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Welcome to Supporting Communities 224th 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

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## Share our roads responsibly - Annual road safety appeal from the Department for Infrastructure and PSNI

**The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is reminding everyone of our shared responsibility in 2024 to safeguard our own safety and that of others, however we choose to travel on our roads.**

The release of provisional figures today by the PSNI show that 69 people died in road tragedies during 2023.



Department for

**Infrastructure**

An Roinn

**Bonneagair**

Department for

**Infrastructure**

Reflecting on the loss of life over the year, Dr Denis McMahon, DfI Permanent Secretary said:

“In 2023, 69 people have had their lives cut short and hundreds more have been seriously injured on our roads. I wish to offer my sincere sympathies to all those who have lost loved ones and to those who endure life-changing injuries through road collisions.

“Evidence shows that most road deaths are avoidable, as more than nine in ten deaths and serious injuries are due to human error. We all share the responsibility for road safety. So if you are driving, slow down; pay attention and look out for other road users; leave the mobile phone alone; always wear a seatbelt and NEVER ever drink or take drugs and drive.”

Continuing Dr McMahon said:

“What is particularly shocking this year is the high number of deaths of some of the most vulnerable road users - motorcyclists and pedestrians. 13 motorcyclists and 19 pedestrians have died on our roads this year, which accounts for over 46% of road deaths this year.

“If you are a driver help protect more vulnerable road users by slowing down and paying attention. If you are walking please always be aware of your surroundings and if walking at night please ensure you can be seen. And if you are a cyclist or motorcyclist, please ensure you put your safety first. By each and every road user taking personal responsibility, we are likely to see a reduction in the number of people being killed or seriously injured.

“As we start a new year, please resolve to help prevent collisions and save lives by slowing down and paying attention.”

The Department is actively committed to improving safety on our roads and continue to work closely with our road safety partners in the PSNI, the Fire and Rescue Service, the Ambulance Service and many other agencies to deliver a programme of road safety education, engineering and enforcement initiatives.

Chief Superintendent Sam Donaldson from the Police Service of Northern Ireland’s Operational Support Department said:

“Reducing deaths and serious injury on our roads is a priority for us and we hope that our new initiative which highlights that people who sadly die on our roads are more than just a statistic, will offer people the guidance and information they need to ensure they always reach their destination safely.

“This number is simply horrific and I appeal to all road users to learn about the steps they can take to keep themselves and others safe on our roads.

“As well as deaths, many people have suffered serious and life-changing injuries, demonstrating that as a society, road safety is something that needs to be taken more seriously.

“The responsibility for making our roads a safer place is one that we ALL share, remember the ‘Fatal Five’ - don’t drink or take drugs and drive; slow down; don’t be careless; always wear your seat belt and never use your mobile phone whilst driving.”



# VCS Representation on the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme – NICVA Call for Nominations **\*\*Closing Date Extended\*\***



Kathy Maguire of NICVA writes;



Children's Social Care Services  
Reform Programme

On behalf of the Department of Health, NICVA is currently seeking nominations for Voluntary Community Sector positions across the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme.

Summary of the selection and appointment process

The Department of Health has appointed NICVA to undertake a selection process to nominate representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector to the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme.

NICVA is now inviting organisations working within the sector to nominate representatives to be considered for a range of positions across the programmes structures.

A total of 27 VCS positions are available, including membership of the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme Board and the position of Co-Chair of the Family Support Workstream.

The application process is open from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and now closes at 12pm on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and voluntary and community sector organisations are invited to consider and make nominations during this period.

Organisations can apply for any number of the available positions (one application is required per position) but can only be represented once on the programme.

A Selection Panel made up of two Voluntary and Community Sector representatives of NICVA's Executive Board and a senior representative from the Department of Health will consider and agree appointment recommendations for each of the 27 positions across the Reform Programme.

The Panels nominations will be based on their assessment of all applications against selection criteria provided by the Programme Board. The Panel will then confirm their nominations to the Chair and Board of the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme.

Final decision making on all appointments and the creation of reserve lists for each available position will be made by the Chair of the Programme Board.

It is anticipated that all VCS appointments will be confirmed by late February 2024. We will update this timeline, if and when more information becomes available.

What is the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme.

The Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme is seeking to deliver reform within children's social care services to address a range of known service challenges, particularly in relation to the increasing volume and complexity of case work. It is also seeking to draw together a number of strands of ongoing reform work, including the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme and workforce-related reform.

## Reform Structures

The Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme Board ('the Board') is responsible for providing strategic oversight, direction & governance for the delivery of the reform programme. It ensures that a robust programme plan (supported by workstream plans) is in place and is monitoring progress of the workstreams against the plan.

The role of the Board is to:

- Provide overall strategic direction for the programme;
- Promote co-ordinated activity and collaboration within and across organisational boundaries;
- Ensure the required resources are available;
- Monitor progress against agreed milestones, providing support and challenge, as necessary;
- Advise on contingencies and counter-measures to mitigate the impact of any potential risks to progress; and
- Expedite decision making should implementation issues require escalation.

