

5 July 2023

E-Zine



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society

Welcome to Supporting Communities 214th Edition of E-Zine, bringing you Best Practice from the Community Sector; Funding and Training Updates and Policy Developments in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Republic of Ireland

NIHE warns that budget cuts will hit those most in need

The Housing Executive has warned that proposed budget cuts to homelessness prevention, the new build programme and home energy grants will impact households in most need in Northern Ireland.

In its response to the Department for Communities' Budget 2023/4 Equality Impact Assessment, the organisation has set out its concerns about the funding challenges for a number of programmes and services.

Grainia Long, Chief Executive said:

"At a time when we need to be building more homes, preventing homelessness and helping those experiencing fuel poverty, the proposed budget would result in substantially fewer social homes started than originally planned for next year, an increase in people needing temporary accommodation and the effective suspension of the boiler replacement scheme. The funding challenge outlined in the draft budget comes at a time when the cost of living crisis is continuing to impact on many households across Northern Ireland.

As housing professionals we are concerned about the impact that the proposed budget cuts will have across society but specifically on those individuals who need our help most: people with disabilities; young people leaving care; the increasing number of young women presenting as homeless; households in rural areas; those in fuel poverty; and vulnerable groups, including older people.

While the proposed draft budget comes at a time of unprecedented levels of homelessness, the indicative funding of £26.4m for homeless services equates to a shortfall of £7.4m. As a consequence, it will be virtually impossible to provide services to prevent homelessness, with the overwhelming proportion of the homelessness budget focused on response. Perversely, failure to fund prevention services, will lead to greater numbers living in expensive temporary accommodation, leading to greater budgetary pressures. We are extremely concerned that failure to fund homelessness services will lead to job losses in the voluntary and community sectors. The

proposed budget will also have a significant detrimental effect on the social housing new build programme, when demand for housing is at a record high. A funding requirement of £199.5m has been identified in order to target 2,000 new social housing starts in 2023/24, to meet housing need.

A funding allocation of between £141.6m and £159m budget is likely. Either scenario will result in substantially fewer homes being built in 2023/4 than originally planned. This means that more households will be waiting longer to have permanent housing offered to them. We are concerned about the levels of funding proposed for the forthcoming year for energy efficiency programmes tackling fuel poverty across Northern Ireland.

A shortfall of £2m in the Affordable Warmth scheme will curtail this improvement programme and the indicative funding of £148k of the Boiler Replacement scheme effectively closes the scheme to new applicants this year. In addition, the budget outlined in the EQIA does not allow for the high cost of goods and materials, contingency planning for emergency situations, such as a Covid-19 outbreak or cold snaps during the winter. Furthermore, it does not enable us to meet additional numbers presenting as homeless following positive 'leave to remain' decisions. The outlined budget in the EQIA and other departments' current budget announcements will also have a negative impact on the much-needed collaboration across sections such as health, education and justice as well as with partners in the housing sector.

We have been working closely with the Department of Communities to set out the impact of the budget reductions proposed and today published our response to their EQIA. We will of course work to minimise any disruption to services and programmes of work, however, it is our view that the proposed expenditure as it stands will have an adverse impact on the most vulnerable people across Northern Ireland, who are urgently in need of housing services."

**Housing
Executive**

Youth employment scheme relaunched by DfC

An employment scheme for young people at risk of long-term unemployment has been relaunched by the Department for Communities following the allocation of funding from the UK government.

The JobStart scheme, which supports young people between the ages of 16 and 24 into the labour market, has been allocated £15 million from the New Deal for Northern Ireland initiative.

Originally launched by the Department for Communities in 2021, JobStart provides six and nine-month job opportunities across a range of employment sectors, equipping young people with the skills to move into the labour market.

Of the 1,452 young people who completed the original scheme, 77 per cent have gone on to secure full-time employment.

Department for Communities' Deputy Secretary for Work and Health, Paddy Rooney said:

"The success of the JobStart scheme shows the importance of such initiatives in supporting young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

"By providing funding to employers to create real job opportunities, young people can develop their employability skills in positions which align with their individual skills and interests.

"I would encourage employers to take this opportunity to invest in our young people and to benefit from the strengths that they can bring to your business."

The £15 million allocation is part of a £40 million fund from the UK Government being shared with the Department for Economy and Invest Northern Ireland. The funding is aimed at increasing access and participation of under-represented individuals in skills, education and employment.

Invest NI will support the work of both Departments through its local employer and business base and will harness the expertise of its client-facing teams to secure commitment and engagement from employers.



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

Part-Time BSc Hons Community Development - Recruiting Now!

Your experience counts! If you work or volunteer in communities, you can apply directly to Ulster University and gain a professionally recognised degree in Community Development? Apply now to transform your life and your community!

Do you want to make a difference in your community? Do you want to help improve people's lives and challenge inequalities that exist in society? By studying this course, you will develop your knowledge and understanding of core community development concepts such as equality and diversity; power and social justice; community and informal education. You will also gain skills in managing community projects, writing funding applications, delivering informal education, conflict resolution and peace-building.

Students actively participate in the learning on this programme and you will have many opportunities to share your experience and learn from your peers. There are three placements over the four year programme, one in Years 2, 3 and 4, which will help you to put the theory into practice and develop your skills in community work. (Placements also operate one day per week and replace the normal teaching day). This also gives you the opportunity to broaden your experience and make some very useful contacts for your organisation.

This unique programme is professionally endorsed by the UK Endorsement and Quality Standards Board and the All-Ireland Endorsement Body.

