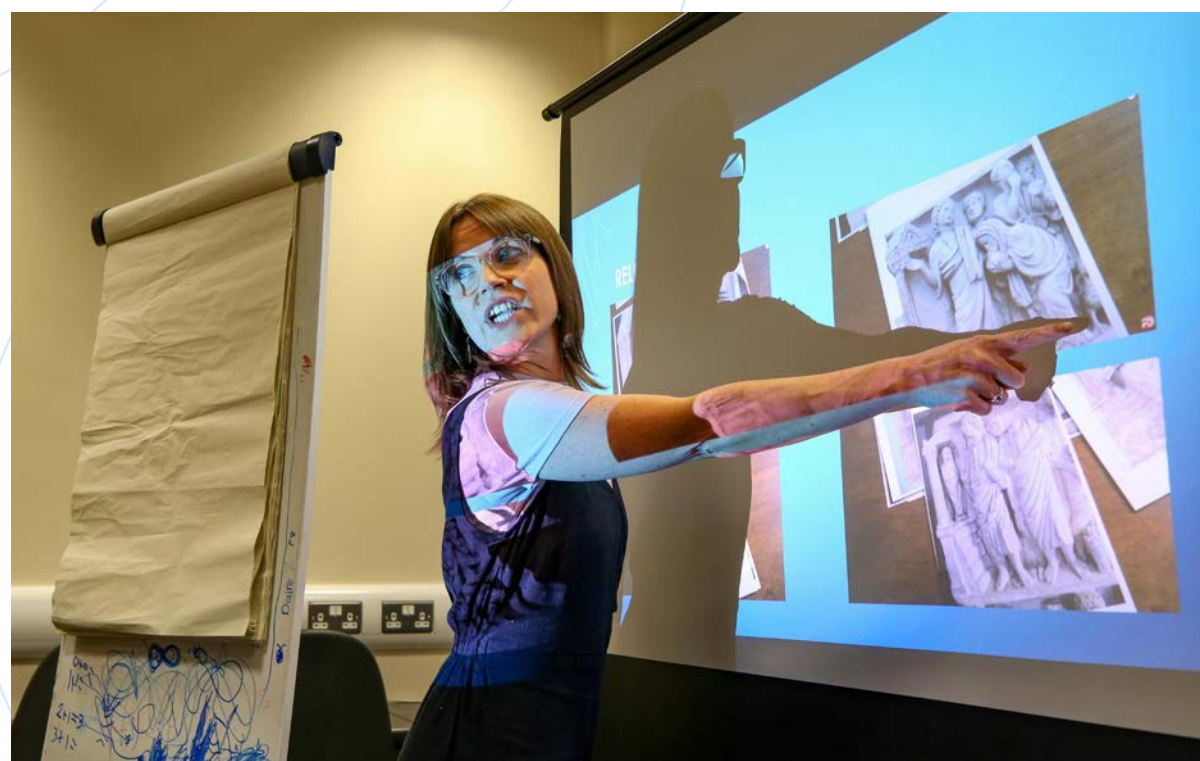


The project already has a growing core group of women – considered the backbone of any community – with almost fifty participating in activities, events, courses, and training classes to better equip them with skills and confidence so they can take on more active leadership roles. Early courses – as suggested by participants – have included learning self-defence as well as a bespoke half-day Assertiveness Workshop that looks to increase self-esteem and self-confidence, improve communication skills, and earn greater respect from those in the Creggan and immediate area.

A workshop on researching family trees and a panel discussion where bereaved relatives critiqued the British government's legacy plans was also delivered as part of Derry Féile, and an audience with eminent British human rights lawyer Michael Mansfield KC where he spoke about his latest book. For Good Relations Week, Empower collaborated with The Junction in Derry-Londonderry for a course called 'Empowering Women and Challenging the Status Quo', and plans to develop a local history project that will culminate in a new mural depicting the historic roles of Creggan

women on Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership's Central Drive offices.

"The biggest challenge in our first quarter was establishing the project and making our presence known to the wider community," reveals Julieann. "This includes identifying and engaging a core group of women who otherwise might rarely participate in such programmes – that was important to us. Beyond that, we acknowledge there are going to be challenges around building enough trust and rapport with dissenting groups that exist in the area. We know this is a slow process, but there is a genuine willingness among these groups to work with us and trust us. Perseverance is key if we are to have lasting impact. We feel a sense of achievement in having established – and formally launched – the project in August 2024, with some fantastic support from the community, project participants, the local press, and key stakeholders. There is already an observable difference in how we – and the Empower Project – are viewed within the community as we meet various groups and individuals."



ABOVE: A workshop being delivered as part of the Empower Project.



ABOVE: An audience with eminent British human rights lawyer Michael Mansfield KC where he spoke about his latest book.



ABOVE: Public response to the Empower Project has been very positive.

Progress around mediation and negotiation, where Empower works with – and between – groups and individuals in Creggan to mediate and do a deep dive into alternatives to violence, is also gaining traction, with cases being resolved on an ongoing basis. Julieann points out that this aspect is understandably more sensitive, and that discretion is central once again to establishing trust and maximising results with local people.

"Creggan has historically been a stronghold of Republican groups such as the IRA, the INLA, PIRA, the Real IRA and Óglaigh na hÉireann (ONH)," she says. "The 1998 Good Friday Agreement had little impact in Creggan besides the release of its political prisoners. Much of this project's success depends upon the willingness of its participants and the support of the wider Creggan community. Thankfully, we have been warmly received so far – our neutrality is a huge factor in terms of getting groups to trust us and work with us. This will increase as the project progresses."

Although the journey ahead may have twists and turns and hit the occasional bump in the road, Julieann believes having adequate funds thanks to the IFI's Peace Impact Programme means that tangible change that will benefit those in the Creggan is on the horizon. "To me, success would be most noticeable as a genuine increase in community cohesion and how groups who have seen no advantage from the peace process interact with and respond to the wider community," she adds.

"With the right resources now in place, I feel we can work with groups to lessen the need for violence. There is already consensus among these groups that the project and its staff can be trusted to remain neutral in such a politically charged area."

*We have been warmly received so far – our neutrality is a huge factor in terms of getting groups to trust us and work with us.*



ABOVE: Project coordinator Julieann Campbell pictured at the launch with IFI Chair Paddy Harte.



## Ait na nDaoine (Place of the People)



ABOVE: A Social Inclusion quilt created by members of the Women's Group.

Some communities in the border region continue to suffer from the legacy of The Troubles conflict. One of those is the County Louth town of Dundalk. Although the Good Friday Agreement has brought relative peace and stability, influence from dissident elements remains part and parcel of daily life, as is control and intimidation, social exclusion, unemployment, and reliance on social welfare.

Brexit – and the fallout that has resulted from the UK government's decision to leave the European Union's Common Market in early 2020 – has also reignited many of the old prejudices and challenges the area has faced in the past.

With access to employment, training, and education limited, it has affected people's life chances from the poorest communities and intensified the existing negative socio-economic situation. However, Ait na nDaoine (translated meaning Place of the People) – an organisation that has received financial support from the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) through its Peace Impact Programme – is creating positive change under the auspices of former-prisoner, John Connolly.

By working closely with disaffected Republicans, teenagers, and families from Dundalk's largest housing estate – Muirhevnamor – the 'Invictus Project' has a clear goal of creating a community that is more inclusive, more cohesive, and safer for everyone. To do this and devise an exit strategy from the long-standing issues that have held this pocket of Louth back for so long, the initiative has identified training and developing volunteers. Doing this, says John, will allow existing activities to live beyond IFI funding.

"We, as a group, are extremely grateful for the funding provided by the International Fund for Ireland for the greater Muirhevnamor area," says John. "It allows us to reduce the negative gap on so many fronts and bring some equity to the table. Going forward, we hope to build on peace and justice issues that affect so many of us.

Muirhevnamor is a well-known estate in Dundalk – and it holds historical significance as a community that saw a large influx of residents from the North. Many families settled here permanently, which resulted in high levels of issues relating to the legacy of the conflict and transgenerational trauma. Muirhevnamor, like many other large working-class estates, has its share of ongoing social problems and challenges. In an article from 2014 entitled 'Estates of fear', Eamon Dillon named it as one dealing with 'the twin parasites of anti-social behaviour and organised crime'. It was one of nine estates around the country listed – and the only one outside of Dublin and Limerick.

"The needs of our community remain fairly static as the issues we deal with are ever-present. They are intergenerational – poverty, unemployment, underachievement, mental health – and the elements they throw up. On top of that there is the drugs issue – the biggest scourge on our community and one that is increasing by the day. In that sense, our



ABOVE: Ciarán Dunbar and Laurence McKeown held a photography and film workshop.



project has had to adapt due to this out of fears for the safety of our staff and premises. We have also had to become more involved in challenging racism within our area and building alliances with other groups and statutory organisations to help combat the divisions that are being deliberately fostered within our community. One of the big strengths of Muirhevnamor in the past was that people generally pulled together when trouble arose on the street, but it is more and more difficult to sustain that unity in the face of threats of direct physical violence.”

John and his colleagues have enjoyed success, however, through engagement with local residents and statutory bodies, from the local Garda Síochána's late-night Garda Diversion Football Tournament to the Louth Meath Education and Training Board. On the back of this, both youth groups and women's groups have been established, with mentoring on a one-to-one level made available to at-risk young people to either steer them back towards education or into the world of work by offering courses on basic welding, driving theory lessons, and even an eight-week Youth Leadership programme. To solidify and build on the key gains

that have been enjoyed so far, upskilling existing community helpers, running workshops and discussions groups, and devising cross-community elements with similar, like-minded groups across the border in Northern Ireland are also significant. Intra- and inter-community work is not easy, yet John says a growing number of individuals are engaging with the 'Invictus Project', with participants gaining increased confidence and understanding. This has included 14 older women and eight older men, eleven of whom were actively involved in The Troubles in Northern Ireland, and young girls and boys, some of whom are the children of ex-prisoners.

Supporting community work through workshops and conferences is another strand of the 'Invictus Project', with some of the themes explored including how to stop drug gangs from ruining the lives of locals. 'Skills Legacy' around mediation, facilitation and restorative justice has focused on upskilling local women and training them in mediation and conflict resolution so that they are equipped to plan and deliver similar work in the future and pass on their experiences. Working with PUL communities – chiefly those funded through



ABOVE: A visit to Crumlin Road Gaol is one of the activities organised by Ait na nDaoinne.



ABOVE: Members of the Women's Group taking part in an arts and crafts class.

PIP – to establish cross-border alliances; running workshops to dissect the changing political face of Ireland (Brexit, the Troubles and those people displaced from Northern Ireland due to the conflict); and delivering intensive, one-to-one mentoring are key elements, too.

“We have successfully developed a strong women and young women's group in the area – and we continue to develop opportunities for these women,” explains John. “We have, through the Invictus Community Initiative, developed real meaningful relationships with the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist community in the north, including Twaddell in Belfast, Redburn estate in Holywood, and the Dalaradia group based close to Rathcoole in Belfast. The engagements are around issues of legacy and the changing political landscape, especially talk of a border poll on the reunification of Ireland and what that would mean for everyone living on the island. We continue to work with all agencies and other groups operating in the area to ensure a joined-up approach to our collective activities.”

However, while acknowledging the importance of IFI funding, John and his colleagues are mindful of the need to think about where Ait na nDaoinne is headed longer-term, which is why a 'Future Strategy for Muirhevnamor' is seen as another

building block of the 'Invictus Project'. “We actively engage with the community in an ongoing manner. We know the needs, we know the people, and they know us,” explains John.

“Our premises is a place people know they can go to for advice or support at any time. Our door is always open and open to all. Our practical work on the ground, delivering services to both the young and the old is of huge importance as it's immediately visible. Apart from the services we deliver directly in our community, we view our work – given the area we live in – in terms of the broader context of peacebuilding. Success for us, in that regard, would be when people of any political persuasion, any religion, any skin colour, sexual orientation, or ability/non-ability can feel unafraid to go into any area, attend any event, visit any venue. We work towards that end.”

*We actively engage with the community in an ongoing manner. We know the needs, we know the people, and they know us.*



ABOVE: Young Women's Group members visited Ti Chulainn in Newry.