[Terms of Reference for the Programme Board can be viewed here.](#)

For more information on these roles and details of how to apply, go to; [VCS Representation on the Children's Social Care Services Strategic Reform Programme – NICVA Call for Nominations \*\*\\*\\*Closing Date Extended\\*\\*\*\* | NICVA](#)

## “Interested in making the consumer voice heard and making it count?”

The Department for the Economy (DfE) is seeking to appoint a Chair, Deputy Chair and eight Members to the Board of the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland (CCNI). It is anticipated that the appointments will be effective from 1 May 2024 for a four year term.

Time commitment and remuneration (under review):  
Chair - up to 1½ days per week - £24,415 per annum  
Deputy Chair - 1½ days per month - £154.27 (over 4 hours per day) and £77.13 (under 4 hours per day).  
Board Members - 1 day per month - £116.32 (over 4 hours per day) and £58.17 (under 4 hours per day).

No academic qualifications are required for the posts. Appointment will be made on merit from those individuals who best satisfy the criteria. A Guaranteed

Interview Scheme, for applicants with a disability, will operate for this competition.

For more information on the positions including responsibilities and selection criteria please download or request an application pack:  
[www.economy-ni.gov.uk/department-economy-public-appointments](http://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/department-economy-public-appointments); Telephone: 028 90529461 or 028 90529212 Email: [pau@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:pau@economy-ni.gov.uk)



The closing date for applications is 12.00 Noon (GMT) on 8th February 2024. Late applications will not be accepted.

## Northern Ireland Housing Executive – Building for the future

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive has cut sod on its first housing development in nearly 25 years.

The scheme will see six semi-detached dwellings built at Sunningdale Gardens, North Belfast by construction company, GEDA. Part of a new build pilot, the six homes will be built using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and ultra-low energy building techniques, to Passive House standard.

NIHE Chief Executive, Grainia Long said: “We are excited to see work begin on these modern homes which we hope will offer a blueprint for the future of social housing. We are not just building new homes for our tenants for the first time in a generation. We are building future-proofed homes that will be constructed to a standard beyond that of current building regulations in Northern Ireland.

“Making sure our tenants have homes that are safe, warm and dry is always our priority and this pilot pairs that with our commitment to reaching net zero. The ultra-low energy building methods being used to construct these houses will mean that our tenants benefit from improved energy efficiency and a reduction in carbon emissions, lower heating bills, savings from reduced fuel costs and more comfortable homes. This pilot will also give us the opportunity to explore the practicalities of returning to building homes as part of the revitalization of our organization.”

Construction on site will begin immediately.

Ms Long continued: “We are keen for work to get underway so that people on the waiting list can benefit from these additional homes. It is important for us, as the strategic housing authority for Northern Ireland, to influence the future of social housing and reimagine what estates and housing developments could look like. This scheme will help us to investigate how Modern Methods of Construction can be utilized to deliver much needed homes within a faster timeframe, to a higher level of fabric performance and explore ways to drive down costs, in comparison with traditional construction methods.”



NIHE Chief Executive, Grainia Long, Chair of the Housing Executive Board, Nicole Lappin, Construction Director, GEDA Construction, Damian Murray and Department for Communities' Director of Social Housing, Paul Price gathered with representatives from NIHE and GEDA Construction to cut sod on the new build pilot at Sunningdale Gardens, north Belfast.

Construction Director for GEDA, Damian Murray, welcomed the partnership with NIHE and said: “Geda Construction, as prominent social housing builders, are delighted to be involved in this pilot scheme that builds on our long-standing eco credentials.

“Bringing Passive House standards to social housing helps tackle the fuel poverty crisis and aligns perfectly with our Net Zero ambitions. We are looking forward to working with the team at NIHE and our Passive associates, Nilan.Green in making the comfortable and economic attributes of Passive House living achievable for all.”

From the Department for Communities, Director of Social Housing Paul Price said: “We’re marking the start of this a significant, and welcome, development at Sunningdale Gardens for a number of reasons. Primarily, these homes will help address the need for quality housing which exists in our society. Alongside this, these homes will be built to energy efficiency standards at a time when tackling climate change is a key strand of government policy. So what is happening here won’t just provide accommodation for those in need, it will also be more fuel efficient for the residents and have less of an environmental impact overall.”

## Shaping the Future Relationship with Government



An update from Denise Hayward, VCS Co-Chair of the Joint Forum on behalf of the Voluntary and Community Sector Panel, on proposals for a new Agreement between the Voluntary and Community Sector and Government

The [Joint Forum](#) was set up in 1988 to promote regular dialogue between the Voluntary and Community Sector and Departments of the NI Government. The forum is made up of public sector representatives and a Voluntary and Community Sector Panel (VCS Panel) of 15 representatives elected from the sector. The VCS Panel meets with senior representatives from across government and the public sector regularly throughout the year, as the Joint Forum. As an integral part of its workplan for this current Joint Forum term, the Forum's membership has been working on a review of the existing [Concordat](#) - an agreement which underpins the relationship and which was last updated in 2011. Former Communities Minister Deirdre Hargey mandated the forum to undertake this review of the Concordat as part of a reset of the Joint Forum in September 2022.