The degree runs over one day per week (Wednesday) over four years. There are exit points after Year One (Certificate), Year Two (Certificate in Higher Education) and Year Three (Associate Bachelor Degree).

Entry Requirements: Applicants should normally have a Grade C English Language GCSE or Pass in Essential Skills Literacy Level 2*. No A levels required if you have experience working or volunteering with marginalised or disadvantaged groups.

Those with A levels or higher qualifications and substantial experience of working in or with the community/voluntary sector, may be eligible for direct entry into Year 2 (contact us for further information).

Apply directly via the online application:
<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/courses/202324/community-development-30145>



Camping Safety

Camping is a fantastic way to enjoy the great outdoors. Following some simple safety advice will ensure your camping holiday goes smoothly and make it a memorable experience.

- Allow at least 6m spacing between tents.
- Know the fire safety arrangements for the campsite; know the location of the portable firefighting equipment and nearest telephone.
- Cook outside and away from the tent; keep flammable material away from the cooking area; make sure cooking appliances are stable and cannot be knocked over easily.
- Never use candles inside or near a tent; torches are much safer.
- Don't smoke inside a tent.
- All flammable liquids and gas cylinders should be kept outside the tent.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is known as the silent killer because you can't see it, smell it or taste it. CO gas can build up quickly and can kill with no warning. Therefore, you should be CO aware when camping.

- > Never use fuel-burning devices such as disposable barbecues, camping stoves, camping heaters, lanterns, etc, inside a tent.
- > Disposable barbecues and smouldering charcoals can produce CO for hours after you have used them.



Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service

- > Keep any fuel cooking appliances down wind and well clear of tents to ensure fumes don't build up in nearby tents.
- > Remember a vehicle engine or generator exhaust gases also contain high levels of CO.

Dry ground and vegetation in the summer means there is an added risk of a fire starting.

Follow these tips to reduce the chance of a wildfire in the countryside.

- > Only use barbecues in a suitable area and never leave them unattended.
- > Dispose of cigarette butts safely; ensure they are completely extinguished before placing in a waste bin.
- > Open fires can be dangerous; keep a bucket of water or sand and a shovel close by.
- > Don't leave glass bottles in woodland – sunlight shining through the glass can start a fire.
- > If you see a fire in the countryside, call the Fire & Rescue Service immediately.

Remember, if a fire starts, dial 999 and ask for the Fire & Rescue Service.

For further information phone NIFRS HQ 028 9266 4221 or visit www.nifrs.org

Register with Social Value NI

Social Value is about maximising the social, economic and environmental benefits through the public procurement process. Ultimately, this allows Government Departments and their stakeholders to find new and far reaching methods to deliver on the outcomes of the Programme for Government.

<https://biteable.com/watch/3839349/057567cda04300a577b20688fe969067>

The Social Value NI website offers the public, private and third sectors a suite of bespoke resources, training modules and model procurement documentation to ensure consistency of approach

while allowing public bodies, and their suppliers, to retain flexibility in the delivery of the 4 social value themes:

- Increasing secure employment and skills
- Building ethical and resilient supply chains
- Delivering zero carbon
- Promoting Well-being

Your organisation may be able to benefit from contractors working in your area – all you have to do is register as a broker here: <https://socialvalueni.org/brokers/>



Consultations

Place10X - a sub regional economic approach - call for evidence

Department for the Economy

[Place10X - a sub regional economic approach - call for evidence | Department for the Economy](#)
([economy-ni.gov.uk](#))

Closing date; 9th July 2023

Private Tenancies Act payment options

Department for Communities

[Consultation on Private Tenancies Act payment options | Department for Communities](#)
([communities-ni.gov.uk](#))

Closing date; 17th July 2023

Draft Equality Scheme

The Executive Office

[Consultation on The Executive Office Draft Equality Scheme | The Executive Office](#)
([executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](#))

Closing date; 11th August 2023

Policy and Practice Focus

Market Development Association: 'An alternative vision for housing'

This article, including photographs appeared in AGENDA NI magazine

The MDA launches housing plans for the northern fringe Gasworks site, with former Minister for Communities, Deirdre Hargey MLA.

In April 2023, the Department for Communities (DfC) acquired the vacant Stewart Street site in Belfast's Market area for housing-led regeneration. In this context, Ciarán Galway visits the area and speaks with Fionntán Hargey, Director of the Market Development Association (MDA), about his community's longstanding grassroots housing and community regeneration campaigns. Named after the 14 commercial markets which once surrounded it – St George's Market being the sole survivor – the Market area of south Belfast is one of the city's longest established communities. Once an industrial heartland, its streetscape was originally constructed on a grid plan.

With the various industrial ventures which once dotted the area in the early 20th century now consigned to history, the recent conflict compounded the scarring of local geography. The grid system was erased and today, the area has only three points of road access: Stewart Street, Raphael Street, and Eliza Street. Euphemistically alluded to as "defensive planning", post-conflict, the consequence for areas such as the Market is continued place-based inequality and socio-spatial segregation from Belfast's socioeconomic life.

Contained on four sides by East Bridge Street to the north, the Lanyon Place Station railway lines to the east, the Gasworks business park to the south, and Cromac Street (which bisects the area, and was



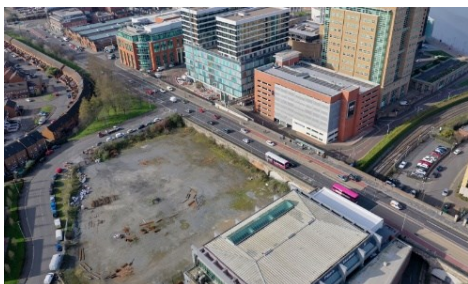
previously intersected by several natural access points from the Market proper) to the west, the Market has been artificially separated from its natural hinterland: the city centre.