# PIP Financial Assistance

During the financial year the IFI committed financial assistance to the following projects:

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
BELFAST CITY		
<b>Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association (TWRA)</b> The Cabin, 3 Twaddell Avenue, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT13 3LE	The programme will build partnerships at a local level, it will also seek to establish relationships on a cross-community and cross-border basis to ensure that tension factors can be identified early and addressed.	£213,335
DERRY CITY AND STRABANE		
<b>Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership</b> Creggan Community Centre, Derry, Co. Londonderry BT48 9QT	To support the development and empowerment of the Creggan community in its entirety through engaging the most marginalised groups within the estate and for the first time attempting to bring these groups together to explore solutions to problems instead of using violence.	£206,632
<b>St Columbs Park Reconciliation Trust</b> 4 Limavady Road, Waterside Londonderry, Co. Londonderry BT47 6JY	This project is unique in that it will target both the PUL and the CNR constituency, who live side by side. This project will be starting from scratch within both communities at a grassroots level. The project will have three clear elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community capacity building</li><li>• Community Mediation &amp; safety programme</li><li>• Youth diversionary programme</li></ul>	£191,451
<b>North West Cultural Partnership - Bready &amp; District Ulster Scots Development Association</b> 20-22 Hawkin Street, The Fountain Derry, Co. Londonderry BT47 6RE	To deliver a programme to support the PUL communities both Urban and Rural deal with contentious issues. To deliver a bespoke leadership programme. To engage with cross -border groups and network with other groups in the North West Area both PUL and CNR to support agreed solutions to issues.	£301,761

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
BALLINMORE, ENNISKILLEN		
<b>Ballinamore Area Community Council Clg</b> Kiltymoodan, Ballinamore Co. Leitrim	This project will build on cross-community/ cross-border links and will continue to promote peace and reconciliation in the bordering counties of Leitrim and Fermanagh while also continuing to address the legacy of conflict in the border region and to raise awareness among young people susceptible to the influence of groups opposed to peace.	€193,797
DUNDALK		
<b>Ait Na nDaoine</b> 1 Park 1, Muirhevnamor Dundalk Co. Louth	The project will continue to work with disaffected Republicans, young people, families and local residents in an area long associated with displaced people, republicanism, dissident activity, criminality and high levels of deprivation. The project will also have cross border and cross-community elements with groups across the border.	€219,119
WEST CAVAN, WEST FERMANAGH		
<b>Cavan County Local Development</b> Unit 6A, Corlurgain Business Park, Ballinagh Road, Cavan	The project will facilitate and enable the development of community relations between Ballyconnell and Fermanagh and will address the Legacy of the Conflict within the community which have been amplified by the fallout from the former Quinn Group.  This proposal forms a foundation stone for this groups plans to create a sustainable community platform and voice, ensuring they are a key partner in the implementation of central government investment in the Ballyconnell area.	€143,158



# Peace Barriers Programme



Peace Walls are the most visual remaining symbols of division in Northern Ireland. Today, more than 100 barriers remain mostly in Belfast stretching a distance of 21km.



ABOVE: Peace Barriers participants on a field trip.



ABOVE: A local resident shares his positive experience at an event.

The Peace Barriers Programme (formerly known as Peace Walls Programme) was launched in January 2012. It focuses on helping interface communities to bring about the conditions that can allow for the removal of Peace Walls.

It provides a range of confidence and relationship building initiatives within and between interface communities to help residents arrive at a position where they feel it is safe and appropriate to discuss and consider the removal of Peace Walls

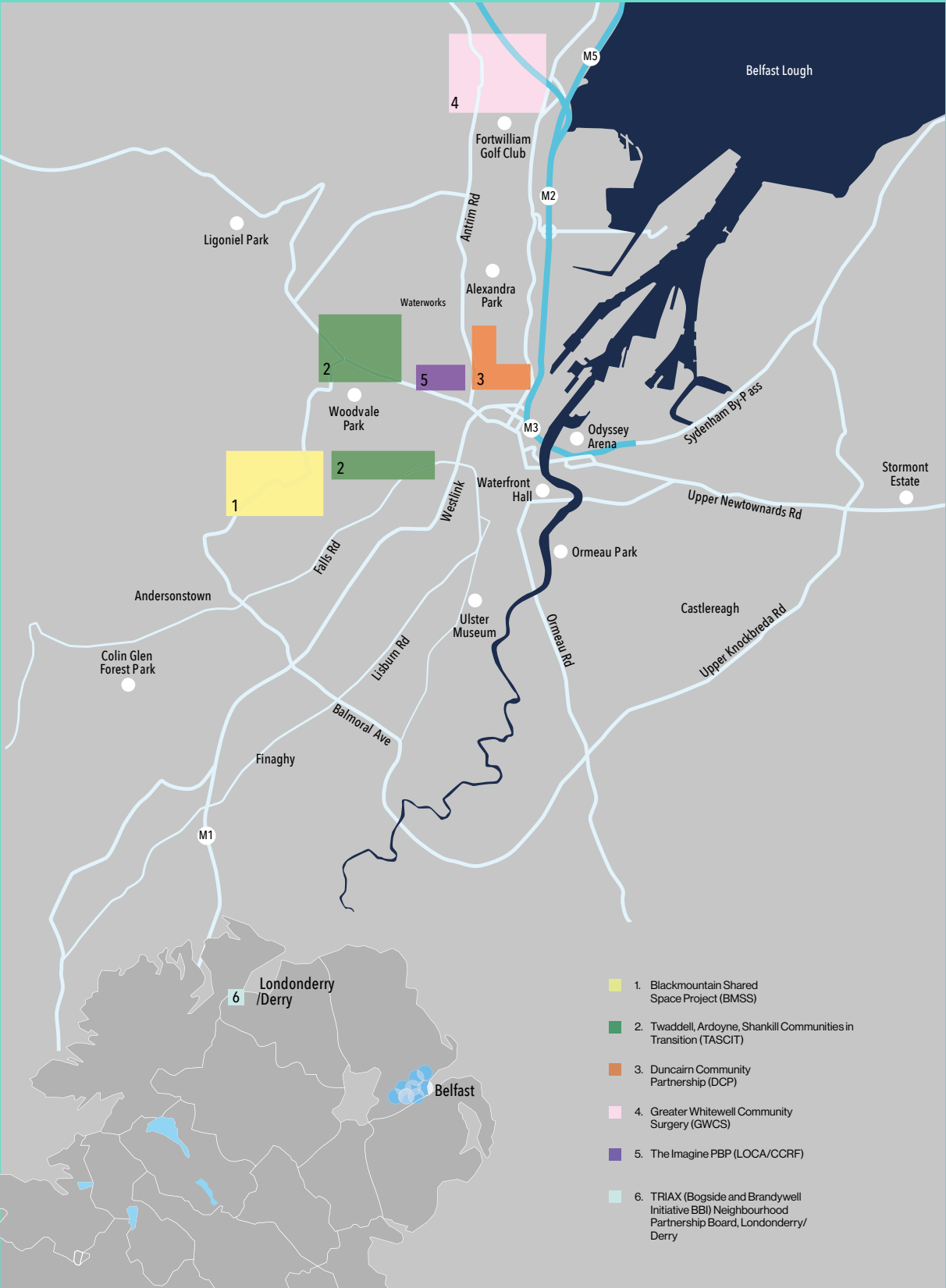
in their area. The programme is designed for communities that have expressed their willingness and readiness to begin building the levels of trust required before starting the process of engaging with statutory authorities about removing the barriers. The programme, which was developed by the IFI following consultation with all the key stakeholders, is designed to be the first stage in a process leading to the physical removal of barriers. This includes assisting interface communities to lever financial and political investment from statutory authorities for any associated infrastructure and community regeneration needs when the barriers are removed.



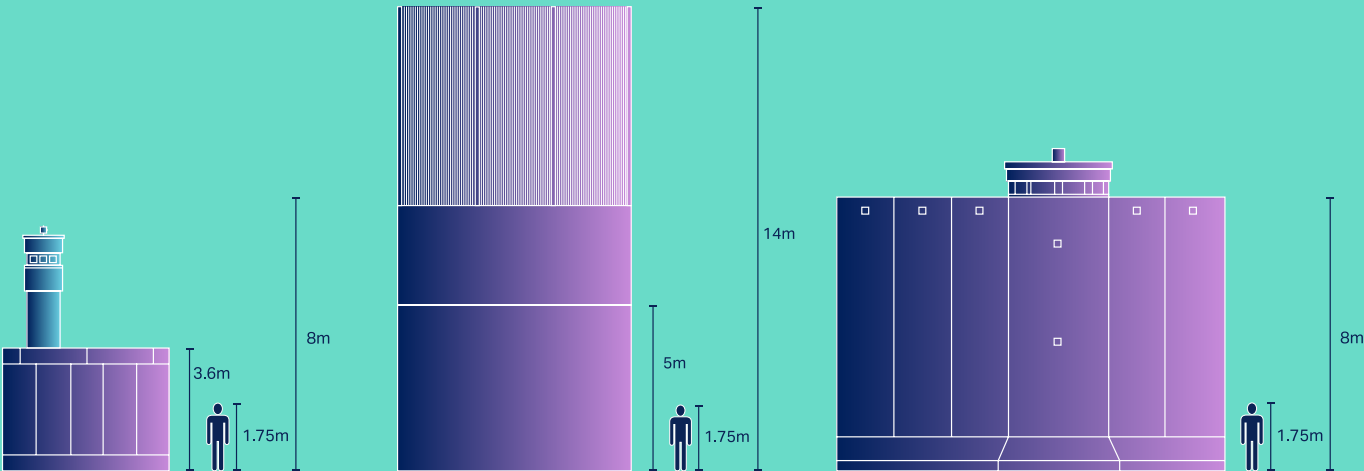
ABOVE: The peace gate on Flax Street in Belfast has connected communities separated by a fixed barrier for the past 40 years.



# PBP Projects



The Peace Barriers Programme works with communities to imagine life without barriers.





In the past reporting year our Peace Barriers Programme has delivered:



engagement events were delivered.

- 19,564 people engaged in events (47% PUL, 52% CNR, 1% other / not stated)
- 83% of events were inter-community
- 17% of events were intra-community



projects were funded by the programme, comprising a total of 44 sub-projects / sites



residents were involved in Peace Barrier site discussions (43% PUL, 57% CNR)



inter-community events were delivered

- 17,511 people engaged in events (43% PUL, 55% CNR, 1% other / not stated)



intra-community events were delivered

- 2,053 people engaged in events (80% PUL, 20% CNR)

Note – the numbers presented above are totals, and the number of unique individuals may be lower

### Our Aim

To develop and deliver a range of confidence and relationship building interventions within and between communities to help residents reach a position where they feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of peace barriers in their area.

## Greater Whitewell Community Surgery (GWCS)



ABOVE: The GWCS project team, led by Geradline O'Kane (left).

Created following a merger between two separate, single-identity groups, Greater Whitewell Community Surgery (GWCS) has achieved positive and discernible change within many North Belfast neighbourhoods where political and sectarian tensions remain fluid.



Led by Geraldine O’Kane, this peace and reconciliation work crosses the political divide to a total of seven locations that are bounded by the Antrim Road in the Belfast City Council area, and Church Road in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council area.

Neighbourhoods such as the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (PUL) White City and Graymount, and Catholic, Nationalist, Republican (CNR) Whitewell and Serpentine still have interfaces and Peace Barriers in place – a constant reminder of The Troubles conflict and the purpose they served. However, they are also a nod to the problems that young and old people face, from poor mental health, conflict related trauma, to alcohol and/or substance misuse.

“One of the main challenges within the community is segregation caused by the Peace Barriers, and the lack of shared space and a community hub where the communities can come together and discuss a range of issues through contentious times,” says Geraldine. “Many of our community have been directly affected by The Troubles which contributes

to high rates of depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and anxiety. Due to the limited services in our community, it makes it more difficult for people to get the help they need to cope with trauma and stress; this has led to an increase in substance abuse in our community”.

“The young people in our community also often feel isolated, separated and withdrawn due to intergenerational trauma, and have limited opportunities for employment and social engagement. The low confidence and the lack of prospects can lead to anti-social behaviour / sectarianism and can leave them vulnerable to the influence of paramilitaries. Combating social isolation is another key issue within our community due to factors such as mobility and retirement, as is the fear of living on an interface and the lack of social housing that exists in interface areas.”

Peace Barriers Programme (PBP) funding from the International Fund for Ireland allows GWCS to successfully overcome hurdles and those that stem from Loyalist elements and dissenting and mainstream Republican elements, including contentious parades, bonfires, commemorations, and paramilitary flags.



ABOVE: GWCS team alongside participants involved in the project.



ABOVE: Group discussion on attitudes towards Peace Barriers.

A proactive and visible approach on the ground in tandem with Restorative Practices has proven useful as it has allowed GWCS to foster constructive working relationships with other statutory organisations; gain the trust of those individuals who wield power and influence; and tackle everyday common problems by removing the green and orange politics. Combined, it’s paved the way for a shared purpose to be formed, and a growing number of wider, community-based events that deliver positive outcomes across the whole community.

These include separate men’s and women’s groups that, on occasions, come together to explore peacebuilding issues; an inter-generational programme involving different age groups to examine contentious issues; cross-community youth initiatives that target the most vulnerable; diversionary activities for young people, especially

“Coming from an interface, one main challenge is segregation. The Peace Barriers within our community have become physical symbols of division.”



ABOVE: Successful transformation of a Peace Barrier into a shared space for the local community.

during the contentious summer period; and events that celebrate different cultures and bring as many as 350 residents from Peace Barrier communities together to either establish or foster relationships.

Geraldine says: “We also facilitate an Achieving Personal Potential (APP) programme. It brings eighty children together from diverse backgrounds to teach awareness and cultural respect from as young as five through early intervention. The project helps to promote peace and stability, it empowers our community, builds cross-community relationships, supports education, works towards conflict resolution and supports long-term reconciliation. We have also been able to diffuse flag situations and work with the young people to ensure that flags are not erected on the Whitewell Road. GWCS was also able to deescalate an issue that arose from a bonfire situation and have – and continue to – hold discussions regarding the issue of immigration. We continue to address those challenges that are related to flags, anti-social behaviour, sectarianism and interfaces as these are deeply intertwined with the communities’ history of conflict.”

“Coming from an interface, one main challenge is segregation. The Peace Barriers within our community have become physical symbols of division. They limit interaction between communities and reinforce distrust. GWCS continue to work with the relevant statutory bodies to address community reconciliation and economic development because our role is to break down the barriers, both physical and psychological,





ABOVE: Participants enjoy taking ownership of topics.

that continue to divide our community. Another challenge is the threat of paramilitary activity and influences. Paramilitary groups can have a negative impact on Peace Barrier work and interfaces in our area because they instill fear within the residents to maintain their influence. They heighten tensions within the area and undermine the peace initiatives which changes community attitude towards Peace Barrier removal.