The Forum has taken evidence from across the UK and Ireland about how the relationship between public bodies and the sector works elsewhere and the public policy and legislative frameworks which support these relationships. In the past six months the Forum and in particular the VCS Panel has been shaping a set of values and practices that should underpin these relationships in the future. Our proposals are rooted in recognition of both sectors distinct yet complementary roles in contributing to the social, economic, environmental, and cultural life of Northern Ireland and the belief that by collaborating and working better together, we can increase our impact and agency. Any new Concordat/Agreement should act as a framework for improving partnership working which recognises and supports the contribution each makes to improving the lives of individuals and communities.

On the basis of this mutual understanding of each other's roles, it should be recognised that the VCS sector continues to be a key partner in formulating and delivering many aspects of public policy/ services, and as such, there is a need to develop much stronger partnerships/relationships with government and its agencies. Many VCS sector organisations play a dual role, acting not only as advocates for change or improvement, but also delivering vital service and supports to beneficiaries and communities. A new Concordat/Agreement should recognise the importance of the VCS sector to a healthy, just and prosperous society, and set out

how Government will work alongside and support the sector as a key partner in the years to come.

It should be noted that the VCS Panel is most keen to continue exploring the potential for any new agreement to be given a statutory footing by implementing legislation that would solidify the relationship between the VCS and the Northern Ireland Government and the commitments enshrined in any new concordat/agreement. However, we recognise that this process will take time and we therefore support, in the interim, a clearer link between the new Concordat/Agreement and the Programme for Government and other measures such as a Ministerial statement.

The VCS Panel has begun a process of engagement with the wider sector on these issues via an online consultation event on the 14th November 2023 in preparation for a public consultation by the Department for Communities on the values and principles of a new agreement. This forms part of a wider consultation by the Department on draft proposals for future Infrastructure support of the Voluntary and Community Sector in NI. This [consultation](#) launched on 15th November, and we would encourage everyone in the sector to respond to this to help shape and inform these important relationships.

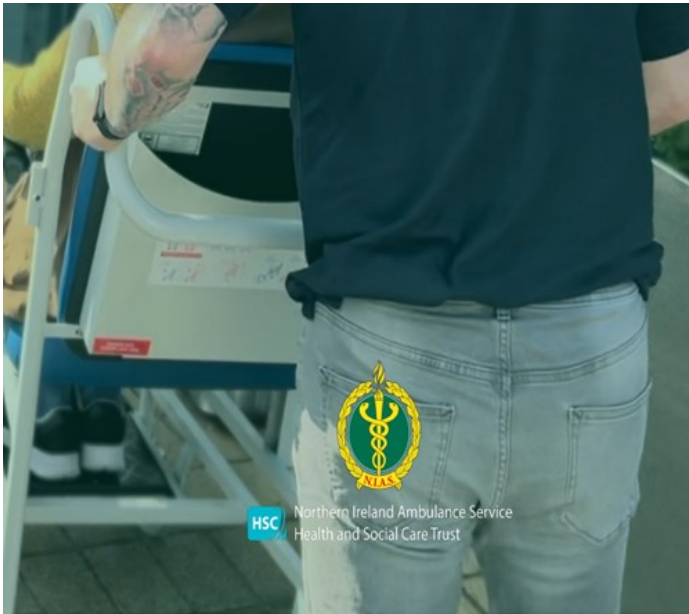
In addition, the VCS Panel will be hosting a series of face to face and online events in January 2024 to engage with the sector in more detail on these issues and to ensure that we represent as wide a range of views as possible in our discussions on final proposals for an agreement between the sectors. *More details on these events, including venues etc. will follow in the next few weeks.*

Denise Hayward  
Co-Chair, Govt and Voluntary Sector Joint Forum – on behalf of the Joint Forum Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Panel

The [Concordat between the Voluntary & Community Sector and the Northern Ireland Government](#) published in 2011, set out a shared vision and agreed commitments between the sectors to work together as social partners to build a participative, peaceful, equitable and inclusive community in Northern Ireland.

For more information on the Joint Forum, including the full list of current Voluntary and Community Sector Panel representatives, please visit [here](#).





# BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH THE NIAS VOLUNTEER CAR SERVICE



## BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH THE NIAS VOLUNTEER CAR SERVICE

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) plans to increase the size of its Volunteer Car Service (VCS), which provides high quality transport to and from non-emergency healthcare appointments and treatments for patients that don't require an ambulance. VCS is viewed as a vital part of NIAS' Patient Care Service.