"If you look at older maps of the area, it is completely integrated into the city centre. During the redevelopment of Belfast in the late 1960s into the 1970s, three interlocking trends came together: suburbanisation, deindustrialisation, and securitisation of urban planning," Fionntán Hargey observes. "The Market, and Belfast as a whole, are not unique in experiencing socio-spatial segregation, but it was the combination of those three factors, in the context of the recent conflict, which exacerbated it beyond the experience of many other cities in the western world."

In fact, in recent decades, this segregation has been compounded by commercial redevelopment in its surrounding environs. Referencing the Laganside

regeneration area which demarcated the land of riverfront to be transformed with £1.2 billion of investment between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s, Hargey suggests that it carefully excluding the surrounding inner-city communities that neighbour the River Lagan.

“This exclusion cut deep within the psyche of these inner-city communities like ours, and the message was ‘keep out, you are not welcome’. Indeed, the only regeneration investment that the Market community observed was in gates, walls, and fences,” the MDA Director reflects.



An aerial shot of the Stewart Street site.

Housing need

Established in late 1995, the Market Development Association aims to “promote the wellbeing of all residents living in the Market area of south Belfast”. While the MDA does not employ a dedicated housing officer, almost half of the queries that it receives are related to housing. Discussing housing need with the Market, the Director explains that an average of 115 families are on the social housing waiting list each year.

This figure excludes people experiencing hidden homelessness, because “many local people do not see the point in registering for the waiting list because they do not think they will ever get the required allocation points, are reluctant to linger on the list for years, or do not even understand the system”. Indeed, in 2018, the MDA community survey which informed *We Must Dissent* – the MDA’s overarching framework and strategy for community development – found that 86 per cent of Market residents felt that there was not enough decent and affordable housing in the area.

“There is a limited turnover in properties each year. This is exacerbated by the Right to Buy Scheme which is undermining social housing stock,” Hargey notes, elaborating: “The problem that we are observing is that while a social housing unit home may have initially been bought by a tenant as a family home, for myriad reasons that house is eventually sold on and often it is being bought up as an Airbnb or a HMO. Even if someone wanted to buy locally, therefore, they are often being outbid while simultaneously, they cannot get sufficient points to access social housing.”

‘Sunshine not Skyscrapers’

On the eastern edge of the Market, adjacent to Lanyon Place Station, the Stewart Street brownfield

site – a roughly rectangular plot of vacant land with a curving boundary to its south – is one of the foremost initial sights greeting rail passengers entering Belfast city centre.

In 2016, a £55 million high-rise development plan for the site crossed the Rubicon, proposing commercial development within the traditionally residential footprint of the old commercial markets. The local community met the plan with vociferous opposition, coordinated through the ‘Sunshine not Skyscrapers’ campaign under the wider ‘Save the Market’ umbrella. “The community’s perspective was that the proposed development epitomised all the bad planning precedents that had been happening within the Market community over the decades. In terms of the MDA’s wider strategies around connectivity and breaking the economic barriers that we are grappling with; it was overdevelopment on steroids.”

In the face of what the Director describes as an “existential threat”, the Market community was bolstered by its “alternative vision for housing”. “We were not just opposing development; rather we had a better alternative for both the community and the wider city; a real community regeneration project rather than just commercial speculation.”

Subsequently, residents fought the commercial plan at the Belfast City Council planning committee and initially lost by 10 votes to four. The plan was then subject to judicial review.

“While the judicial review was going on, the community undertook the Save the Market/Sunshine not Skyscrapers campaign. This involved everything from posterage, lobbying, and filmmaking to media engagements and street protests,” Hargey describes. “Ultimately, we won the High Court judicial review in May 2018. Later that year, the developer sought to resubmit the planning application to Belfast City Council which then referred it to the Ministerial Advisory Group – an independent expert panel convened by the Department for Communities to assess contentious planning applications.

“In early 2019, the Ministerial Advisory Group came back, rejected the proposal, and vindicated the residents’ opposition on the grounds that it would effectively kill off the Tunnels Project. It was overdevelopment in terms of scale and design on that site. When Covid hit in March 2020, the developer then tried again to push ahead with the plan, and it went back to the Belfast City Council planning committee in November 2020 where, inverting the original decision, it lost 10 votes to four.”

Commenting on this “victory for the Market community”, Sinn Féin MLA and former Minister for Communities, Deirdre Hargey insists: “It was the political support and push that made that happen within Belfast City Council. The campaign was very effective in building up political support, as evidenced by the fact that the committee ultimately opposed it by majority.”

Housing-led development

In a latest development, in April 2023, it was announced that DfC had purchased the Stewart Street land for a housing-led regeneration scheme. “That will unlock the tunnels and encourage active travel, while also addressing housing need, which is prevalent not just in the Market community, but in the city centre as well,” the MDA Director articulates. While hypothetically, the ground floor units, especially those nearest to the tunnels could be earmarked for commercial use, to complement that project, it is too early to determine how many housing units will be constructed on the Stewart street site. Soon, the MDA will be undertaking that type of engagement with the Market residents, collating their vision for the site.