Geraldine continues; “GWCS also work with community police and local people to build trust as effective community policing can help to reduce the fear of paramilitaries. GWCS also recognises that early intervention instills values and tolerance, empathy and understanding before sectarian attitudes become deeply engrained and, as such, we set up programmes for children – aged five and up – to divert them from paramilitary influence.”

There are many other aspects to the work of GWCS, with unemployment and social deprivation, poor physical and mental health, and the cost-of-living crisis realities that do not discriminate between those of a PUL and CNR persuasion. As such, Geraldine and her colleagues work closely with St Vincent de Paul, foodbanks, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, council representatives and Assembly members. These issues are exacerbated by the experiences of living in interface communities and with Peace Barriers.



ABOVE: Men's group discussing recent activity.

“Our organisation has continually evolved through this process and the experiences we gained have helped us increase community confidence in our work and change attitudes within the community. The community now identify GWCS as a key point of service which has enhanced our Peace Barriers work.

“While we believe there has been progress, the trust between our communities is still fragile and the presence of Peace Barriers continue to impact our community, therefore, the Peace Barriers Programme is crucial for building and maintaining this trust. This Programme creates a safe environment to facilitate critical conversations between communities that might otherwise remain segregated.”



ABOVE: Residents meet regularly through the project.

# Bogside Brandywell Initiative



ABOVE: Young and old alike enjoyed the One World event which explored and celebrated different cultures from around the world.

The first step to begin the process of descaling Peace Barriers – or, indeed, removing them entirely – is securing consensus from those people who have lived in their shadow for many years, and feel reassured by the protection they offer.





ABOVE: Some of the international food offered at the One World event.

Today, more than 100 barriers remain, mostly in Belfast, stretching a distance of 13 miles (21km). Although the International Fund for Ireland's Peace Barriers Programme (PBP) largely focuses on Belfast similar work is currently taking place in Northern Ireland's second biggest city.

For many years, the Bogside & Brandywell Initiative (BBI) in Derry/ Londonderry has been proactively tackling inter-communal violence, sectarianism, parades, and protests. It has also been providing a safe, shared space in the face of violence from those who remain opposed to the Belfast Good Friday Agreement. Success, however, hinges on gaining the trust of people from both sides of the political divide and with support from the IFI, ideological barriers are being overcome with support from PBP project workers, one day at a time.

Gaining trust work takes BBI Manager Donna McCloskey and Peace Building worker Catherine Brogan into the Catholic, Nationalist and Republican (CNR) areas of Bishop Street, the

Bogside and Brandywell as well as the city's predominantly Protestant, Unionist and Loyalist (PUL) Fountain Estate. While both agree they have had much success with residents from the larger CNR community, winning over residents from the minority PUL community which is surrounded by Peace Barriers has been a bigger challenge.

A key focus of the projects work is exploring, at a grass roots level, what neighbourhoods would look like without Peace Barriers. On this front, Donna says the desire to see agreed and timetabled change amongst those from the Fountain is low. In response, a partial reset has been required in terms of how – and where – BBI interacts with residents, with a re-jigged project structure from April last year paving the way for the recruitment of Chris McDonagh.

"The IFI strategy focuses on physical change to Peace Barriers and that does not always make us welcome in the Fountain Estate and Bishop Street areas," says Catherine. "A gap was identified in terms of the number of men engaging in our programme – but since January we secured additional funding as part of IFI's 'Our Peace Our Future' Initiative and seventy people have got involved. We have organised somewhere in the



ABOVE: BBI Manager Donna McCloskey (second from right) pictured at an event.

region of twenty-five different activities just for men from the two communities. It has proven to be very successful, with anywhere up to 50 people attending an event at any one time such as a cross-community visit to Belfast's Crumlin Road Gaol and Peace Barriers sites.

"We brought together a lot of men from different communities who all live, work or have strong connections to the Fountain / Bishop Street area, and I am pleased to say we managed to get an even split of Catholics and Protestants which, for us, was really good given that the population of Derry / Londonderry is overwhelmingly Catholic. That 50-50 split has allowed for positive relationships to be developed between people who would not have met otherwise, and it provided meaningful opportunities for them to meet. It has really laid the foundations for good work and relationship building."



ABOVE: Participants pictured on an away day.



ABOVE: Local children involved in a workshop.

As well as targeting hard-to-reach men, Donna has continued to oversee the successful 'Hen's Shed' – an initiative that was created after lockdown. It has become a cross-community hub of approximately 120 women who engage in a vast range of activities and are increasingly getting involved in hard-hitting peacebuilding work. There are fun elements too, of course, besides the difficult and thought-provoking conversations, with coffee mornings, bus trips, flower arranging, computer and creative writing classes ensuring a packed diary for BBI.

Donna says: "We hold events in the Fountain, in Bishop Street and the Creggan and it is normal for ladies from all backgrounds to attend any of these venues – there is a freedom of movement now that did not previously exist due to fear and not knowing people from other areas".

"Through the Peace Barriers Project, and the fact BBI has been here for 10 years, we have opened the door and created the opportunity for other community groups to deliver and engage in the areas we work. If there was no other group doing the work we do – having difficult conversations, talking about peace and how we ensure it continues – there would not be the same focus on peace hence why we have been having a difficult relationship with those in the Fountain Estate and Bishop Street. The reason for that is very simple: These are the communities most affected by the Peace Barriers, those who have the lived experience of many years of interface conflict and we are challenging them all the time and that is not



easy – it is not always positive work, sometimes there are very difficult issues to deal with, but it needs to continue”.

“If people are not challenged, in a positive way, then progress can’t be made. Just look at the Dog Leg Peace Barrier which connects the Fountain Estate directly to Bishops Street – it had not been opened up in forty years and many local people thought it was going to be the end of the world when changes were made to it, but it wasn’t. It’s allowed the area to be opened up for the benefit of both communities.”

Four themes underpin the work of BBI: ‘Building Leadership’ works on an inter-generational basis at Peace Barrier sites with individuals as opposed to groups or organisations to create new leadership capacity; ‘Two Generations Learning’ explores peacebuilding by allowing young and old to deal with the issue of legacy by learning from and listening to one another; ‘Positive Partnership’ tries to find new ways to engage more people and organisations to change perspectives where Peace Barriers are concerned; and Re-classifying the City’s Interface from a ‘No Go Zone’ to one that is a shared space through a series of larger scale celebration events such as the One World North West Cultural Festival.

An advisory Group consisting of local people from both sides of the community has also been created in recent months to support BBI staff when it comes to delivering activities, while BBI has spearheaded a City Forum – a platform that has introduced community groups, youth clubs, primary and secondary schools to PBP.



*As well as looking at the past,  
we also need to look to the  
future, and be reactive to  
what is happening now.*



Donna adds: “As well as looking at the past, we also need to look to the future, and be reactive to what is happening now. The One World event is a great example as it allows people to explore other cultures and make them realise society here is no longer just orange and green, and help people who are from the Black, Asian and minority ethnic community to integrate. It is another way of bringing people back into the city, of showing them the good work that we are doing and reigniting their passion for this place.

“The One World event was previously located at the Guild Hall in the city centre but this year we managed to bring it to the Peace Barrier site, normalising that space, creating shared space and enabling people to move freely between the two communities while also exploring various other rich cultures and traditions. Normalising space as well as relationships is important.”



ABOVE: Our Peace Our Future Men’s Group at a health talk led by Hive Cancer Support.



ABOVE: Our Peace Our Future Men’s Group visit Crumlin Road Jail.

## Black Mountain Shared Space (BMSS)



ABOVE: The recently completed Black Mountain Shared Space Community Hub.

The Black Mountain Shared Space project operates the only Peace Barriers Programme (PBP) in West Belfast. The work focuses on mixed interface estates, primarily Upper Springfield, Highfield, and Upper Springmartin – areas that have been greatly impacted by the loss of human life or personal injury due to The Troubles-related incidents, intercommunal violence, and paramilitary activities.



The picture is a complex one for Project Manager Seamus Corr because as well as intra-community tensions between Protestants, Unionists, Loyalists (PUL) – and Catholics, Nationalists, Republicans (CNR) – there are also inter-community issues borne out of factionalism between UDA and UVF groupings as well as those different Republican and Dissidents factions who continue to exert influence over people.

As a direct consequence of past and present events, those who live beside or near Peace Barriers and choose to engage with BMSS are at a disadvantage in a whole host of ways, as Seamus explains.

“The five or six estates we work in are interface areas and they tend to suffer from a lack of investment which covers everything from general health and well-being to personal development and education which there are not too many opportunities for. And then there’s the Peace Barriers themselves which restrict movement and access. For instance, those who are living in the Upper Springfield would tend to have a lot of community programmes and recreational activities going on – but it still remains difficult, or almost impossible, for residents in Highfield and Upper Springmartin to access these.

“Another issue that exists in the areas we work is security and assurance. Interface barriers remain in place – the Million Brick Wall, one of the



ABOVE: Around 40 metres of Peace Wall were removed to make way for the new building.

biggest and most recent of its kind in Belfast. Such Peace Barriers do their job but at the expense of separating communities, and that impacts on bus services, access to shops and convenience stores which, never mind inter community relationships, in turn, has a negative effect on individual and community self-worth,” adds Seamus.

“We have always insisted that to implement real change, it had to happen from the ground up – you create the foundation through continual engagement and continually building trust. If you can do that, you have a lot of the work done and that has proved to be the case. We interact closely with residents’ groups, and we now have a residents’ forum comprising six people from each side of the Peace Barriers – they are the six representatives who bring proposals forward, and also aim to resolve issues. The work to reach those people who really need our support never stops.”

Much of what BMSS does and has to offer people revolves around a new, state-of-the-art multi-million-pound Community Hub. It has taken BMSS nearly 12 years to get to the point where they have opened a new, cross-community shared space facility in September 2024, on a site that was surrounded by Peace Barriers and littered by a legacy of violent incidents from the Troubles era.

IFI provided support to BMSS during that entire period including through the Peace Barriers Programme, which brought the communities to a point where this became possible and other funders were able to come onboard to support the physical building of the Shared Space Community



ABOVE: Since 2010 the project has worked hard to break down barriers and improve community relations.



ABOVE: Guests and local residents pictured at the new Shared Space.

Hub. Through the IFI Peace Barriers Programme, an agreement was reached to allow for more than 230ft of Peace Barrier architecture to be replaced to facilitate the build at the former Finlay’s factory site, which was once a hot bed for high levels of sectarian violence and incidents.

The new 2,370 sq m purpose-made facility has given Seamus and his colleagues the platform to deliver an increasing number of bespoke events that positively impact on Peace Barriers by securing support and buy-in from those local communities on either side of the political divide. PBP funding has been allocated to help identify suitable participants for events; hold men’s, women’s and also mixed engagement workshops to create trust and allow difficult and sensitive subjects to be broached; shine a spotlight on conflict-related issues such as perception, identity and culture; plan and stage seasonal events; and use the shared facility at BMSS to host a wide number of peacebuilding recreational engagements that are open to PUL and CNR communities.

Although differences remain around what should happen to Peace Barriers such as the Million Brick Wall, small but nonetheless significant changes are

being made to these structures that allow for a less restrictive way of life.

In one case, two ladies – Michelle Bradley and Lily Brannon – have become close friends and would without doubt be even closer neighbours were it not for one of the bigger Peace Barriers in Belfast”, says Seamus. While Lily has previously expressed a desire to see it come down, Michelle has spoken of the reassurance and safety it provides during the summer when contentious parades and commemorative events stir up tension in the West of the city. Seamus singles out individuals like Michelle and Lily as they can win hearts and minds in their local communities in ways BMSS cannot, describing mothers, grannies and the over 50s as “the influencers in the house”.

At every opportunity, talking about Peace Barriers, how these can be reimagined, de-scaled and, in time, removed altogether, are often explored. This sensitive work also tends to involve locally elected representatives, partner organisations and statutory agencies.

“More people are engaging than ever before. There is more cross-community happening which





ABOVE: PUP councillor Billy Hutchinson pictured at the opening of BMSS Community Hub.

is really very important, and progress is being made on barrier removal. The confidence and the communication at a local level is far better also, and the trust is also building, so that is important. On the flip side, there are always going to be bumps in the road – as much as we are dealing with positive stuff, we also have to deal with the negative. The wider political situation and the changing political and cultural landscape are things we also keep an eye on as is the on-going discussion around a border poll which could be destabilising to community relations if not managed or prioritised for discussion. There are also some young people behaving negatively – but we have a communication system that allows us to respond to incidents quickly and often without needing the police’s intervention.”

However, where intervention is required, admits Seamus, there is continual support and direction

“We have been able to take the barrier down at Moyard and in its place fourteen new homes have been left – that is a classic win-win situation for us..”



ABOVE: BMSS Project Manager Seamus Corr addressing guests.

from the Peace Barrier Programme (PBP). Without it, he believes, the gains that have been made since BMSS started to receive assistance from the International Fund for Ireland back in 2013 would not have been do-able.

“We have been able to take the barrier down at Moyard and in its place fourteen new homes have been left – that is a classic win-win situation for us. We are always trying to leave something better than how we found it. That is something I strongly believe in, working in this area of Belfast. But without the IFI funding over the last eleven or so years, I would sincerely say we would be nowhere near where we are with this project. That is the truth of the matter.”



ABOVE: Jim Branagh from Shankill Star Flute Band and Darlagh McCrory from the Doherty Petri Irish Dancing School at the launch of the Black Mountain Shared Space in West Belfast.