## YOU WILL BENEFIT FROM:

- ✔ Volunteering within your own community
- ✔ A supportive work environment, with a designated VCS contact and peer support via VCS Forum activities.
- ✔ NIAS badged uniform
- ✔ Developing key interpersonal and workplace related skills.
- ✔ Reasonable expenses covered, including a competitive mileage.
- ✔ Gaining experience of working within the Health & Social Care environment

### VCS DRIVERS OPINION

"If you're a people person and want to help those who are sick or those in their potential end days then this is the role for you. It's very rewarding and your patients become like friends or family." - Richard

### THE ROLE:

- ✔ Support patients in your community by transporting to non-emergency healthcare appointments and treatments.
- ✔ Personally rewarding and fulfilling, an opportunity to help your community.
- ✔ Flexible, to fit in with other aspects of your life.
- ✔ and reasonable expenses covered.

### SERVICE USERS VIEW

"I have nothing but thanks and admiration for this excellent service and it the drivers themselves which is its best asset."  
Eric



So, if you are over 18, with no more than 3 points on your driving licence and with access to your own car then why not explore this fulfilling voluntary role with NIAS.

For further information or to make an application please contact [nias.vcs@nias.hscni.net](mailto:nias.vcs@nias.hscni.net) or: 028 7134 7134 Option 3, or Mobile/Text message: 07771520122, or post to Non-Emergency Ambulance Control (NEAC), Altnagelvin | Glenshane Road, Derry-Londonderry, BT47 6GT.

# Consultations

## Launch of a consultation on proposals to amend legislation to help tackle Anti-Social Behaviour

DfC, in conjunction with the Department of Justice, is publishing proposals for future legislation on Anti-Social Behaviour. A consultation has been launched and will run for 14 weeks until Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The full consultation documentation is available online [here](#) and there will also be social media activity to increase awareness of the consultation.



Social Housing Policy have contributed to the consultation and have developed housing-related proposals concerning:

- Injunctions against anti-social behaviour; and
- Absolute Grounds for Possession.

We want to ensure that we receive as many responses as possible to enable the proposals to be strengthened and developed in order to bring forward legislation. We would encourage all relevant housing colleagues to read the consultation and provide feedback.

The consultation document and supporting documents are available at; [Anti-Social Behaviour | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

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## Community and Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Support - future plans

The Department is carrying out a programme of work aimed at refreshing the policy frameworks for our voluntary and community sector support. This includes agreeing with



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our partners on the outcomes that we should prioritise in future years. A review of sectoral needs will inform how we can better support the sector to deliver outcomes set out in any future Programme for Government.

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We welcome views and responses on the proposed framework through our consultation events being hosted both in person and online through November and December 2023, and are inviting you to sign up for one of our events at; [Community and Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Support - future plans | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

The events will take the form of roundtable discussions and are an opportunity to share thoughts, ideas or comments.

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## Strategic Framework to Prevent the Harm caused by Obesity, and Improve Diets and Levels of Physical Activity

Department of Health

[Strategic Framework to Prevent the Harm caused by Obesity, and Improve Diets and Levels of Physical Activity | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing Date; 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## Department launches a Call for Evidence on Planning Policy and Climate Change

The Department for Infrastructure is inviting the public to have their say as a consultation to help inform any future focused review of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) is launched.

The SPPS sets out the regional planning policies for the orderly and consistent development of land here. Given the climate emergency and the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, the Department is looking at how its planning policies can help to reduce carbon emissions, as we collectively chart the path to net zero by 2050. We have seen at first hand the significant impacts of recent flooding events and there is understandably an increased interest in the role of planning policy in responding to our changing climate.

Our planning system plays an important role in helping to address the climate change challenges we will continue to face. We are currently finalising the review of planning policy for renewable and low carbon energy, which was consulted on last year. In addition, we need to consider whether the rest of the SPPS remains appropriate and fit for purpose in relation to climate change. For example, a future focussed review of the SPPS could include a fresh look at the appropriateness of extant policy provisions such as on flood risk, transportation and development in the countryside.

Planning matters affect everyone and the Department is continually seeking opportunities to make positive changes to planning policy which will support the planning system as it shapes our places and communities, delivering for people now and for future generations.



The primary purpose of the Call for Evidence is to engage with stakeholders on the proposed areas of focus for a review of the SPPS and to invite the submission of evidence on the relevant factors that can assist with determining the best way forward.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks until 5.00 pm on Thursday 28 March 2024 and the Department welcomes responses from the public, stakeholders and planning authorities.

Documents are available at:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/call-evidence-future-focused-review-SPPS-climate-change>

The information gathered through the Call for Evidence will be considered by the Department and will help inform any decision by a future Infrastructure Minister on a potential review of the SPPS and the options for it. In the absence of Ministers, any final decisions will be taken in light of the decision-making framework at that time.

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## Northern Ireland Youth Assembly - The Big Youth Survey

The Big Youth Survey is live on CitizenSpace and we need your help!

As you may be aware, the new Youth Assembly is up and running and they will be choosing issues to focus on over their two-year mandate. We're asking young people, aged between 12-21, to help them decide.

It is live from 8 January until midnight 26 January. It will only take 5 minutes to fill in and you can find the link below:

<https://consult.nia-yourassembly.org.uk/youth-assembly/big-youth-survey-2024>

Young people, aged 12-21 years old are encourage to tell us what issues they think the Youth Assembly Members should focus on.