“In terms of what normally happens, the Department for Communities will defer to the Housing Executive as the housing authority, the Housing Executive will select a housing association to bring forward a housing-led scheme on the site,” Deirdre Hargey advises, adding: “We want a level of mixed use on the site to make sure that the development is complementary to the Tunnels Project and that there is good synergy. The designated housing association will bring forward a scheme and it will be down to consultation and engagement as to what the final proposal looks like.”

Discussing the projected configuration of the housing on the site, the Sinn Féin MLA believes that it will be mixed tenure. “Obviously, a portion of the housing will be social and public, but feeding into the sustainability of the community, there is likely to be different types of tenure. The policy of DfC now is to have ‘tenure blind’ accommodation going forward. We still need to address the housing need because we are in a crisis, but it is making sure that it is sustainable, that it fits into its surroundings, and complementary,” she says.

Tunnels Project

Fundamental to housing-led regeneration plans for the Stewart Street site are the tunnels which run underneath East Bridge Street. The MDA’s Tunnels Project, aimed at reopening the tunnels to facilitate active travel access to Lanyon Place and the wider city centre, as well an associated regeneration was successful in securing funding from the Executive Office and Belfast City Council.

“DfC’s focus is on wider connectivity of regeneration priorities,” Deidre Hargey emphasises. “Consider what Belfast City Council is trying to achieve through its strategic framework for the city, Bolder Vision for Belfast, creating an urban Greenway around the city rather than an inner-city ring route. Bolder Vision for Belfast addresses the community severance of inner-city communities, and how they have been disconnected from the city core and vice versa. We need to overcome that severance that is felt within those neighbourhoods through projects such as the Tunnels Project. “Key to the Tunnels Project is connectivity; beginning to breakdown the severance of the Market community from the city core. One of

the tunnels will be a pedestrianised route that will start to connect all of that up.”

‘Homes Now’

Previously, the ‘Homes Now’ campaign, also under the ‘Save the Market’ umbrella, Market residents had successfully campaigned for housing-led development on the northern fringe of the Gasworks site – which borders the Market on its south side. Running from the River Lagan to the Ormeau Avenue end of the Gasworks, the northern fringe site had traditionally been residential, but during a period of regeneration was acquired by Belfast City Council and held for the construction of inner-city ring road. However, it remained undeveloped, becoming what is known as a ‘shatter zone’.

Replicated across the inner-city of Belfast, these shatter zones are, according to architect, Mark Hackett, “barriers that were imposed by government onto a community to detach them from the centre”. *“We were not just opposing development; rather we had a better alternative for both the community and the wider city; a real community regeneration project rather than just commercial speculation.”* Fionntán Hargey, Director, Market Development Association

Since 2004, the MDA began campaigning for the land to be rezoned for housing. Following the financial crash, from 2015 onwards there was enhanced private sector interest in the site as an investment opportunity for capital development. This provoked the Market community to respond with the Homes Now campaign. “Today, instead of a proposed total of six houses on that site, there will be 94 units and part of the land developed for community use, including for economic development and job creation. While housing is important, it is also about building sustainable communities. All of this was achieved under the Homes Now campaign banner, with We Must Dissent linking up each of these campaigns,” the MDA Director observes.

Vision

Discussing his vision for the future of housing in the Market, Hargey succinctly summarises it in a line: “Homes for all.” Asked to elaborate, the objective, he asserts, is to ensure that “every child being born and growing up in the Market has adequate space to develop and prosper”.

“It is about ensuring dignity for people while building a sustainable community. Housing is a critical part of that. We must ensure that we deliver homes for all and that the Market is a community that continues to develop and evolve, while retaining the spirit of what makes it unique. We are looking to the future in terms of sustainability, and building a neighbourhood that people want to live in and stay in. We want this collective approach to be replicated across the city to build a fairer and more sustainable society.”

Publications

Scope ^{NI} One final article – a goodbye

[Nick Garbutt](#)

The time is right for Scope to close. It's been a decade of long reads, alternative journalism, and the opportunity for important issues to have a platform. And – hopefully – some good insights.

This version of Scope began almost a decade ago. We wanted to give a voice to people and organisations who had important things to say, and who might have struggled to find a platform elsewhere. Hopefully we succeeded.

We want to thank NICVA for choosing to fund Scope in the first place, and for continuing to support it for so long. Their commitment to our independence was also exemplary – we wrote around a thousand articles, and they never asked us to change a word. This was a fine contribution to journalism and its fundamental purpose: giving people easy access to important information and concepts that are relevant to their lives.

Scope quickly found its feet as a magazine focused on slow journalism. Articles were relatively long but still concise (mostly). Sometimes they lasered in on breaking news, sometimes they looked at interesting tales from hundreds of years ago. The aim was to let readers chew on the smaller details within larger ideas.

Our coverage of health has been a particular highlight. We started writing about the need for a transformation of services at a time when the dynamics slowly crushing Northern Ireland's health system were less widely appreciated than they are now. If we contributed to any improvement in the crucial public conversation that exists in parallel to health reform, it's something of which we can be very proud.

Things change, however. Funding a magazine is not part of NICVA's core mission and, given the immense pressures on the third sector, it is unsurprising that Scope is winding down. Those financial realities,

combined with the fact that the two of us have been writing these articles for ten years, mean the time is right for this version of Scope to close.



So, this final article is a goodbye. We want to thank NICVA, once again, for all their support. We want to thank everyone who has contributed to the magazine over the years. And, of course, we want to thank our readers for deeming us worthy of attention (and for all the nice emails thanking us for our work).