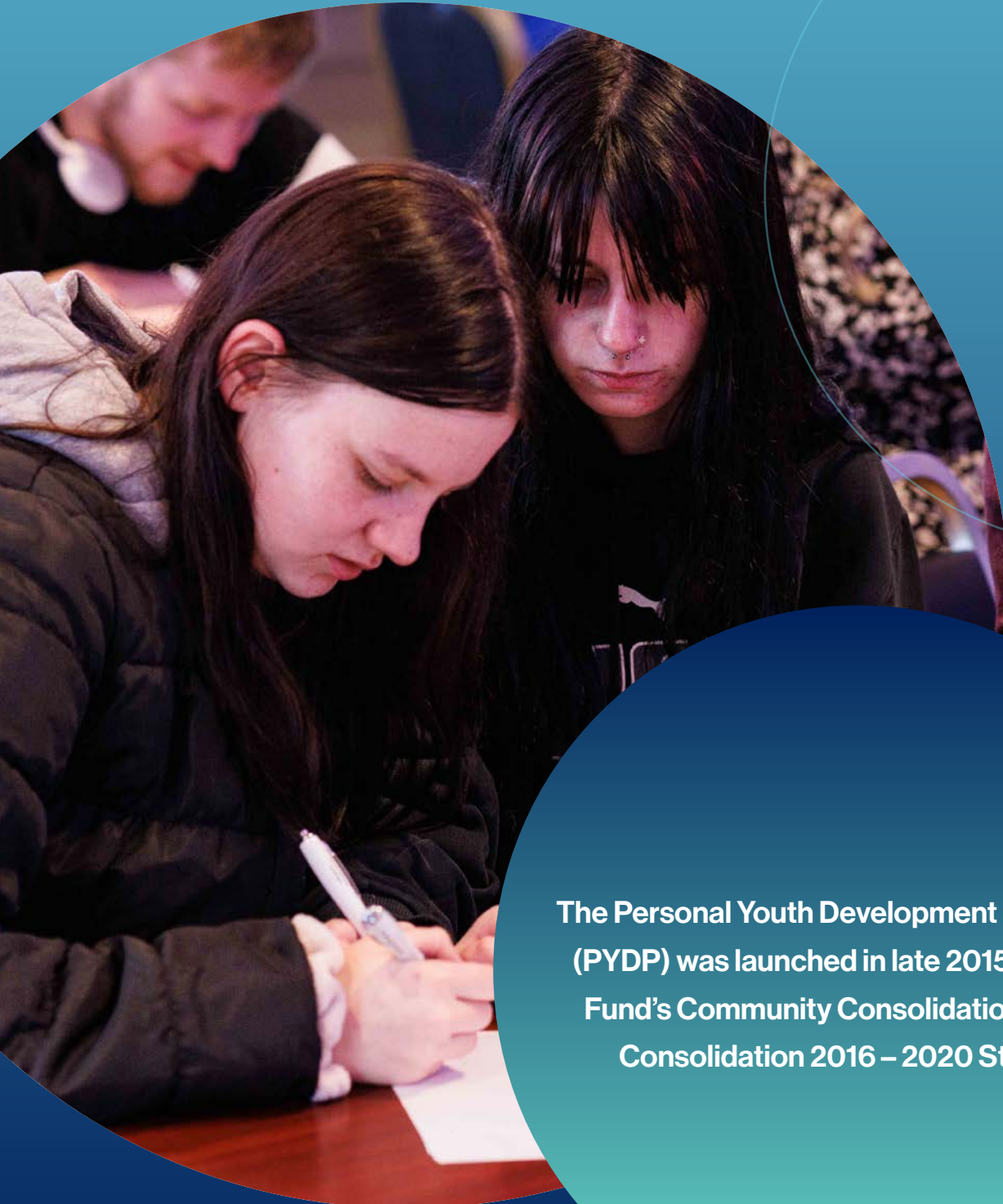
# PBP Financial Assistance

During the financial year the IFI committed financial assistance to the following projects:

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
BELFAST CITY		
<b>Lower Oldpark Community Association &amp; Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum (The Imagine PBP)</b> 9-23 Avoca Street, Belfast Co. Antrim BT14 6EN	The Imagine project works on an inter-community basis to promote positive attitudinal change towards Peace Barrier removal or reduction. It also works to regenerate the area and promote shared space initiatives.	<b>£367,610</b>
<b>TASCIT (Ardoyne, Upper Ardoyne, Twaddell, Woodvale and Lower Shankill Partnership)</b> 123 Cliftonville Road, Belfast Co. Antrim BT14 6JR	The TASCIT PBP works to transform Peace Barriers across the many interfaces in this complex area of Upper North Belfast. It promotes inter-community engagement, regeneration and positive life opportunities for residents.	<b>£569,592</b> <b>Additional Funding</b> <b>£14,609.71</b>
<b>Black Mountain Shared Space (BMSS)</b> 280 Ballygomartin Road, Belfast BT13 3NG	The Black Mountain Shared Space PBP’s vision is the positive regeneration of the Black Mountain area through provision of Shared Space initiatives with Peace Barrier transformation for residents most impacted by the conflict.	<b>£509,719</b>
<b>Duncairn Community Partnership</b> 290 Antrim Road, Belfast Co. Antrim BT15 5AA	Duncairn Community Partnership promotes inter-community engagement between residents across a notorious interface and builds community confidence towards agreement for Peace Barrier removal or reduction.	<b>£395,588</b> <b>Additional Funding</b> <b>£1,472.66</b>
<b>Greater Whitewell Community Surgery</b> 878 Shore Road, Newtownabbey Co. Antrim BT36 7DQ	Greater Whitewell Community Surgery focuses on strengthening inter-community relationships while working to develop the attitudinal change needed to enable Peace Barrier removal or reduction.	<b>£327,769</b>
DERRY CITY AND STRABANE		
<b>Bogside and Brandywell Initiative - BBI) Triax Neighbourhood Partnership Board</b> 128 Lecky Road, Derry/Londonderry Co. Derry BT48 6NP	The BBI PBP delivers a broad range of intra- and inter-community engagement programmes for adults and young people across their interface area. This promotes understanding and breaking down negative perceptions of the ‘other’ and has enabled positive change to some Peace Barriers with ongoing consultations to reduce/ remove others.	<b>£235,403</b> <b>Additional Funding</b> <b>£7,413.17</b>



# Personal Youth Development Programme



The Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) was launched in late 2015 within the Fund's Community Consolidation – Peace Consolidation 2016 – 2020 Strategy.



ABOVE: Young People involved with PYDP can gain accreditations through the programme.

The programme aims to help at risk young people build and develop life skills that foster good relations, build confidence and resilience and make them more employable. The programme is unique in the way it engages and sustains contact with participants.

Each PYDP project builds enduring relationships with young people and establishes highly personalised development plans tailored to the needs of the individual. The tiered nature of the programme and continued contact with project coordinators – even after completion of initial level – means participants can progress or reconnect with the programme at different levels as circumstances change. In this sense,



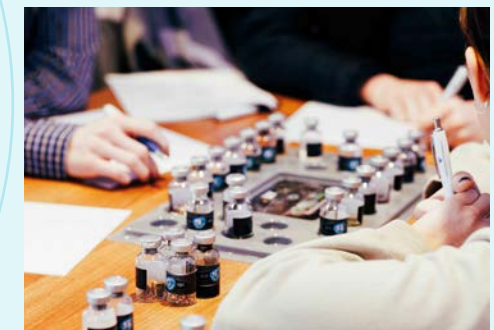
ABOVE: Each PYDP project delivers a strand of activity where participants give back to their community.

the programme adapts and adjusts to the needs of the individual providing personal guidance and encouragement as they develop. The PYDP seeks to connect young people aged 16-25 to personalised learning, skills and employment opportunities with a central focus on good relations and preparing young people for the world of work. It is interested in engaging young people that are vulnerable to polarisation/recruitment to organisations opposed to the Peace Process and face barriers to participation in mainstream provision.

The Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) enables each participant to take control of their own personal development through a multitiered approach that offers significant individualised support with community, social and economic elements.



ABOVE: A project re-images a wall with their own positive graffiti in Derry.



ABOVE: PYDP participants in a workshop.



# PYDP Projects

During this financial year the IFI has committed financial assistance to the following projects:



**Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon**

- 1. Drumgor Detached Youth Work Project, Lurgan

**Belfast City**

- 2. Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum - YOLO (Youth Opportunities Learning Outcomes), Belfast
- 3. EastSide Greenways, Belfast
- 4. RCity Youth, Belfast
- 5. BYTES Project, Glengormley
- 6. Belfast Unemployment Resource Centre, Belfast
- 7. Phoenix Education Centre, Belfast

**Causeway Coast and Glens**

- 8. Roe Valley Residents Association – Building Brighter Futures, Limavady

**Derry City and Strabane**

- 9. Derg Valley Care Limited, Castlederg

**Fermanagh and Omagh**

- 10. Fermanagh Sports & Cultural Awareness Association, Ballinamallard

**Mid Ulster**

- 11. Galbally Youth & Community Association, Galbally
- 12. Maghera Cross Community Link – Link Youth Achievement Project, Maghera

**Ardee Mid Louth**

- 13. Ardee Mid Louth Consortium, Ardee

**Donegal**

- 14. Inishowen Development Partnership, Inishowen
- 15. Lifford Clonleigh Resource Centre, Lifford
- 16. Milford and District CLG, Milford

**Moneymore, Drogheda**

- 17. Connect Family Resource Centre, Drogheda

**Sligo**

- 18. Foróige Sligo, Sligo

Launched in November 2015, the Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) is designed to help young people build and develop life skills that foster good relations, build confidence and resilience and make them more employable. In the last reporting year:



young people have secured employment



young people participated in the programme



young people have secured apprenticeships



young people completed good relations training



young people received employment-related training



young people progressed to education and training



projects were funded by the programme

- 25 projects in NI
- 13 projects in southern border counties



accreditations were achieved

**Our Aim**

Helping at risk young people build and develop life skills that foster good relations, build confidence and resilience and make them more employable.



## Causeway Rural & Urban Network (CRUN)



ABOVE: CRUN Project Co-Ordinator Helen Christie pictured with a pupil at Millstrand Integrated Primary School for the presentation of 'Buddy Benches'.

Since October 2018, Causeway Rural & Urban Network's (CRUN) Building Resilience and Knowledge in Education (BRAKE) has been transforming the lives of young people who join the programme through a self-referral process.

For CRUN's Project Co-Ordinator Helen Christie and experienced Youth Support Worker Michael Walker, their job is to transform the lives of the most vulnerable in Coleraine, County Londonderry. They do this by equipping them with skills to overcome daily challenges and giving them the confidence to achieve their potential – a process that breaks benefit dependency and isolation.

Central to transforming young lives in its catchment is support from the International Fund for Ireland's Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP). Having secured over £180,000 of PYDP funding in April 2023, BRAKE's latest work centres on Coleraine's Central, Churchlands, Cross Glebe, Waterside and Ballysally areas. These have been identified as needing additional support given how they ranked inside the top 30% of the most deprived areas within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough – areas where threats, intimidation, and petrol bomb attacks on properties continue to occur.

Paramilitary-related incidents have been well-reported in Coleraine over recent years. In 2020, these totalled twenty – the second highest in Northern Ireland – with a special Paramilitary Crime Task Force being resourced to disrupt the activities of proscribed organisations, and those with links to the groups. CRUN has also been active in tackling this social problem. Helen and Michael have

recruited nineteen at risk young people to BRAKE who were not engaged in employment, education, or training. As the result of them slowly fostering close relationships with these young people by listening and responding to their requests and needs, six of the current cohort are either in full- or part-time employment, four in education including one at Queen's University studying Applied Maths, and two on work placement.

"We recognised there was a shortfall in youth provision in the Coleraine area. The problems we identified in the past, where we felt we could make a difference, were around sectarianism and the problems that stem from that, such as sectarian fighting around the old bridge area in Coleraine," explains Michael.

"The good thing about the IFI funding is you get to work with a small group of young people for a two-year period which allows you to build up a strong rapport with them and get them to a good place in terms of education and employment. I have been involved in this area of work for the last sixteen years and the IFI's PYDP is probably the best programme I've been involved in as far as rewards for young people go."

There is no one size fits all approach given the varied and complex needs of each young person, and the different challenges they battle with every day such as a lack of confidence, high stress and anxiety levels, self-harm and drink and drug addiction issues. The routine and structure BRAKE can guarantee them allows them to gradually gain confidence and come out of their shells.



ABOVE: CRUN participants and project team meeting Millstrand Integrated Primary School Pupils.



ABOVE: CRUN participants receive a guided tour of the Coleraine NRC campus.





ABOVE: A number of 'Buddy Benches' were made – and donated – by CRUN for Millstrand Integrated Primary School.

Michael says; "It takes a while for the young people to trust you. Many have had negative schooling and tend to be cautious of statutory service providers because a lot of them have been through the system in relation to mental health and education and have been let down. By getting the opportunity to work with them over a really intensive two-year period, for three days a week, we really get to know these people inside out."

Helen and Michael work closely with each young person over a two-year period to tailor a programme that best suits their needs. The project delivers a range of activities, workshops and training in year one around personal development and Good Relations, this is then followed with more specific training for each young person in year two.

As participants learn and develop new skills, they also give back to their community. In partnership with the local Men's Shed, the latest cohort designed, constructed, and donated a 'Buddy Bench' and outdoor mud kitchen for one integrated primary school. They even got the chance to meet pupils

“By getting the opportunity to work with them over a really intensive two-year period, for three days a week, we really get to know these people inside out.”

and discuss the importance of looking out for one another and why inclusivity can reduce isolation. Helen adds; "A number of our young people are either in supported accommodation for mental health reasons or are in homeless hostels as they may be estranged from their parents or care givers, so these are the kind of life skills they would miss out on. We want to give these young people goals



ABOVE: Project Co-Ordinator Helen Christie and experienced Youth Support Worker Michael Walker.

and aspirations and even though they are in their twenties, it is our job to remind them that it is not too late to learn new things. By doing this they are given a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging – for young people who have been isolated and don't have a peer friendship group, they feel they belong here and that gives them a sense of hope.