It can also be found on our social media channels below:

<https://twitter.com/niyouthassembly>

<https://www.facebook.com/northernirelandyouthassembly/>

<https://www.instagram.com/niyouthassembly/>



Youth Assembly

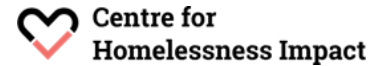
Room 26  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX



# Policy and Practice Focus

## Report exposes critical links between refugee resettlement and rising rates of UK street homelessness

### Scottish Housing News



*A report released by the Centre for Homelessness Impact sheds light on the challenges faced by refugees being resettled in the UK.*

Exploring the connection between poverty, education, health inequalities and housing, [the report](#) emphasises the role housing plays in shaping the destiny of those on the edge of society. It highlights that refugees bear a disproportionate burden, often facing multiple challenges and disadvantages when trying to find stable accommodation.

Key findings from the report include:

- The correlation between the UK's asylum system and a 223% increase in people sleeping rough after leaving asylum housing.
- Large-scale resettlement programmes, including the Homes for Ukraine schemes, leave people with an increased risk of homelessness due to a lack of support when people leave host households.
- Short move-on periods after asylum application decisions, welfare reforms, the right-to-rent policy, and family reunifications significantly contribute to housing instability for refugees.
- Housing challenges are intricately connected to broader societal issues such as education, health, and employment and refugees face heightened disadvantages in these key areas, impacting their ability to secure and stay in stable homes.

The report, which was written by academics at the University of Huddersfield, delves into statistics revealing a 223% surge in street homelessness for people leaving asylum between June and September 2023. This trend indicates a troubling link between the UK's asylum system and the growing levels of homelessness.

The analysis brings attention to differences in how well different resettlement programmes work. Due to a lack of support during the move from temporary to permanent housing and a lack of appropriate and affordable accommodation, Afghan refugees faced prolonged stays in temporary 'bridging accommodation', while those in the Homes for Ukraine schemes faced a higher risk of homelessness after leaving host families. Looking into why refugees in the UK might end up homeless, the report pinpoints certain factors that may contribute, such as the time it takes to find accommodation after an asylum application, changes in welfare rules, the policy about renting and family reunification. The study shows that people who become refugees through the asylum

process often face more uncertainty and instability when trying to find a stable place to live.

Professor Philip Brown, from the University of Huddersfield and lead researcher on the project, said: "Those people who arrive in the UK to seek sanctuary have, over the last few decades, been increasingly finding themselves accommodated in precarious situations, often enduring homelessness. This is particularly common for those receiving refugee status after a decision on their claim for asylum. These are challenges shared by many people in the UK. A lack of social housing, low-pay work and a poorly resourced support system maintain common struggles. The lack of familiarity with UK systems, difficulty getting into employment and an often fledging grasp of English mean that, for refugees, they find things even harder. We hope that our analysis helps to see where things can be done to help refugees live their lives in peace. Many of these things will help everyone who is struggling to have somewhere safe to call home."

Ligia Teixeira, chief executive of the Centre for Homelessness Impact, said: "This research allows us to better understand the lives of refugees in the UK and highlights the deep personal struggles that people are facing. It's not just about statistics; it's about individuals yearning for stability and security. To truly address this crisis, we must adopt a strategic approach to national and local refugee settlement. "Increasing awareness of rights and providing tailored support are critical for supporting people on their journey towards stability. This involves empowering refugees with knowledge and resources and fostering agency in navigating their new lives."

The report recommends practical measures for the sector. **Among these are extending the move-on period, acknowledging the crucial role of social housing providers, and ensuring access to rights-based advice. By providing increased face-to-face support and building capacity within refugee communities, more thoughtful and effective approaches towards refugee resettlement can be created.**



# Publications



## 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 with the Chief Constable's Report to the Board at [chief-constables-report-northern-ireland-policing-board.pdf \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#) and the Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing at [Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)

In addition the November edition of Policing Matters is available at; [Policing Matters December 2023.pdf](#)



The Report "Linking the Irish Environment" is available at [Linking-the-Irish-Environment-Executive-Summary-June-2023.pdf \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#). For other NIEL publications and events, go to; [www.nienvironmentlink.org](#)



Please click the link below to access the latest newsletter 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](#)



Welcome to the latest issue of Signpost full of updated news for September 2023 with all the latest updates on information and activities relevant to older people and organisations supporting older people this month. [age-ni-signpost-express-september-2023.pdf \(ageuk.org.uk\)](#)

Please see the list of following jobs currently available at the Housing Executive:

- 2024-26 - Leaseholder Unit Officer
- 2024-18 - Senior Admin Officer—Major Adaptions
- 2024-27 - IT Service Manager
- 2023-215 - Housing Advisor



Further information on these jobs can be found at the GetGot website which can be accessed by clicking this [link](#) and typing 'Housing Executive' into the search bar.

# Events

## Charity Commission Annual Public Meeting

Northern Ireland's Chief Charity Commissioner, Gerard McCurdy, invites you to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's annual public meeting on Wednesday, 31 January 2024.