More than anything else, we want to acknowledge the memory of our late colleague, Patrick Sanders. Patrick, who died in 2017, was a key member of Scope from the beginning. He was a great man – intelligent, caring and warm – and his illustrations were the best part of our articles. We never even thought about replacing him, it would have been an impossible task. The image at the top of this article is his first cartoon for Scope. There could be no better way to sign off.

Scope will continue to exist online as a great resource for anyone seeking to understand all sorts of issues that impact on Northern Ireland. We thought about linking to some of our favourite articles here, to provide a flavour of our writing. However, maybe the best way to do that is to simply look at the final articles from both of us: [a historical reflection on the incredible achievements of the Belfast Charitable Society](#) from Nick, and [Ryan's helter-skelter look at the future of the jobs market](#).

That was Scope, in a nutshell. Every week, you never knew what you were going to get. Hopefully you enjoyed it all.

Thanks, Nick and Ryan.

Live Here Love Here is Northern Ireland's largest civic pride programme

It's about loving where you live... and feeling empowered to take positive environmental action. Examples include: creating a community vegetable patch, organising a beach clean or starting up a tool swap scheme.

Create your profile [here](#) and join us in doing something positive for your community today.

Sign up for the e-bulletin here; [Live Here Love Here - Show your support](#)





Catch up on what's been happening at the Board in [Policing Matters June 2023.pdf](#) and the Chief Constable's Report to the Policing Board June 2023 is available at; [chief-constables-report-northern-ireland-policing-board_0.pdf](#) (nipolicingboard.org.uk)

The Environmental news bulletin is available at [ENRA-March-2023.pdf \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#). For other NIEL publications and events, go to; www.nienvironmentlink.org



Please click the link below to access the latest news-letter for PCSPs which highlights local events and initiatives; [PCSP Projects coming to Life | Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(pcsp.org\)](#)



RCN produces a range of publications including Rural Brief, a regular update of news and views affecting rural communities as well as Consultation Responses and Policy updates. A range of RCN publications is available at [Publications Archive - Rural Community Network](#)

Events

Belfast Mela Conversation At Belfast Central Library



Next date: Tuesday 18 July 2023 at 11.00am

We are looking for people who receive universal credit or jobseeker's allowance to take part in a 1-hour conversation in Belfast City Library on 18th July 2023.

In association with ArtsEkta, we are facilitating a conversation on Tuesday 18th July 2023 from 11.00am to 12 noon at the Belfast Central Library. We are looking to speak with people in Belfast who currently receive universal credit or jobseeker's allowance.

We aim to find out what arts and culture events people typically go to in Belfast and what prevents them from attending other events.

To thank you for your participation, each attendee will receive a Belfast Mela 2023 Golden Ticket, which gives free admission to all events at this year's August programme.

Please find link to the Belfast Mela's website: <https://belfastmela.org.uk/>

If you are interested in attending, please sign up here: https://bit.ly/GM_MelaLow

Training

HCN Members Forums Digital Drop-In Sessions

Are you a member of the [Housing Community Network](#)?

If you attend Central, Area, Regional, District Level meetings or Inter-Agencies, you will soon have access to all of your forum resources online!

Carla Mullholand, our new digital inclusion officer, will be holding regular drop-in sessions on Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm - 2.30pm to help members get signed up and use the online forums.

Not to be confused with the tenant portal, where you can manage aspects of your tenancy by signing in on the Housing Executive website, the collaboration portal or 'HCN Online Forums' are designed to create a simple online environment for sharing files, online chat, discussions, managing meetings and associated papers and assigning tasks or 'to-do' lists.

The online forums will improve the network's ability to collaborate by removing the need to email papers, minutes, and meeting invitations which individuals can quickly lose. Instead, all the forum's documents and discussions will be stored in an organised way online where members can access them whenever needed. Read more [about Carla and her new role](#) in assisting the HCN to gain the digital skills needed to participate online.

Register for these session

These session will be held on Zoom. To register for any of these sessions, please [fill in this form](#).

If you have any questions, contact Carla Mulholand at carla@supportingcommunities.org.



Volunteer Now Training Sessions in July 2023

Leading The Way – Governance

Wednesday 26th July 2023 from 10.00am - 12 noon
Online standard course from £20 +VAT



This session is aimed at both current committee members, as well as those who are seeking to join a committee for the first time. By the end of this session, participants will gain an introduction to:

- The Code of Good Governance
- The DIY Committee Guide
- Roles and responsibilities of Trustees
- Building skills in the Committee
- Support for Staff and Volunteers
- Risk management
- Safeguarding

Find out more and book your places here – <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/training/courses-scheduled/>

Housing Rights Training

Housing Adaptations

Location: Online

Date: 1st August 2023

Time: 10.00am to 1.00pm



Fees: *Voluntary / Community from £56.00 / £70.00*
Public / Statutory from £100.00 / £125.00

This course will increase your understanding of the processes required to get an adaptation within a client's home. It will cover all tenures of housing as well as how to challenge decisions.

You will be better equipped to support your clients through each stage of the adaptations process and what steps to take next.

What we will cover:

- different stages in the housing adaptations process
- the steps to follow depending on the adaptation needed
- different areas of housing (social, private rented, owner occupier)
- grants available to private renters and owner occupiers
- how to challenge decisions

Sustaining Tenancies in the Private Rented Sector

Location: Online

Date: 9th August 2023

Time: 10.00am to 1.00pm

Fees: *Voluntary and Community from £56.00 / £70.00*
Public and Statutory from £100.00 / £125.00

This course will ensure attendees have the knowledge and skills to help sustain tenancies in the private rented sector.