"We can respond to the needs of the young people. When we had a group of car enthusiasts who wanted to do car valeting, Michael contacted OCN (Open College Network Northern Ireland) and developed a new OCN qualification. We then got in touch with a local car detailing business in Kilrea and the boys all walked away with two OCN qualifications in car valeting. One of them used their new qualifications to go on and start up their very own car detailing business.



ABOVE: Getting hands on during an Open Day visit to the NRC in Coleraine.



ABOVE: Pupils from Millstrand Integrated School using their new benches, which were built by CRUN participants.

"When you see a young person, who is 22 or 23, and we give them their own leather-bound portfolios with their name on it, and you see them putting that first qualification into it, there is a real sense of achievement. We could put that certificate into the portfolio, but for them it is massive because it is a reinforcement after having been told, 'You won't amount to anything', 'You can't do that', 'You aren't capable of doing this', or 'It is too late, you've missed your chance', they all have proved their doubters wrong."



ABOVE: CRUN group pictured outside Northern Regional College's new Coleraine campus.



# Greater Shankill Partnership 'Wall2Wall' Project



**The Greater Shankill Partnership (GSP) works in a part of Belfast which according to research is one of the most economically and socially disadvantaged parts of the city. What is more, over half (52%) of the children living there currently experience poverty.**



ABOVE: Wall2Wall's Peace Panda makes new friends during a family fun day it organised.

It is a similar picture on the opposing side of the very first Peace Wall in Cupar Way, first erected back in 1969 in response to The Troubles. Studies here also show a direct link between unemployment, sectarianism, and mental health issues.

In response to this, GSP joined forces with Springboard Opportunities Limited to launch a 15-month 'Wall2Wall' initiative. Backed by the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) to the tune of £123,000, the work has transformed the lives of 16 young people aged 16 to 20 who live on either side of the Cupar Way Peace Wall in the Clonard and Shankill areas respectively.

Those who registered for the project, according to Springboard's Executive Director Steph O'Rourke, faced multiple barriers in their lives including low educational attainment, were affected by inter and intra conflict, involved in risk-taking behaviours and held prejudicial views.

Young people were either referred to Wall2Wall, recommended by a friend, or approached by the programme directly. Project leaders and participants met three times a week for a year and prepared for a seven-day trip to the Mediterranean island of Cyprus at the start of September. There, the group had the chance to exchange experiences with their peers of living in a divided society in the shadow of Peace Walls.



ABOVE: Getting creative as part of Wall2Wall's photo exhibition that was shown in Belfast City Centre.

From the outset of the project, intensive confidence-building workshops allowed identity, cultural heritage and myth busting to be unpacked to help everyone gain a much clearer, more enriched understanding of the Unionist and Nationalist cultures. Community relationships to the Peace Wall and symbolism were also placed under the microscope to challenge existing perceptions and fears, before good relations workshops were introduced that focussed on prejudice, sectarianism, and diversity. Fundamental to Wall2Wall's success, says Steph, was Good Relations and the wide-ranging strands it incorporated.



ABOVE: Face painting and a bouncy castle were just some of the activities organised for a cross-community family fun day.



“We worked under numerous pillars, including Personal Social Development, Citizenship and Educational Development but, for me, Good Relations was crucial. Workshops included tackling prejudices, exploring cultural identity, talks with those directly involved or affected by The Troubles, and study visits to Derry-Londonderry and Dublin all formed the Good Relations element. And just as the project suggests, we collectively explored the Peace Walls in order to understand the impact of growing up in its midst for the young people involved. We wanted the young people to have the opportunity to explore what it means to them and have their say on what they believe the future should look like for them.”

Steph continues; “Leadership emerged as a strong element in the project with participants completing a qualification in Uniting Communities Through Leadership and delivering peacebuilding workshops to their peers in Cyprus. Participants drew on comparisons from other divided societies and developed a greater understanding on how to

It has been a real bridge for the two communities and an opportunity for young people to become potential agents of change.

positively influence or shape their local communities. The stories participants share is also helping to reshape previously held views and beliefs within their own families, with the message of peace and reconciliation front and centre at the group’s youth-led Family Fun Day that was attended by 100 people from the catholic Clonard area and 100 people from the protestant Shankill neighbourhood. Made possible by the work undertaken in workshops, it was organised by the recent cohort and tangible proof of how they can promote positive, lasting change in their own community.



ABOVE: Wall2Wall participants who travelled to Cyprus to learn more about conflict and division.



ABOVE: Animal petting proved popular at Wall2Wall’s family fun day event in Belfast.

The programme drew in participant’s parents, families, and community members. Families have said the programme has helped change their perceptions about the other side, so it is a two-fold process.

“The fact that young people who were involved in riots at this interface are now mixing with others



ABOVE: The final touches are put to the photographic exhibition.

from different backgrounds and understanding why there is more that unites them than divides them, is brilliant. It has been a real bridge for the two communities and an opportunity for young people to become potential agents of change.”

The hope is that the conversations Wall2Wall members have had with their peers during the overseas study visit to Cyprus – a country that has experienced conflict and witnessed reunification talks aimed at removing barriers fail – can cement this subconscious process of changing people’s mindsets and building a better, more inclusive future. Through the programme, young people will be prepared and empowered to address the challenges and shape the consequences of barrier removal.

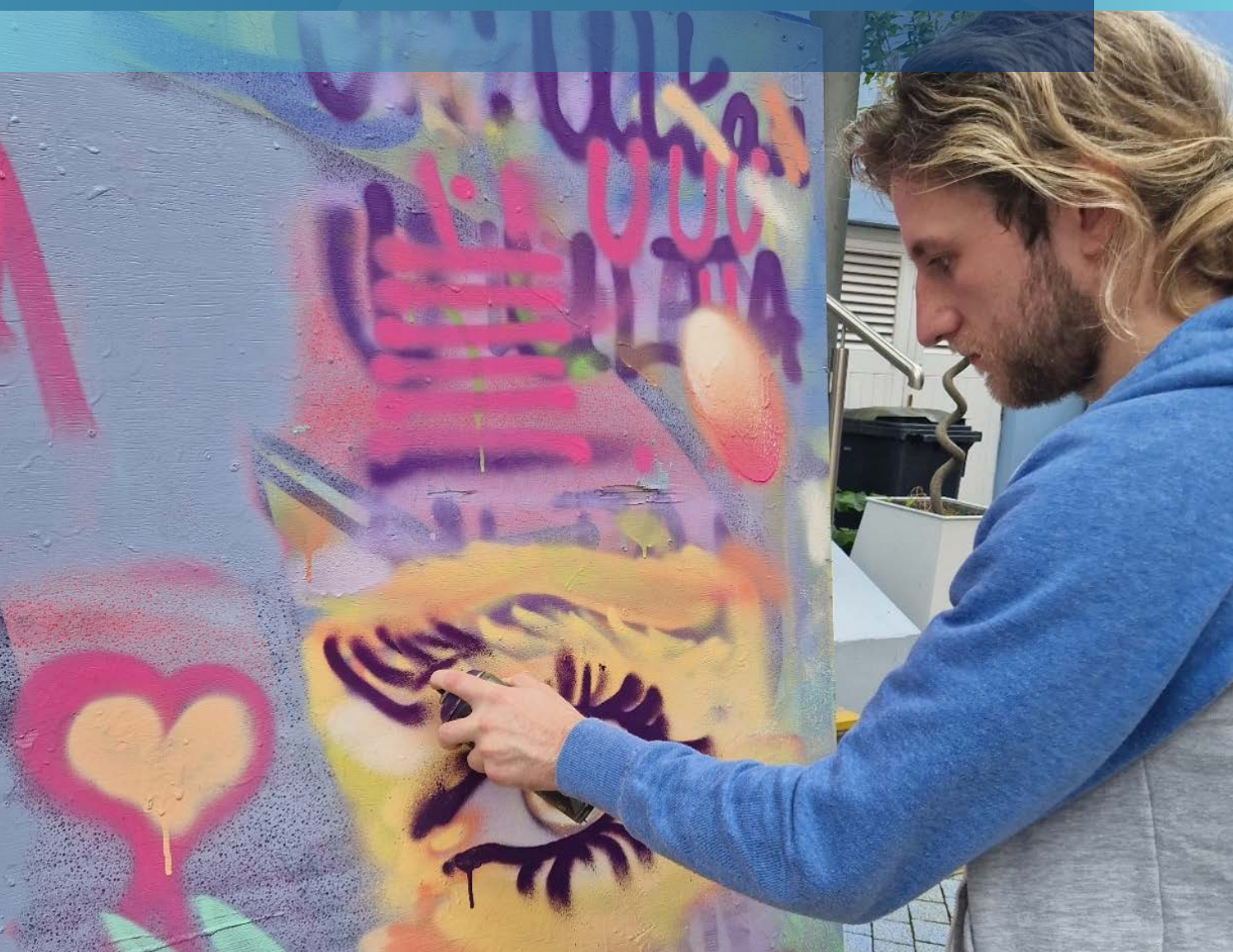
On the need for PYDP and the role it plays in transforming lives and communities for the better, Steph adds: “The PYDP model engages with the most marginalised in our society – it reaches those on the fringes of our communities who tend not to be involved in support services, peacebuilding, or good relations work. Without Wall2Wall and the support of PYDP funding many of these young people would not have the opportunity to take part in conversations and bridge these relationships. Research carried out by IFI in 2019 around the Peace Walls showed 75% of people wanted the walls down but not in their life time, this programme has empowered young people to have a voice as well as acted as a safe space for them to develop personally and socially.”



ABOVE: People from both sides of the community attended Wall2Wall’s family fun event.



## Mulroy Youth Engagement Programme (M.Y.E. Future)



ABOVE: Creativity on display at an arts graffiti workshop.

Based in Milford, County Donegal, the Mulroy Youth Engagement Programme (M.Y.E. Future) works with young people in smaller – and often harder to reach – rural communities. Covering a fifteen-and-a-half mile (25Km) radius, it stretches to the northern most point of the island at the Fanad peninsula, incorporating the picturesque towns and villages of Rathmullan and Carrigart, Downings, Ards, Termon and Kerrykeel.



ABOVE: Pictured are MYE Future participants on a walking tour of Derry's murals.

The M.Y.E. Future Project is relatively new having only been formed in 2022 by Declan Meehan – the manager at Milford and District Resource Centre. Declan's been contributing to good community relations in the area since 2019, but his commitment to developmental youth work goes by much further.

With support from the International Fund for Ireland's Personal Youth Development Programme the long wait for all-important developmental youth work supports in the North Donegal area has ended. The development work is led by Project Co-ordinator Marie Tonra with this proving so transformative since it was set-up, that the IFI is backing the project for a further two years until 2026.

Both Declan and Marie feel there is a "clear need" for PYDP, as evidenced by the uptake of, and referrals into the programme due to the common issues

faced by young people and young adults, particularly young people living in isolated, peripheral and remote communities. The issues in the area still mirror many of the challenges seen in urban communities, high rates of early school leaving, the impact of drugs and alcohol on the community, mistrust of statutory agencies, poor mental health, the prevalence of poverty, adverse personal experiences, all present challenges and barriers that young people must deal with day to day.

"Early intervention can prevent further negative outcomes and set young people on a path towards success," says Marie, a qualified Life Coach. "Through targeted interventions and support services, we mitigate risk factors associated with these challenges. Our youth development programme empowers young people to overcome obstacles and helps build resilience. Through mentorship, education, skill-building activities, and life coaching, we equip them with the tools they need to navigate challenges and achieve their goals. Investing in youth development benefits the



entire community by addressing root causes of societal challenges and promoting overall well-being and prosperity. Ultimately, our goal is to help young people realise their full potential and become active, productive members of society. By investing in their development and providing growth opportunities we contribute to building a brighter and more inclusive future for all," she continues.

"The Personal Youth Development approach is at the core of the M.Y.E project because it helps to create a foundation of personal development, ensuring that every young person is given the tools, the time, and the support they need to build a future that they can all be proud of."

So far, the M.Y.E Future Project has reached – and benefited – a total of 21 at-risk young people, with each participant supported through a combination of group work and one-to-one personal development classes. Through her extensive experience of assisting those young people impacted by homelessness, coming into contact with the probation service, or having been referred to rehabilitation services, Marie has worked closely with each participant to create individual training plans. To date, over 650 PYDP sessions have taken place, with life coaching, mentorship, and accredited training at the heart of these.

In fact, with M.Y.E starting from a blank canvas, Marie used the opportunity to devise all-new elements that consist of 'Navigate Your Plan', 'Career Ready' and 'Growing In Confidence' – and



*The Personal Youth Development approach is at the core of the M.Y.E project because it helps to create a foundation of personal development.*



the results speak for themselves. 12 participants have progressed to further education, nine have completed work experience, and the remaining 10 have applied their skills to secure either full- or part-time positions.

Moving forward, the project will help a new intake of 18 people aged 18-25 and, once again, all will learn more about Good Relations and its significance through activities, training and also events. In the past, this has incorporated educational field visits to communities across the border into neighbouring communities in Derry-Londonderry and to Northern Ireland's capital, Belfast. The achievements of M.Y.E have not gone unnoticed locally, either; at the end of 2022, the Reformed Presbyterian Church donated their Community Hall to Milford and District Resource Centre meaning the facility will become something of a hub now for the PYDP-backed initiative.