The event, which will take place from 9.30am to 12.30pm at Riddel Hall, Belfast, will see Mr McCurdy, Commission Chief Executive, Frances McCandless, and colleagues provide updates and insights into the Commission's work.

Given the growing prevalence of online crime, this year's event will also have a focus on cyber-crime with speakers from the National Cyber Security Centre and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) looking at the latest trends and offering advice on how to protect your charity.

Open to the public, the event is free of charge but pre-registration is a must. To book your place please email [events@charitycommissionni.org.uk](mailto:events@charitycommissionni.org.uk)

For more information, please contact Shirley Kernan, Commission Communications Officer, on telephone: 028 3832 0169 or email: [shirley.kernan@charitycommissionni.org.uk](mailto:shirley.kernan@charitycommissionni.org.uk)

## Big Garden Birdwatch

26-28th January 2024



Big Garden Birdwatch is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Every year, hundreds of thousands of nature lovers like you take part, helping to build a picture of how garden birds are faring.

### How to take part

Spend an hour watching the birds in your patch, between 26 and 28 January, and record the birds that

land.

Tell us what you saw (even if that's nothing at all!) You can submit your results online or by post.

[Big Garden Birdwatch FAQs](#)



Choose an hour between 26 and 28 January

Only record the birds that land in your patch



Record the highest number of each bird species you see at any one time



For more information and to sign up, go to;

[Big Garden Birdwatch | Register \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk)

## Residential Building Safety Resident Information Event

### Resident Information Session

Improving High-rise Residential Building Safety

People who currently live in high-rise residential buildings\* are invited by the Department for Communities' Residential Building Safety Team to attend one of the information sessions on high-rise building safety being held on 30 & 31 January, and 1 February 2024.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RESIDENTS?**  
Our work aims to protect and reassure residents by improving high-rise building safety and minimising risks. In essence we want to help ensure your home stays safe and that you feel safe in it. **Further information can be found on the DfC Residential Building Safety webpage.**

**WHAT'S THE SESSION ABOUT?**  
The Department for Communities' Residential Building Safety Team will explain their work on improving building safety in high-rise residential buildings across Northern Ireland following the Grenfell Tower fire in London. The team's work will focus on residential building safety and in particular, fire safety issues stemming from building design, construction and ongoing operation and maintenance.

**TO LEARN MORE**  
We want to keep you up-to-date on this important work. Information sessions (lasting approximately one hour) will take place:

- Belfast - Public Record Office of NI (PRONI), 2 Titanic Boulevard, Titanic Quarter, Belfast BT3 9HQ on 30 January 2024
- Derry-Londonderry - Guildhall, Derry-Londonderry on 31 January 2024
- Online (via Microsoft Teams) at 7pm on 1 February 2024

\* The high-rise residential buildings included in the Residential Building Safety Team's work will normally have four or more floors and be over 11 metres high. Further detail is available on our website/at the information sessions.

### HOW DO I REGISTER?

Get in touch to register for a date and time that suits you.

**EMAIL**  
info.residentialbuildingsafety@communities-ni.gov.uk

**ONLINE**  
[CLICK HERE](#)

**CALL**  
Tel: 028 9082 3209

### EVENT LOCATIONS

**Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)**  
2 Titanic Boulevard  
BELFAST  
BT3 9HQ  
Tel: 028 9053 4800

**Guildhall**  
Guildhall Square  
Derry-Londonderry  
BT48 6DQ  
Tel: 028 7137 6510

All transport options to get to PRONI and a map are available online on [nidirect](#).  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/getting-proni-and-opening-hours](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/getting-proni-and-opening-hours)

Further information is available online:  
[guildhalderry.com/visit-us/](http://guildhalderry.com/visit-us/)



Department for Communities | An Roinn | Department for Communities  
www.communities-ni.gov.uk | Pobal

## Social Enterprise Plus & Your NWRC

Calling all social enterprises in the Derry / Londonderry area  
Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 11.00am



**Housing Executive**

**north west regional college**  
Derry-Londonderry • Limavady • Strabane

The Housing Executive in partnership with North West Regional College are holding an informal session on social enterprise and personal development. Come and hear what opportunities are available for new and existing social enterprises, meet other enterprises and meet other funders from the sector.

Lunch is available for participants.

For more information and tickets, go to Eventbrite at: [Social Enterprise Plus & Your NWRC Tickets, Wed, Feb 21, 2024 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)



## Mid & East Antrim Funding Roadshow for Community & Voluntary Groups

**Date: Tuesday 30th January 2024**

**Time: 2:30 am to 7:30 pm**

**Location: Larne Town Hall, Upper Cross Street, Larne, Northern Ireland, BT40**

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, in partnership with Supporting Communities and Larne Area Community Cluster, are hosting a Funding Roadshow for Community and Voluntary sector groups across Mid and East Antrim.