This course will help you support clients who are having problems in keeping their private rented home. It will inform private renters on their rights and responsibilities. You will learn about possible resolutions to help clients sustain their tenancy.

What we will cover:

- support and protections available to private renters
- renters rights and responsibilities
- rent arrears and affordability
- changes in legislation affecting tenants
- disrepair

Financial Support to Address Housing Poverty

Location: Online, Zoom

Date: Tuesday 15th August 2023

Time: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

We developed this course in response to problems people are facing with growing poverty and the cost of living crisis.

It will cover the various forms of financial support available to help people alleviate poverty and keep their homes.

What we'll cover :

- forms of discretionary support

- financial assistance & eligibility
- changes to Discretionary Housing Payments
- changes to Support for Mortgage Interest
- charitable help and other cost savings available

Who should attend:

- social housing sector staff
- private landlords and agents
- advice agencies

For more information on Housing Rights Training, courses and seminars, go to; [Housing Rights Training](#)

Supporting Communities Training



Understanding 'Social Value'? (Online Session)

Thursday 6th July 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am /
Wednesday 2nd August 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am
Wednesday 30th September 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am

Join us online to get a better understanding of what we mean when we talk about 'Social Value' and 'Impact Measurement'.

This session will help you to:

- Recognise the importance of measuring your social value
- Understand the jargon associated with impact measurement
- Learn about the tools available to use to measure your impact

Register your place

This session will be held on Zoom. To register, [please fill in this form](#).

Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.

Writing Successful Funding Applications (Online Session)

Wednesday 26th July 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am
Wednesday 16th August 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am
Wednesday 20th September 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am

Join us for this short session looking at planning and completing a successful funding application.

Learners will gain:

- an understanding of the key processes of a successful funding application
- increased confidence when approaching funders
- enhanced fundraising skills and knowledge

Register your place

To register for this course, [please fill in this form](#).



Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.

Funding

National Lottery Arts and Older People Programme

The Arts & Older People Programme aims to strengthen the voice of older people and promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing through the arts. The proposed projects should reflect the partnership approach with the target groups they plan to engage with and have the support from them in the delivery.

To ensure a strong advocacy message there will be an opportunity to showcase the projects funded throughout the year. Applicants should endeavour to build this into their project programme and budget.

Who can apply?

- The programme is aimed at constituted community and voluntary groups who are working at a local level to support older people and can demonstrate strong partnership working with older people groups.
- This programme is also open to non-governmental organisations, Local Authorities and arts organisations who can clearly demonstrate partnership working.
- We are looking for partnership or consortia-based projects. Partnerships can be led by either age sector providers, arts organisations or Local Authorities, however the consortium must be made up of appropriate representatives and demonstrate a commitment to working together. Other specialists who work with older people may also be included as named partners in the consortium.



Who Cannot Apply?

- Individuals or sole traders
- Broadcasters (excluding community service broadcasters)
- Central Government Departments
- Organisations with statutory obligations to providing services for Older People
- Organisations in breach of any previously issued Arts Council award grant conditions.

How much can I apply for?

Grants from £1,000 to £10,000 are available:

[Arts & Older People Guidance Notes \(2023\)\(385.8 KB, PDF\)](#)

[Arts & Older People Scoring Criteria \(2023\)\(175.0 KB, PDF\)](#)

For more information and to apply, please visit [National Lottery Arts and Older People Programme | Arts Council NI \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](#)

The Which? Fund

Discover Which? grantmaking support efforts to uncover and tackle the consumer harm facing diverse and disadvantaged communities.

The Which? Fund offers grants to support research projects aiming to improve understanding of the specific consumer harms experienced by diverse and disadvantaged communities, and to develop evidence-based solutions to tackle these harms.

The Which? Fund is now open to applications until 5pm, 18th September 2023. Please see below for details, including how to apply.

Which?

Which? funds specific, strategic projects, with the potential to benefit large numbers of people by changing policy, regulation or practice.

Which? offers funding to registered charities based in the UK, not-for-profit Community Interest Companies (CICs) and UK universities.

For more information and to apply, please visit [The Which? Fund - Which? Policy and insight](#)



PHA Making Life Better Through Short Term Funding Programme 2023-2024

Community and voluntary groups are being encouraged to apply for a short-term funding programme that focuses on improving mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The Public Health Agency (PHA) scheme opens to applications on Wednesday 28th June 2023 and aims to address health and wellbeing needs in local communities. The funding programme will also support a range of strategic themes and priorities under the 'Making Life Better' public health framework, in particular mental health, emotional wellbeing, suicide prevention and self-harm.

- [The 'Making Life Better' \(Public health framework\) priorities](#)
- [Protect Life 2 - Suicide Prevention Strategy](#)
- Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing, Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm

Fiona Teague, Head of Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement at PHA, said: "Community and voluntary organisations are most acutely aware of the issues that affect people on the ground and this short-term funding programme will give them the opportunity to address issues of mental health and emotional wellbeing specific to their communities.

"The PHA is keen to invest in programmes that will have a particular focus on using one or more of the 'Take 5' Steps to Wellbeing'. These are five simple steps that we can build into our daily lives to maintain and improve wellbeing – Connect, Be active, Keep learning, Give and Take Notice.

- [Take 5 steps to wellbeing](#)

"We are encouraging applicants to work collaboratively to develop innovative projects and most importantly involve local communities in project design."

The short-term funding programme provides the community and voluntary sector with the opportunity to access small, non-recurring funding which can be used to support health improvement in local communities.