ABOVE: Learning new skills by getting hands-on.



ABOVE: Participants of two IFI funded projects – MYE Future and WAY Bundoran – on a tour of The Falls Road in Belfast.



ABOVE: A design created by a MYE Future participant during an arts workshop.

This Good Relations work also focuses on the political history of north Donegal, and the opportunity to learn about the importance of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, by speaking with former prisoners, as part of a visit to the Loyalist Shankill Road and the Nationalist Falls Road and guided tours of the community areas. M.Y.E Future has also raised awareness of racism, discrimination and hate speech, and paved the way for the group to engage with their peers and other projects. The young people have learned about community transformation planned for the area, through the Rathmullan Community and Heritage Regeneration plans, and the Milford Town and Village Renewal plans. M.Y.E. Future participants have also given back to the community by volunteering at charity shops, supporting coastal clean ups, and lending a hand when it comes to planning and organising



ABOVE: Karl Porter of UV Arts facilitates a graffiti workshop at his studio in Derry.

events. Workshops with UV Art's Karl Porter – someone who is better known for his Derry Girls artwork in Derry City – to design a mural for Milford has been another highlight.

"The impact of the project on the young people I've worked with has been profound, as evidenced by the noticeable transformation from their initial visits to me to where they are 12 months later," says Marie. "This progress is neither linear nor immediate, but the PYDP approach is built on the understanding that real change takes time. By offering consistency and meeting young people where they are, this method enables me to foster growth – on their terms – rather than imposing my expectations. Some progress quickly – depending on their age and clarity about their goals – while others need more time. Many young people initially struggle with low confidence and mistrust of organisations, often finding it difficult to even engage in conversation. However, as trust is gradually built through rapport, I witness remarkable shifts. They begin the programme



ABOVE: Setting up for an interview with Poca Productions.



feeling lost and uncertain, yet many leave with a clearer sense of identity and direction. The progress in terms of education and employment has been particularly significant, with numerous participants carving out career paths for themselves. Perhaps most notably, I have seen a positive shift in their attitude, both towards others and, most importantly, towards themselves.

“The Personal Youth Development Programme is crucial to the success of our project because it recognises that meaningful, lasting change takes time. Many of the young people I work with come from challenging backgrounds and have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences which can affect their ability to engage in education, training, or employment. One of the first things we address together is, “What’s holding me back?”, “Who do I want to become?”, “What do I want to

achieve?”. We understand this journey won’t be a straight line – there will be both successes and setbacks. The PYDP approach gives us the time and flexibility to be compassionate, meeting each young person where they are, without imposing unrealistic expectations of progress.

“While we challenge the young people we work with, we also validate their experiences and show understanding. PYDP allows us to invest not just in hard skills, like certifications and courses, but also in essential soft skills such as confidence, resilience, and personal growth. The programme emphasises seeing the young person as a whole, with the goal not just of getting them into employment or education but ensuring that these opportunities are meaningful and sustainable for them. We want them to take pride in their choices and feel empowered,” adds Marie.



ABOVE: Youth Coordinator Marie participating in a UV arts graffiti workshop.

# PYDP Financial Assistance

During the financial year the IFI committed financial assistance to the following projects:

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON		
<b>Drumgor Detached Youth Work Project</b> Unit 1A, Mount Zion House, Edward Street, Lurgan Co. Armagh BT66 6DB	The project will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development. It will work with fifteen young people.	<b>£217,976</b>
BELFAST CITY		
<b>Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum - YOLO (Youth Opportunities Learning Outcomes)</b> 185 Cliftonpark Avenue, Belfast Co. Antrim BT14 6DT	The project will work with 20 hard-to-reach young people and will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development; Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development.	<b>£217,127</b>
<b>EastSide Greenways</b> 278 - 280 Newtownards Road Belfast Co. Antrim BT4 1HE	The project will deliver, Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development, Education and Employability Development and Community Champions to 15 young people who are not currently involved in full time education, training or employment.	<b>£185,377</b> <b>Additional Funding £5,640</b>
<b>R City Youth</b> Spectrum Centre, Shankill Road, Belfast BT13 3AA	The project will target 16 to 21 year olds. The project will re-educate young people who have minimal qualifications, negative experiences within the education system and limited life skills to improve their future employability options.	<b>£179,194</b>
<b>BYTES Project</b> 300-302 Antrim Road, Glengormley Co. Antrim BT36 5EG	The project will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development. Plan to recruit 16 at risk young people who are currently not in education, employment or training and who are vulnerable to polarisation across PUL areas in North Belfast.	<b>£245,369</b>
<b>Belfast Unemployment Resource Centre</b> 4-6 Donegall Street, Belfast BT712FN	The project will recruit 15 young people on a cross-community basis to focus on skills training and development in the Advance manufacturing sector.	<b>£143,230</b>
<b>Phoenix Education Centre</b> 7 Shimna Close, Belfast BT6 0DZ	The project will work with 15 hard to reach, disengaged young people on a single identity basis from the PUL community who are not in any form of employment, education or training and have left school with no qualifications. It will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development.	<b>£210,167</b>



Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS		
<b>Roe Valley Residents Association – Building Brighter Futures</b> 13-14 Keady Way, Limavady Co. Derry BT49 0AU	Project will work with 15 hard-to-reach young people who are faced with a range of barriers, issues and challenges in their lives. It will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development; Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development.	<b>£223,597</b>
DERRY CITY AND STRABANE		
<b>Derg Valley Care Limited</b> 5-7 Parkview Road, Castlederg Co. Tyrone BT81 7BN	This project will provide opportunities for fifteen at risk young people within Castlederg and surrounding rural areas a flexible, personalised programme of training and support. Activities will include good relations training, accredited training, employability skills, personal and social development.	<b>£226,733</b>
FERMANAGH AND OMAGH		
<b>Fermanagh Sports &amp; Cultural Awareness Association</b> Unit 9, Ballinamallard Enterprise Centre, Enniskillen Road Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh BT94 2BD	The project will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development; Skills and Social Development; and Education and Employability Development to 15 young people over 21 months.	<b>Additional Funding £3,188</b>
MID ULSTER		
<b>Galbally Youth &amp; Community Association</b> 36 Lurgylea Road, Galbally Co. Tyrone BT70 2NX	The project will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development; Skills and Social Development; Education and Employability Development and Advanced Personal Development, Training and Employability Support to 15 young people over 21 months.	<b>Additional Funding £3,028</b>
<b>Maghera Cross Community Link – Link Youth Achievement Project</b> 49 St Lurach Road, Maghera Co. Londonderry BT46 5EJ	Project will work with 20 young people. It will deliver Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development.	<b>£182,834</b>

Lead Partner Name/Address	Project Description	Financial Commitment
ARDEE MID LOUTH		
<b>Ardee Mid Louth Consortium</b> Dee Hub, Market Street Ardee, Co. Louth A92 Y590	The project will upskill and train up to 10 current PYDP participants and other disadvantaged young people to take up employment opportunities in emerging climate technologies industries.	<b>€129,236</b>
DONEGAL		
<b>Inishowen Development Partnership</b> St Mary's Road, Buncrana, Inishowen Co. Donegal F93 PW61	The project will deliver a flexible support programme to meet the specific needs and challenges of 18 young people taking part who will each benefit from training and support in good relations, personal and social development and employability skills.	<b>€159,804</b>
<b>Lifford Clonleigh Resource Centre</b> Lifford, Co. Donegal F93 WR22	This two year project will engage and work with 70 young people from communities in East Donegal and West Tyrone supporting them to Develop Community Leadership skills.	<b>€171,014</b>
<b>Milford and District CLG</b> Market Square, Milford Co. Donegal F92 P8YD	The project will engage with 18 young people on a cross-community basis to deliver on Good Relations and Personal Development, Skills and Social Development and Education and Employability Development.	<b>€167,288</b>
MONEYMORE, DROGHEDA		
<b>Connect Family Resource Centre</b> 171 Moneymore, Drogheda Co. Louth A92WE19	This project supports 16 vulnerable young people to attain educational qualifications and employment. Using a cooperative approach to ensure the most at risk young people are supported.	<b>€221,247</b>
SLIGO		
<b>Foróige Sligo</b> Foróige Youth Crib Rockwood Parade Co. Sligo F91YC80	The project supports 16 young people who are unemployed and not engaged in training or education. The programme aims to break the negative pathway which may lead them to criminality and paramilitarism.	<b>Additional Funding €4,500</b>



# AMBIT



**AMBIT (American Management and Business Internship Training) is an annual outreach and capacity building programme that has been funded by the IFI for over 20 years and is facilitated by the US Consulate in Belfast and managed by the Washington Ireland Program (WIP).**



ABOVE: AMBIT 2024 cohort.

Successful applicants from professional and community sector backgrounds travel to America and visit organisations and key stakeholders to engage on a variety of issues that can then be implemented within their own work environment.

Individuals from across the island of Ireland can apply to be considered for AMBIT and following a shortlisting process are selected to participate. More than 200 people have completed the AMBIT programme to date, each bringing their own unique experience from working with at risk young people in marginalised communities that continue to live with many challenges including the legacy of The Troubles.

AMBIT has been successful in forming partnerships and encourages collaboration to support individual development, as well as to create awareness of the IFI's work at local and international level.

Each year, it explores a series of themes and participants engage with non-profit organisations, government departments and Congressional Representatives to



ABOVE: AMBIT participant Lorraine Thompson pictured at the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute in Boston.

experience first-hand how particular challenges affect communities in some of the most deprived inner-city areas in the US. Themes studied to date have covered youth unemployment, community development, intergenerational trauma, mental health and promoting democratic renewal.

The AMBIT 2024 trip aimed to promote the positive development of communities dealing with division by examining four themes: managing multiple identities in a shared space, social regeneration, entrepreneurship, and inclusive innovation.

In March, the group visited Boston and Washington DC over a 12-day period. Over the course of the study visit the group experienced workshops and community group led presentations to more formal organised events that offered opportunities to engage with key government representatives and officials. Key highlights this year included a reception at the Irish Consulate in Boston, where an AMBIT participant chaired a session with Joseph Kennedy III, the Special Envoy to Northern Ireland for Economic Affairs.

On the Washington leg of the trip, the group met with the US Department of State, Northern Ireland Bureau, and



The UK embassy and Ireland's Deputy Ambassador Orla Keane. They also visited non-profit organisations working on issues of multiple identities in a shared space, trauma, youth unemployment, and democratic renewal in the local community.

Stephanie Pollock is a restorative practitioner from the Greater Shankill area of Belfast, one of the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. She works with young people who are facing barriers to education and employment opportunities. This year's AMBIT theme immediately stood out as something she wanted to be involved in.

"AMBIT offered me the opportunity to look at more innovative ways to work with young people in my community and get exposure to different models being used globally. I wanted to look at how restorative justice approaches are utilised in other environments that I could adapt in my own practice in Belfast.

"I was able to network, connect and share experiences with people from other pockets of Northern Ireland and look at ways to support each other more. On our trip ROCA was an organisation that stood out to me as they address issues like poverty and racism which in turn disrupts young people being incarcerated. They tackle educational underachievement and have a parenting programme that I could relate to my day-to-day work in Belfast."

The trip empowered Stephanie and gave her more confidence in her role and be proud of how far Northern Ireland has come, since The Troubles.

"AMBIT gave me the confidence to address political and statutory representatives in a way that wouldn't have been possible in Northern Ireland. Since returning from the US, I have made lasting connections with various organisations who have helped to inform my practice and develop new innovative ways to how I work."



ABOVE: AMBIT 2024 group pictured in Washington.



ABOVE: AMBIT 2024 pictured during engagement on their trip.

Alongside offering valuable connections in the United States, AMBIT enhances cross-border relationships and knowledge sharing for participants with many benefiting equally from discussions affecting peacebuilding locally.

Lorraine Thompson is the CEO of Donegal Youth Service which provides a range of services across County Donegal. She has been working with young people for 27 years on a cross-border basis in the specialisms of peace and reconciliation. For Lorraine, AMBIT was a fantastic experience, and she would highly recommend to others.

"AMBIT offers an immersive experience in providing opportunities for learning, sharing, and reflecting on leadership in



ABOVE: In discussions with Carmel Martin, Special Secretary leading Governor Wes Moore's Office for Children in Maryland.



ABOVE: Participants discussing shared issues during the trip.

communities with conflict. The participants in the group played a key role in this, just as much as the organisations and individuals we met in America. The trip itself was amazing and gave us access and insight into NGO's, government organisations, universities and politicians and their individual approaches to practice, policies, shared issues, and challenges.

Describing the programme as a once in a lifetime experience, Lorraine says there were so many highlights and learnings for everyone involved.

"The two weeks were really jam packed but ultimately meeting other groups and AMBIT participants was powerful because we could reflect on our own organisations, challenge our own thinking and broaden our horizons. This enabled the group to have many discussions about NI and the border counties as a post conflict society, as well the challenges of working through the legacy of the conflict."

The AMBIT Programme will continue to provide a positive platform for participants each year. It is a testament to how sharing and engaging with policy makers and funding bodies at a local and international level, can be instrumental in transforming local communities on their peacebuilding journey.



# BCC Captial Build Funding



**Black Mountain Shared Space (BMSS)** is funded through the Peace Barriers Programme and it has made progress building trust with residents in the Upper Springfield, Highfield, and Upper Springmartin areas of the city.



ABOVE: The Reception area in the new shared space.



ABOVE: People of all ages are now using the building.