This event includes:

- A drop-in Funding Fair from 2.30 pm – 6.30 pm. This is an opportunity to speak with funders about funding opportunities and project ideas.
- A free awareness training workshop from 6 pm -7:30 pm on how to generate sustainable income through Social Enterprise. Numbers for this session are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Organisations attending on the day include:

- National Lottery fund
- CommunityFoundation NI
- NI Housing Executive
- The Executive Office
- Groundwork
- The Heritage Fund
- Network Personnel
- Department of Foreign Affairs
- Larne Community Development Project
- Supporting Communities



### To Register

Please contact Amanda at [Amanda.Cotter@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:Amanda.Cotter@midandeastantrim.gov.uk) or call 07391863492.

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## Omagh Funding Fair

**Date: Tuesday 13th February 2024**

**Time: 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Venue: Omagh Leisure Complex, Old Mountfield Road, Omagh, Northern Ireland, BT79**

**This event has been rescheduled due to the dangerous weather.**

**The Funding and Advice Fair will take place on Tuesday, 13 February, from 4-8 pm at the Omagh Leisure Complex.**

The Fair will allow groups and individuals to drop in and meet with representatives from various funding and support agencies.

We'll be there to help groups looking for funding and to tell them about our funding support services. Come meet funders face to face, find out what they have to offer, and discuss your ideas!

### More Information

Contact Anita Doonan, Supporting Communities Funding and Social Value Officer

Email: [anita@supportingcommunities.org](mailto:anita@supportingcommunities.org)

Tel: 07840849453

## Funding Clinic Sessions

**Date: Tuesday 6th February 2024**

**Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm**

Finding the right funding can be difficult and time-consuming. Get some help to streamline the process and improve your chances of success!

HCN members can book a one-to-one funding support session with Anita Doonan, Funding and Social Value Officer, for advice and help to access the resources your group needs.

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-minute slots available for individuals or groups to discuss their funding needs one-on-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!



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## Digital Drop-In Session at Murphy's on Main Street Community Hub Ederney

**Date: Thursday 29th February 2024**

**Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm**

**Location: Murphy's on Main Street Community Hub,  
15 Main Street, Enniskillen, NI BT93 0DH**

Do you need help to access online services?

Whether it's sending an email, getting onto Facebook, shopping online for the best deals, accessing your Universal Credit account....or simply learning how to turn your tablet on, we can help!

Anita Doonan from Supporting Communities will be at [Murphy's on Main Street](#) for a free digital skills support day on Thursday, 29 February. Bring your tablet, laptop, or smartphone and get one-to-one support on whatever has you stumped!

*A second drop-in day will be held on Thursday, 14 March also at the Ederney Community Hub.*

### Book Your Place

For more information and to book in for one-to-one help, please contact Neil at the Community Hub at 028 6625 1068.



FREE DIGITAL SKILLS SUPPORT

## Digital Drop-In Sessions at Murphy's on Main Street Ederney

*Do you need help to access online services?*

Whether it's sending an email, getting onto Facebook, shopping online for the best deals, accessing your Universal Credit account....or just learning how to turn your tablet on, we can help!

Anita Doonan from Supporting Communities will be at Murphy's on Main Street for free digital skills support days on **Thursday, 29 February** and **Thursday, 14 March**.

Bring your tablet, laptop, or smartphone and get one-to-one support on whatever has you stumped!

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**To book, contact:**

Neil at the Community Hub  
on 028 6625 1068



**Supporting  
Communities**  
Empowering Society





# Training

## Volunteer Now Training Sessions

### Measuring the Impact of Volunteering

**DATE:** Thursday 8th February 2024, 10.00 am - 12 noon

**ONLINE** Free Course

When it comes to recruiting and retaining volunteers, demonstrating the contribution people can make to your cause is vital. In fact, having a good understanding of the contribution of volunteering to your organisation is essential if we want to secure funding, influence effectively and so much more. In this session we'll explore the development of methods for measuring the contribution volunteers make to an organisation and society, how those methods work, their pros and cons, why you should measure volunteering and how to use the data you produce.

**PLEASE NOTE THIS SESSION IS FOR GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS OPERATING IN THE BELFAST CITY COUNCIL AREA ONLY.**



**Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis and are limited to a maximum of 5 per organisation.**

[Click here for instructions on how to create a Training Account.](#)

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

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## Housing Rights Training

### Housing Benefit and Universal Credit: The differences



Gain a basic understanding of the differences between Universal Credit and Housing Benefit.

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

[Book now](#)

**Location;** Online, Via Zoom

**Date;** 31 January 2024

**Time;** 10:00am to 1:00pm

This course is an entry level introduction to the housing element of Universal Credit and Housing Benefit. It will highlight the differences between the two.

#### What we will cover

- Updates on the progress of 'Move to Universal Credit' in Northern Ireland
- how Universal Credit differs from Housing Benefit
- how to assist people with applying for Universal Credit

- how housing costs will be dealt with under Universal Credit
- What types of accommodation are currently ineligible for UC applications

#### Who should attend?

- housing advisers (new or looking refresher)
- support workers (new or looking refresher)
- welfare officers (new or looking refresher)
- Constituency office staff

## Tenant Participation & Community Development OCN Level 2

Thursday, 1st February 2024 at 10.00 am  
Thursday, 21st March 2024 at 12.30 am

This new, improved 8-week course looks at the intersection of Tenant Participation and Community Development.