The PHA has commissioned the Clear Project to facilitate this process in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

Brenda Morris, Manager of the Clear Project, said: "Short-term funding plays a vital role in supporting programmes within the community. This work can take a range of forms from self-help and life skills initiatives supporting those in need to giving groups the opportunity to develop and build their capacity to help others."



Two types of awards are available under the programme:

- **Award one:** Funding of up to £1,000 for non-constituted and constituted non-profit taking community/ voluntary sector groups.
- **Award two:** Funding of between £1,001 and to a maximum of £5,000 for constituted, non-profit taking community/ voluntary sector groups.

How do I apply, am I eligible?

To apply for the short-term funding opportunities for Western, Belfast, Northern, South-eastern and Southern Health and Social Care Trust areas, click on the link below.

1. [General Guidance](#)
2. [Guidelines for Completion of Application Form](#)
3. [Online Application Form](#) - (Please note - this is a Word version of the application form for your use only. The online application form needs to be completed).

Completed Application Forms:

Applicants are responsible for ensuring the application is submitted in a timely manner. The Clear Project assumes no legal liability or responsibility resulting from any information technology problems when submitting the application.

Please note: All data entered in the online application form will be saved once you click the 'Save & Submit' button. This can be retrieved by providing all the inputs in the search box popup that appears when the form is loading. (Please note - the link to this form should be live before close of play on Thursday 29th June).

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 26 July 2023 at 3pm

For further details please contact:

The Clear Project, Developing Healthy Communities
Building 83, Ledwidge Avenue
Ebrington
Derry~Londonderry
BT47 6GZ.

Tel: 028 7138 3386
Email: clear@dhcni.com



Eat it Up Fund

The Eat it Up Fund is a new £200,000 fund provided by Starbucks (with the money coming from Starbucks 5p cup charge) in partnership with Hubbub Foundation UK, which is an environmental charity.

Objectives of Fund

This new grant fund is aimed at finding and supporting creative approaches to reducing food waste.

The fund will support UK registered organisations with an early-stage food waste project with potential for impact at scale.

The funding is for initiatives that do one or more of the following:

- Address pre-farmgate waste (the food production process, up to the point where the products have been harvested and prepared as produce for sale).
- Prevent food from being wasted at the manufacturing and processing stage.
- Minimise food waste from retailers.
- Find creative ways to use surplus food in communities or at home.

The fund can support ideas that are ready to test, or concepts that have been tested and are ready to progress further.

A total of £200,000 is available with grants of up to £40,000.

The grant must be used within one year of funding being awarded.

Who Can Apply

Applications will be accepted from any organisation that can prove they are an officially constituted body, registered in the UK.



This includes:

- Registered charities, including charitable incorporated organisations and not for profit companies
- Social enterprises
- Community Interest Companies
- Schools, universities and colleges
- Local authorities
- Micro and small businesses with a clear social purpose (less than 50 employees and an annual turnover under £10 million)

Applications from a collaboration of organisations are welcomed as long as the lead organisation is one of the types of organisations listed above.

The fund's terms and conditions, frequently asked questions and Expression of Interest form can be found on the Eat it Up Fund website. A Q&A webinar will be held on 3 July 2023 (10.30am to 11.15am). [Registration](#) is required for this Zoom session.

There is a two-stage application process.

- Stage one is to complete an Expression of Interest form. The deadline for EoIs is 21 July 2023 (5pm).
- Stage two is only open to those organisations who are invited to apply. Full applications will be accepted from 14 August 2023 to 22 September 2023.

Successful applicants will be informed in October 2023 and the winners will be announced publicly at the end of 2023.

For more information and to apply, please visit [Eat It Up Fund | Hubbub x Starbucks](#)



Migrant Help Community Hubs Grant Scheme

Background

The Community Hubs Grant Scheme is provided and administered by Migrant Help.

Founded in 1963, Migrant Help is a registered charity that supports asylum seekers, refugees, victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, and others affected by displacement and exploitation.

Objectives of Fund

The funding aims to support new and existing community hubs and drop-in services that increases support and access to local services for asylum seekers and refugees through:

- Supporting third sector organisations delivering non contracted services to asylum seekers and refugees.
- Encouraging community integration.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Welcoming asylum seekers and refugees into communities around the UK .
- Providing support to organisations and projects which may struggle to find support elsewhere.

Two grants are available:

- **Small bridging grants of up to £2,000**
 - To help with things like short-term running costs whilst seeking further funding or to provide essential needs that cannot be met elsewhere. This may include essentials like covering unexpected increases in bills / venue hire, activity costs, material items or for costs of training and advertising.
- **Sustainability and start up grants of up to £5,000**
 - To help start a new hub in an area of high need or to invest in an existing hub, creating sustainability, such as equipment, training for staff and volunteers, support in advertising opportunities or identifying partners, hosting launch days and community events etc.

Who Can Apply

Applications will be accepted from:

- Registered organisations managing existing hubs.
- Constituted groups.
- Charities.
- Faith groups.
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Not for profit organisations.
- Partnerships of not-for-profit organisations.

Priority will be given to individuals and organisations who have not previously received funding from Migrant Help.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have a bank account in the organisation's name.

- Have adequate insurance in place to deliver the service or project as well as relevant safeguarding procedures.