Whilst division remains partially due to the Million Brick Peace Barrier, one of the longest Peace Walls in Belfast, the project team are passionate about creating a truly shared future for everyone in the local community.

The dream of creating this physical shared space has come to fruition with the redevelopment and regeneration of the former Finlay's Factory site in west Belfast.

In partnership with Belfast City Council (BCC), BMSS received funding through Priority 1: Promoting Peace and Reconciliation, of the EU Peace IV Programme, to develop the site, with the objective of creating a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.

BCC, as lead partner in the project, was awarded €6.3m of PEACE IV funding and the new building was officially launched in September 2024.

There were further plans for Community Office Space/Social Enterprise Units in order to create an income stream that would contribute to making the new facility self-sustainable. However, this

element fell outside the scope of the approved funding.

In December 2019 following engagement with BMSSP, the IFI agreed that the redevelopment of the Finlay's site into a sustainable shared space was of critical importance to this area and also crucial to the future removal of interface barriers across the participating areas.

The IFI made available £500k towards the funding for the Community Enterprise Units known as Black Mountain Shared Space Finlay Site Phase 2. This contribution enabled collaborative and positive discussions to proceed with other funders in October 2019. The remaining funding for the project was subsequently secured from the Department for Communities (DfC) and Department of Justice (DoJ). As a result of this joint agreement BCC was able to give approval for the project to proceed in March 2022.

Due to significant construction inflation the IFI, DfC and DoJ provided additional funding in March 2024, of which IFI's contribution was £147k.

These units will be an integral part of the project and will accommodate organisations with similar objectives



to BMSSP which have the capacity to provide additional good relations activities and environmental benefits on site.

BMSS has worked over many years, bringing together both communities in a range of activities both on a single identity and shared identity basis. The success in attracting funding for the main shared space project reflects this work and the importance of making this a shared site.

Black Mountain Shared Space Finlay Site Phase 1 was officially opened by Belfast Lord Mayor, Councillor Micky Murray on 18 September 2024, and the Community Enterprise Units known as Black Mountain Shared Space Finlay Site Phase 2 official sod cutting took place on 15 October 2024.

BELOW: An aerial view of the site.



# Board Members' Report

The Board Members present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2024.

## Authority

The Agreement between the Governments of Ireland and of the United Kingdom to establish the International Fund for Ireland ("IFI") was signed on 18 September 1986. Notifications of acceptance were exchanged on 1 December 1986 and orders giving effect to the Agreement in the domestic law of the United Kingdom and of Ireland became operational on 12 December 1986.

## Article 3

Article 3 of the Agreement to establish IFI provides that approximately three-quarters of the resources of IFI should be spent in Northern Ireland and one quarter should be spent in the Republic of Ireland.

## Principal Activities and Review of Business

IFI continues to structure its business operations to address the principal objectives set out in its founding Agreement:

*"to promote economic and social advance and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland"*

In the opinion of the Board Members, the state of affairs of IFI at 30 September 2024 is satisfactory.

## Results

The deficit for the financial year is (£2,408k) / (€2,896k) [2023: deficit (£3,264k) / (€3,761k)].

## Events occurring after the year end

There have been no significant events since the year end which affect the financial statements.

## Political donations

IFI made no political donations during the year [2023: £/€ nil].

## Policy on Disabled Employees

IFI aims to ensure that disablement is not a bar to recruitment or advancement.

## Equality

IFI is committed to effectively fulfilling its statutory duties in respect of equality. IFI considers equality implications in developing its policies and guidance.



Statement of Board Members' Responsibilities in Respect of the Annual Report and the Financial Statements

The Board Members are responsible for preparing the financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of IFI and of the surplus or deficit of IFI for that period. In fulfilling that responsibility, they have decided to prepare the financial statements in accordance with accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council applicable in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

In preparing those financial statements, the Board Members have:

- selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- stated whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that IFI will continue in business.

The Board Members confirm that they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of IFI and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with best practice. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of IFI and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

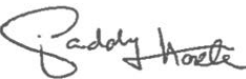
The Board Members are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of IFI's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom and Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as each of the Board Members in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which IFI's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Board Members in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that IFI's auditors are aware of that information.

By order of the Board



Mr. Paddy Harte  
IFI Chair

4 February 2025

Governance Statement

Introduction

This statement is given in respect of the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2024. It outlines the IFI's governance framework for directing and controlling its functions.

The founding Agreement<sup>1</sup> established the IFI as an international organisation of which the Irish and United Kingdom Governments are members.

Under the Agreement:

- The Board of the IFI is the sole principal organ.
- The decisions of the Board shall be taken by a majority.
- The Board shall establish rules of procedure and operating rules.
- A power of the Board may be delegated to one or more of its Members.
- The Members of the Board shall act independently and shall not receive instructions from the two Governments as to the exercise of their powers.

Governance Structure

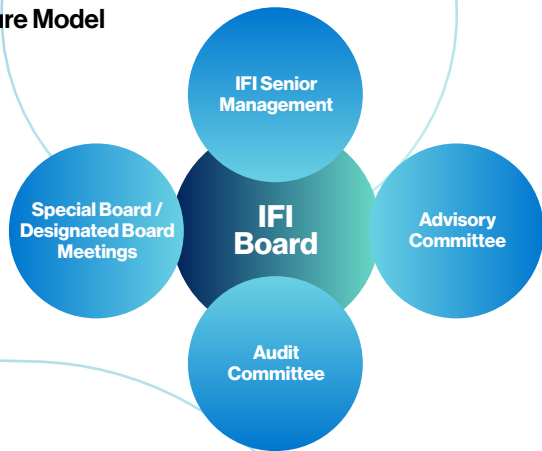
The IFI's governance structure reflects the statutory position of the Board, as set out in the Agreement.

The Board has primacy in determining the strategy, staffing and structure of the IFI and its secretariat and have responsibility for designing and implementing the internal governance arrangements to support the delivery of the IFI's statutory functions. In doing so the Board has due regard to but is not governed by the 'Corporate governance in central government departments: Code of good Practice NI 2013 and 'Code of Practice for Governance of state Bodies' August 2016.

<sup>1</sup> Agreement being Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland concerning the International Fund for Ireland.



Governance Structure Model



The Board

The Board consists of six members and a Chair. In the 2023-2024 reporting year the Board had five members and a Chair. The Board Members and Chair are appointed jointly by the United Kingdom and Irish governments and normally serve a maximum of two terms of three years. Their work is supported by a Secretariat based in offices in Belfast and Dublin. The two governments contribute to the staffing and accommodation costs of the Secretariat.

The Board has responsibility for maintaining effective governance and a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the IFI's policies, aims and objectives, while safeguarding donated funding.

The Board meets formally three times per year, at meetings which are attended by Observers from the donor countries, as well as representatives of the two governments. At these meetings, formal approval is given to applications for assistance.

Board Member	Number of Board Meetings Attended
Paddy Harte (Chair)	3
Avila Kilmurray	3
Peter Osborne	3
Anne Carr	3
Bernie Butler	3
Sadie Ward-McDermott	3

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is composed of representatives of the two governments. The Advisory Committee provides objective and impartial advice to the Board to assist them in the discharge of their functions. The Advisory Committee considered and commented on information formally provided to them three times in the reporting period.

Audit Committee

Three Board Members form the Audit Committee, which has sight of all reports of internal audits that have been carried out, ensures that the risk register is maintained and updated, and approves the annual accounts. During 2023-2024 the Audit Committee met three times.

Member Present	22.01.2024	07.05.2024	16.09.2024
Bernie Butler (Chair)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peter Osborne	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anne Carr	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Chair of the Audit Committee provides an update to the full Board at each meeting. The Chair of the Audit Committee also provides an Annual Statement of Assurance to the Chair of the Board outlining the work of the Audit Committee during the reporting period and an overall opinion on the governance framework and arrangements in place.

The Risk Register is reviewed and endorsed by the Audit Committee and tabled annually at a meeting of the Board.

Designated Board Members

The Board of the IFI has delegated responsibility for the management of its programmes to a designated sub-group of Board Members known as Designated Board Members (DBMs). This responsibility includes making recommendations to the full Board to approve projects for grant assistance, including the conditions attached to such assistance.

Special Board Meetings

Members of the Board meet for Special Board Meetings, in order to formulate strategy and discuss future plans. There were four Special Board meetings during the year.

Senior Management

The Senior Management team comprises two IFI Joint Director Generals (JDGs). The JDGs meet on a regular basis supported by the secretariat. The JDGs support the Board:

- in the development and delivery of the IFI's strategy;
- advising on the prioritisation of activities to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources;
- in managing and monitoring the effectiveness of policies and procedures, review and manage identified risks;
- in ensuring the continuing relevance of IFI's policies and procedures;
- by promoting effective team working across the joint jurisdictional Secretariat to ensure optimum efficiency and effectiveness;
- through reporting the work of the secretariat to the Board and Audit Committee; and
- by considering the implications of recommendations of External Audit and IFI Audit Committee.



The Risk and Control Framework

The Board, with the assistance of the SMT, manage risk in a structured manner through the identification, monitoring, management and review of risks. The IFI focuses on proportionate risk management as an integral part of the way the IFI undertakes its business activities. Risk is managed in a structured way, taking on board the combination of the likelihood of something happening and the impact which arises if it does happen, to assess the inherent risk. The IFI sets out the actions, if any, it needs to take to constrain the risk to an acceptable level in accordance with its risk appetite. The risk that remains, taking on board these actions, is its residual risk. In applying these principles, the Board is accurately assessing the relative significance and prioritisation of each risk.

The Risk Register is a standing item on the agenda of the Audit Committee.

As at the 2023-2024 year end the key risks identified were as follows:

RISK
Failure to develop and deliver quality and timely interventions that tackle segregation and promote reconciliation and integration.
Financial Loss / Fraud and corruption
Insufficient funding to fulfil the objectives of, and implement, the new strategy.
Damage to IFI's reputation, credibility and independence.
Failure to comply fully with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
Disruption to programme delivery

Internal Control System

In addition to the established Framework for Risk Management, the IFI has a robust system of internal control. These controls include maintaining appropriate methodologies, principles and policies for the IFI. The Governance Manual provides detail on a range of control issues, such as operational and financial procedures and delegated authorities.

It includes:

- Procedures and Operating Rules of the Board.
- A Code of Conduct setting out the standards expected of Board Members.
- Arrangements for supporting Board Activities including the Secretariat and Review Groups.
- Fraud Policy including Raising Concerns Policy and Fraud Response Plan.
- Records Management Policy.
- Business Continuity Plans.
- Finance Guidance for Project Management.

Information Assurance

The Governance Manual includes a chapter on Records Management Policy. In May 2018, legislation was introduced in respect of data protection law contained in the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Secretariat engaged a legal firm to undertake a substantive programme of work to ensure compliance. At the May 2018 Audit Committee, a report on the compliance work completed was tabled together with a cover note from the legal advisors providing assurance that 'The steps taken, as outlined in the programme of work, have been taken to assist in achieving full compliance with Data Protection Legislation and to demonstrate a commitment to data privacy, data security and data protection principles'. Since May 2018 GDPR has been a standing agenda item on the Audit Committee and no issues were reported during the current reporting period.

During 2023-2024 the Board commissioned a Security and Data audit review, the findings of which were considered by the Senior Management Team and recommendations made to the Board. The Board agreed the recommendations and action is on-going to implement the recommendations.

The Board has also commissioned a wider GDPR review which will commence in 2024-2025 the findings and commendations of which will be considered and appropriate action taken.

Review of the Effectiveness

As IFI Chair, I have responsibility for the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance is informed by comments made by the External Auditors in their management letter and other reports, the annual on-site independent inspection of projects, the Senior Management Team who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and issues raised by the Audit Committee. I can confirm no significant issues were raised.

Key risks which could affect the achievement of the IFI's objectives are managed actively under the risk management arrangements, with progress reported regularly to the Audit Committee.

Significant Internal Control Weaknesses

Further to considering the Governance framework within the IFI and in conjunction with assurances given by the senior management team, I am content that the IFI has operated a sound system of internal governance during the year ended 30 September 2024.

I can report that there were no significant weaknesses in the IFI's system of internal control in 2023-2024 which affected the achievement of the IFI's key policies, aims and objectives.

Personal Data Incidents

There were no personal data breaches that met the required threshold to be notified to the Information Commissioner's Office during 2023-2024.



# Independent Auditors' Report

## Report on the audit of the financial statements

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the International Fund for Ireland ("IFI") for the year ended 30 September 2024 which comprise: the Income and Expenditure account, the Statement of Other Comprehensive Income, the Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2024, the Cash Flow Statement, and the Notes to the Financial Statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of IFI's affairs as at 30 September 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of IFI in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Boards' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

## Independent auditors' report to the members of International Fund for Ireland (continued)

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on IFI's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Board Members with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The Board Members are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Other required reporting

We conducted our audit in accordance with ISAs (UK & Ireland). An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error.

This includes an assessment of:

- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to IFI's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed;
- the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Board Members; and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements.



Independent auditors' report to the members  
of International Fund for Ireland (continued)

We primarily focus our work in these areas by assessing the Board Members' judgements against available evidence, forming our own judgements, and evaluating the disclosures in the financial statements.

We test and examine information, using sampling and other auditing techniques, to the extent we consider necessary to provide a reasonable basis for us to draw conclusions. We obtain audit evidence through testing the effectiveness of controls, substantive procedures or a combination of both.

In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Responsibilities of Board Members

As explained more fully in the Board Members' report, the Board Members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Board Members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board Members are responsible for assessing IFI's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board Members intend to cease operations or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Independent auditors' report to the members  
of International Fund for Ireland (continued)

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting  
irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud are to assess the risk of material misstatement due to fraud, design and implement appropriate responses to those assessed risks and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the course of our audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with management and those charged with governance of IFI.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to IFI and considered that the most significant are the UK and Republic of Ireland financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council;
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance;
- We enquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Understanding the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Discussions amongst the audit engagement team regarding how fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion we identified the following potential areas where fraud may occur: timing of revenue recognition and management override.

The audit response to risks identified included:

- Reviewing the financial statements disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with the relevant laws and regulations above;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risk of material misstatement due to fraud;
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are reasonable and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.



Independent auditors' report to the members  
of International Fund for Ireland (continued)

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to IFI's members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to IFI's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than IFI and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mr. Ryan Falls (F.C.A)

For and on behalf of CavanaghKelly

Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors  
36-38 Northland Row  
Dungannon,  
Co. Tyrone  
BT71 6AP

4 February 2025

Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended  
30 September 2024

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## Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €					
	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Income</b>	2	<b>6,889</b>	8,655	<b>8,282</b>	9,974
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Approved projects	8	<b>8,717</b>	10,908	<b>10,480</b>	12,570
Net administrative expenses	3	<b>345</b>	409	<b>415</b>	471
Exchange rate adjustments		<b>235</b>	602	<b>283</b>	694
		<b>9,297</b>	11,919	<b>11,178</b>	13,735
<b>Excess of expenditure over income</b>		<b>(2,408)</b>	(3,264)	<b>(2,896)</b>	(3,761)
<b>Movement in the Fund balance</b>					
At 1 October 2023		<b>5,317</b>	8,599	<b>6,126</b>	9,779
Exchange differences on retranslation at 1 October 2023		<b>(259)</b>	(18)	<b>(46)</b>	108
		<b>5,058</b>	8,581	<b>6,080</b>	9,887
Exces of expenditure over income		<b>(2,408)</b>	(3,264)	<b>(2,896)</b>	(3,761)
<b>At 30 September 2024</b>		<b>2,650</b>	5,317	<b>3,184</b>	6,126

The amounts above relate to the continuing operations of IFI.

## Statement of Other Comprehensive Income for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

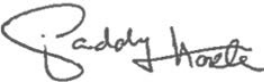
Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Excess of expenditure over income	<b>(2,408)</b>	(3,264)	<b>(2,896)</b>	(3,761)
Currency translation difference charged to Fund balance	<b>(259)</b>	(18)	<b>(46)</b>	108
<b>Total other comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>(2,667)</b>	(3,282)	<b>(2,942)</b>	(3,653)

The notes on pages 108 to 112 form part of the financial statements.

## Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2024

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €					
	Notes	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Investments	4	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
<b>Current assets</b>					
Cash at bank and on deposit	11	<b>11,356</b>	12,732	<b>13,648</b>	14,670
Donor contributions due	5	<b>2,987</b>	3,821	<b>3,591</b>	4,403
Other amounts receivable	6	<b>24</b>	23	<b>29</b>	27
		<b>14,367</b>	16,576	<b>17,268</b>	19,100
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Approved project expenditure outstanding	8	<b>11,622</b>	11,101	<b>13,972</b>	12,793
Payables	10	<b>95</b>	158	<b>112</b>	181
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>2,650</b>	5,317	<b>3,184</b>	6,126
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>2,650</b>	5,317	<b>3,184</b>	6,126
<b>Fund balance at 30 September 2024</b>		<b>2,650</b>	5,317	<b>3,184</b>	6,126

Approved by the Board on 4 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



**Mr. Paddy Harte**  
IFI Chair



**Bernie Butler**  
Chair of the Audit Committee

The notes on pages 108 to 112 form part of the financial statements.



# Cash Flow Statement

## for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
Excess of expenditure over income	(2,408)	(3,264)	(2,896)	(3,761)
<b>Adjustments for:</b>				
Movement in donor contributions due	834	5,147	812	5,796
Movement in approved project expenditure outstanding	521	4,497	1,179	5,282
Movement in other amounts receivable	(1)	133	(2)	150
Movement in payables and accrued expenses	(63)	50	(69)	57
Foreign exchange gain/(loss) on intercompany transfers	(305)	(28)	(367)	(32)
Interest received	(153)	(11)	(184)	(13)
Exchange difference in opening balance	455	63	178	110
<b>Net cash generated from / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>(1,120)</b>	6,587	<b>(1,349)</b>	7,589
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
Interest received	153	11	184	13
<b>Net cash from investing activities</b>	<b>153</b>	11	<b>184</b>	13
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in cash</b>	<b>(967)</b>	6,598	<b>(1,165)</b>	7,602
Balance at 1 October 2023	12,732	6,187	14,670	7,037
Retranslation to current year exchange rates	(409)	(53)	143	31
Balance at 1 October 2023 retranslated to current year exchange rates	12,323	6,134	14,813	7,068
<b>Balance at 30 September 2024</b>	<b>11,356</b>	12,732	<b>13,648</b>	14,670

The notes on pages 108 to 112 form part of the financial statements.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## 1. Accounting policies

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of these financial statements is FRS102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” issued by the Financial Reporting Council. These financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies set out below have been applied consistently throughout the year. The financial statements are rounded to the nearest £'000/€'000.

### Currencies

IFI's transactions are effected in the currencies of each part of Ireland. The financial statements are presented in both currencies, each representing an aggregation of all of the transactions for the year in each part of Ireland translated at the respective exchange rates at the year end. Differences arising on the restatement, to the year-end exchange rate, of monetary assets and liabilities (e.g. amounts due from funders, amounts due to projects and bank balances) at the start of the financial year are adjusted against IFI balance, reported in the statement of other comprehensive income and accounted through reserves.

### Approved projects

IFI make grants to fund or assist in the funding of projects and to make or enter into arrangements which are designed to meet expenditure that promotes economic and social advance and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland.

The income and expenditure account reflects the anticipated cost of projects approved in the year (after deduction of projects which did not proceed) and related administration expenditure. The projects approved in the year are considered as a hard commitment, which is defined as the grant sum payable over the life of a project on which we have a written contractual agreement with the applicant. Hard commitments are charged to the income statement in the year that the contracts are signed. Project approvals are shown on the balance sheet as a liability, the balance being reduced as payments to grant recipients are released.

### Taxation

The Agreement between the Governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom to establish IFI in 1986 stipulated that IFI is exempt from the payment of direct taxes. The Revenue Commissioners and HMRC have confirmed that IFI are exempt from direct taxes in the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

### Interest income

The income and expenditure account includes interest credited to the bank deposit accounts during the year together with interest accrued, but not actually credited, at the year end.

### Investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at their purchase cost less any provision for diminution in value. Investment income is included in the income and expenditure account on an accruals basis.

### Income recognition

Donor countries allocate funds on the basis of calendar years. The whole amount allocated is recognised in the financial year when it has been contractually allocated by the donor country.

### Resources Expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual arrangements and performance related grants are recognised as goods and services are supplied.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### Cash at bank and on deposit

Cash at bank and on deposits comprise cash balances and call deposits.

### Donor contributions receivable

Donor contributions receivable are recognised at the settlement amount, when promised, without any timing adjustment.

### Other receivables

Other receivables are measured at the settlement amount.

### Payables

Payables are measured at the settlement amount.

### Judgments in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the process of applying IFI's accounting policies, no significant judgements have been made. There are no key assumptions concerning the future or other key sources of estimation, that have a significant risk of raising a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

## 2. Income

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>From donors after exchange rate adjustments</b>				
United States of America	2,141	3,691	2,574	4,253
UK Government	-	1,000	-	1,153
Irish Government	4,575	3,905	5,500	4,500
New Zealand	-	48	-	55
	<b>6,716</b>	<b>8,644</b>	<b>8,074</b>	<b>9,961</b>
Interest receivable	151	11	182	13
Miscellaneous Income	22	-	26	-
	<b>173</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>6,889</b>	<b>8,655</b>	<b>8,282</b>	<b>9,974</b>

Donor countries allocate funds on the basis of calendar years. The whole amount becoming due within each calendar year is recognised within IFI's accounts to 30 September without any timing adjustment.

The exchange rate adjustments relate to exchange gains and losses arising from the translation of US\$ and Euro denominated donor contributions. The extent to which any gain or loss is realised will depend on exchange rate movements up to the date of receipt of contributions due.

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 3. Net administration expenses

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Board Members' fees	91	111	109	127
Board Meetings	123	31	148	36
Consultancy and other fees	295	278	355	321
Auditors' remuneration – Audit	6	16	8	18
Travelling and subsistence	37	144	44	166
Postage, stationery, telephone and office expenses	4	1	5	1
Promotional and advertising expenses	28	73	33	84
Miscellaneous	6	5	7	6
	<b>590</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>759</b>
Less: Contributions receivable from the Governments of the UK and Ireland in respect of an element of the above expenses	(245)	(250)	(294)	(288)
	<b>345</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>471</b>

Certain other expenses of IFI, including accommodation, are met directly by the UK and Ireland governments and are not therefore reflected in these financial statements.

### 4. Fixed asset investments

The International Fund for Ireland holds an investment.

The value of the investment as at 30 September 2024 is £105/€126 (2023: £105/€126).

This valuation reflects the value of shares IFI holds within the company.

### 5. Donor contributions due

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>United States of America</b>				
- 2015 (US\$0.01m)	-	8	-	9
- 2023 (US\$4.12m)	-	3,378	-	3,893
- 2024 (US\$4m)	2,987	-	3,591	-
<b>Ireland</b>				
- 2022 (€0.5m)	-	435	-	501
	<b>2,987</b>	<b>3,821</b>	<b>3,591</b>	<b>4,403</b>



## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 6. Other amounts receivable

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Other receivables	4	-	5	-
Bank interest receivable	20	23	24	27
	24	23	29	27

### 7. Staff costs

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Staff salaries & wages	156	162	187	187
Staff PRSI	17	18	21	21
Employee pension contributions	19	20	23	23
	192	200	231	231

A number of individuals are employed directly by IFI as programme managers. Staff costs relating to these individuals have been included within the note above. These costs are included within project expenditure. In relation to the staff costs above, the average monthly number of employees during the year was 3 (2023 - 4). Staff costs relating to staff within the IFI secretariat are borne by the member Government who the individual's contract of employment is with and are not included within these financial statements.

### 8. Approved project expenditure outstanding

The totals of IFI's project disbursements and associated fees in the year ended 30 September 2024 and the movements in approved projects outstanding are as follows:

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Approved project expenditure outstanding at 1 October 2023	11,101	6,604	12,793	7,511
Foreign exchange re-translation	(100)	(19)	431	78
Approved project expenditure outstanding at 1 October 2023	11,001	6,585	13,224	7,589
Project approvals in the year	8,717	10,908	10,480	12,570
Project disbursements and associated fees in the year	(8,096)	(6,392)	(9,732)	(7,366)
<b>Approved project expenditure outstanding at 30 September 2024</b>	<b>11,622</b>	<b>11,101</b>	<b>13,972</b>	<b>12,793</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### 9. Cumulative approved projects and disbursements to date

Cumulatively, the totals of IFI's approved projects and project disbursements to date are summarised:

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Total approved projects to date	779,810	771,193	974,143	963,232
Less contributions to investment companies	(27,142)	(27,142)	(40,023)	(40,023)
	752,668	744,051	934,120	923,209
Total disbursements to projects and administration costs to date	(741,046)	(732,950)	(920,148)	(910,416)
<b>Approved project expenditure outstanding at 30 September 2024</b>	<b>11,622</b>	<b>11,101</b>	<b>13,972</b>	<b>12,793</b>

To date, IFI has approved total payments in respect of specific projects and administration costs to a total of £780 million / €974 million, after deduction of approved projects which did not proceed.

The approved project expenditure outstanding at 30 September 2024, reported in the balance sheet, represents the unspent balance of the projects approved for which a claim for payment of grant has yet to be received.

### 10. Payables: amounts falling due within one year

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Accruals	17	103	19	118
Deferred income	78	55	93	63
	95	158	112	181

### 11. Components of cash at bank and on deposit

Total transactions expressed in £ and Euro €				
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
Cash at hand and on deposit	11,356	12,732	13,648	14,670
	11,356	12,732	13,648	14,670



# Analysis of programme disbursements for the year and of approved projects outstanding at 30 September 2024 (unaudited)

	Approved project expenditure outstanding at 30 Sept 2023	Retranslated at 30 Sept 2023	Project approvals and admin costs*	Project and admin disbursements	Approved project expenditure outstanding at 30 Sept 2024
Expressed in £'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
AMBIT	-	-	202	202	-
CIPP	2,212	2,172	2,352	1,786	2,738
Peace Projects					
Peace Barriers	1,068	1,069	2,590	1,109	2,550
Peace Impact	3,969	3,961	604	2,313	2,252
Personal Youth Development	3,852	3,799	2,969	2,686	4,082
	11,101	11,001	8,717	8,096	11,622

	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Expressed in €'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
AMBIT	-	-	243	243	-
CIPP	2,549	2,612	2,828	2,147	3,293
Peace Projects					
Peace Barriers	1,231	1,285	3,114	1,333	3,066
Peace Impact	4,574	4,762	727	2,780	2,709
Personal Youth Development	4,439	4,565	3,568	3,229	4,904
	12,793	13,224	10,480	9,732	13,972

\* The approval figures in the analysis above differ from the approvals detailed in the annual report for each programme as a result of: the inclusion of programme administrative costs in the amounts above; and the removal of amounts decommitted in year i.e. amounts approved in previous years which are no longer payable.