Restrictions

The following are not eligible for funding:

- Public sector organisations, such as the NHS, Police, Local Authority etc.
- Private sector organisations.
- Organisations currently in receipt of a community hub grant from Migrant Help.
- Organisations with a greater annual turnover than £5 million.
- Work that has already been carried out (retrospective funding).
- Activities and services that do not predominantly benefit asylum seekers, migrants, refugees, survivors of trafficking and modern slavery.
- Projects or services that should be statutory duty, ie, covered under mainstream government funding.
- Projects that promote political or religious beliefs.

Eligible Expenditure

The funding can be used for:

- Capital costs, such as equipment, furniture and materials, etc.
- Revenue costs, such as staff wages, venue hire costs.

There are no deadlines for applications; however, when the maximum funding available for each year has been distributed, the applications will close until the following round in the next year. The year runs from 1 April to 31 March the following calendar year.

Applications can be submitted at any time and will be assessed on a bi-monthly basis with deadlines to submit applications for each round.

There will be five funding rounds with the following application windows:

- 1 April to 31 May 2023 with a decision by 30 June 2023
- 1 June to 31 July 2023 with a decision by 31 August 2023
- 1 August to 30 September with a decision by 31 October 2023
- 1 October to 30 November with a decision by 31 December 2023
- 1 December to 31 January 2024 with a decision by 29 February 2024.

Only one application per organisation can be made in any single funding round.

For more information and to apply, please visit [Migrant Help Community Hubs Grant Application \(office.com\)](https://www.migranthelp.org.uk/community-hubs-grant-application)



Micro Community Investment Fund

Fund Aims

The fund will provide valuable investment for community initiatives making a difference in towns and villages across Northern Ireland.

The fund will enable those organisations who are making the lives of others in their communities better, by improving their financial, physical, and mental wellbeing.

Criteria

You do not have to have a constitution to apply to this fund. We will discuss your project with you in advance of application if you do not have certain governance requirements for funding in place.

We want to support smaller, grassroots organisations delivering great work. For this reason, whilst groups with an income of up to £30,000 per annum are eligible to apply preference will be given to groups with an income of up to £10,000.

Community Investments available: Up to £2,000

Applications are sought to support both new and existing activities and projects that enhance the financial, physical and/or mental well being of people in communities. We will support new or existing community initiatives that have a particular focus on addressing the challenges people are facing around the rising cost of living.

Community projects should focus on improving at least one of the following:

- Financial wellbeing
- Physical wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing

Applications for funding within one or other of these themes could be to support:

- Projects promoting inclusion and belonging, particularly to enhance the physical and mental well being of the local community

- Projects that strengthen the capacity of individuals to engage with a range of available digital services in order to help manage their money in a digital age
- Projects that enhance people's financial knowledge through financial education programmes
- Projects promoting physical activity which uses the assets located within the area
- Projects that improve the ability of individuals to access mental health and wellbeing services either i) directly, through the provision of support or ii) indirectly, through education/awareness raising programmes
- Projects that encourage the active participation of individuals in their own mental wellbeing. Projects should aim to promote increased independence/resilience in relation to an individual's mental health



We want to prioritise projects that:

- Focus on the positive contribution of people within the community and support the challenges that people face in light of the rising cost of living
- Enable active participation of a community in decision-making and involvement in making their community a better place to live in
- Focus on the assets within the community which the project will use to make the community a better place to live in
- Help get people engaged in taking community action where it hasn't happened before to make the community a better place to live in.
- Projects that address more than one particular strand of wellbeing

For more information and to apply, please visit [Micro Community Investment Fund - Community Foundation Northern Ireland \(communityfoundationni.org\)](https://communityfoundationni.org)



The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is delighted to announce that PEACEPLUS funding calls are now open!

The SEUPB are currently accepting applications to the following PEACEPLUS Investment Areas. Please click on the Investment Area you are interested in to find further information.



Investment Area 1.1 - Co-Designed Local Authority PEACEPLUS Action Plans
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2619>

Investment Area 1.4 - Re-Imaging Communities
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2623>

Investment Area 3.1 - Shared Learning Together Education Programme (Formal Education)
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2621>

Investment Area 3.1 - Shared Learning Together Education Programme (Non-Formal Education)
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2622>

Investment Area 3.2 - PEACEPLUS Youth Programme
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2617>

Investment Area 3.2 - Quality and Impact Body for the PEACEPLUS Youth Programme
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2618>

Investment Area 4.3 - Victims and Survivors
<https://www.seupb.eu/node/2620>

Application Support

Online support and guidance for completing your application is available on the new [PEACEPLUS Support Portal](#). This includes how-to guides and videos to help you throughout the application process.

If no call has been opened yet for the Investment Area you are interested in, please visit the Pre-Application support page. Before each PEACEPLUS funding call opens the SEUPB will hold a pre-application support workshop for each Investment Area. Recordings of these workshops and information on future workshops will be published in the Pre-Application section.

[Find our more about pre-application support](#)

Funding Clinic Sessions

Wednesday 19th July 2023 from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm

This is a one-to-one funding support session for HCN members with Anita Doonan, Funding and Social Value Officer. You can meet by phone or video call, whatever you prefer.

Start thinking about your next projects by asking questions like:

- What funding to apply for
- How to structure your application and plan accurate budgets
- How to carry out a community survey
- How to prepare for action planning
- How to do pre and post-monitoring and evaluation of your project

Book Your Place

Please [fill in this form](#) to request an appointment.

The funding clinic will run from 10 am - 3 pm with 30 min slots available for individuals or groups to discuss their funding needs one-to-one with our funding officer.

This service is free for HCN members. If you are interested in becoming a member of the [Housing Community Network](#), please get in touch!