It is targeted at those working in social housing as well as community workers that engage with social housing providers in Northern Ireland.

(We will be looking at a course aimed at the Republic of Ireland in the future!)

This newly revamped course now includes a good practice visit, more case studies, and practical examples to help you develop in your work!



### Learning Objectives:

This course will ensure participants are able to:

- Understand what tenant participation is
- Understand the policy context within the UK
- Have knowledge of the tenant participation requirements in NI
- Be aware of the range of approaches to tenant participation
- Understand the components of a good tenant participation strategy
- Understand what community development is
- Have knowledge of the different approaches to community development
- Understand the community development process
- Be aware of the governance requirements

### Course Benefits:

In addition to increasing your knowledge and understanding of tenant participation and community development, this course will:

- Help you carry out your role as staff/tenant representative/volunteer
- Examine your organisation's strategy and see how your role fits in with it
- Share good practices with other housing professionals and tenant representatives
- Provide networking opportunities with like-minded professionals and volunteers
- Develop your career prospects and professional development with an accredited qualification

### Time Commitment:

This is an 8-week course that will be held on Thursdays from 1st February 2024 until 21st March 2024 from 10 am until 12.30 pm

Weekly sessions will be held on Zoom. One week will be an in-person day trip for a good practice visit - date to be announced.

**Cost:** £425 per person

### Registration & More Information:

Contact Siobhan O'Neill at [siobhan@supportingcommunities.org](mailto:siobhan@supportingcommunities.org) with any questions and to register your place. (Places are limited)

# Funding

## Grand Choice 2024

Local residents or groups in the Castlereagh East area of Lisburn and Castlereagh can apply for up to £1,000 via the 'Grand Choice' participatory budgeting initiative from 15 January 2024.

The key difference between Grand Choice and other council managed funding opportunities is that the successful projects are chosen by the community. The votes of those living in Castlereagh East will decide which projects will be funded.

Councillor Thomas Beckett, Leisure & Community Development Chairman, said: "Once again the council is proud to be supporting this scheme. There is £15,000 available for projects across the council's district electoral area of Castlereagh East. This includes the Moneyreagh, Ballyhanwood, Carrowreagh, Dundonald, Enler and Graham's Bridge areas.

"As with previous rounds of Grand Choice, successful projects can win up to £1,000 and will be chosen by their local community. Voting will be in person at a Community Decision Event on Saturday 9 March in St Mary's Church of Ireland Hall, Ballybeen, 1A Craighleigh Drive, Dundonald from 11am to 3pm. We encourage residents in the Castlereagh East area to use their voting power to select the projects they feel best suit their communities."

Projects that relate to one or more of the Take 5 themes of Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give will be eligible for funding.

All projects must be completed between March and June 2024.

Councillor Alan Givan, Chair of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP, said: "To date Grand Choice has been a great success in all the other district electoral areas with the most recent held in the Castlereagh South area in October 2023. It offers the perfect opportunity for residents, constituted groups and schools to bring a project or event to their local community. If you and a few friends have an idea to support your local community then I would encourage you to consider applying.

"You can apply for up to £1,000 for things such as online or in-person activities, events, tutors, workshops, performers or specialist facilitator. Should you have a specific community issue that needs addressed then you could request funding for marketing campaigns or equipment for projects. If your group is not constituted you must obtain sponsor support from a local constituted group.



"All applications will be assessed to ensure the project is legal, safe, and achievable within government guidance, the budget and timescale. Our communities have the power to decide where the Grand Choice funding goes.

**"Three online workshops have been scheduled to help you decide if your project would be eligible for 'Grand Choice' funds. Please join us and talk to the team who will be happy to answer your questions," concluded Councillor Givan.**

**The scheduled community Teams workshops are scheduled for:**

- **Tuesday 23 January 2024 at 6.30pm**
- **Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 10am**
- **Thursday 25 January 2024 at 3pm**

**To register to attend one of the workshop sessions please email:**  
[pcsp@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:pcsp@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP, PSNI, Sport NI, Ark Housing, Choice Housing and Northern Ireland Housing Executive have contributed to the scheme in addition to the council.

To apply online or to download an application form [please use this link](#) before Sunday 11 February 2024.





## Boots Charitable Trust Extends Grants Programme to Support Local Communities across the UK

Boots Charitable Trust is an independent registered charity wholly funded by Boots UK Limited. The Trust recently expanded its grants programme from its home base of Nottinghamshire to across the UK.

Registered charities working in the areas of health, lifelong learning, community development and social care can apply four times a year for grants of between £100 and £10,000. Grants of up to £5,000 are available for smaller voluntary organisations whose income and expenditure is less than £5,000 per year and who are not yet required to register with the Charity Commission.

To be eligible, projects must meet at least one of Trust's four funding priorities:

- Health: Community healthcare, such as homecare or support for sufferers of medical conditions, and health education and prevention
- Lifelong learning: Local literacy and numeracy projects
- Community development: For example, supporting councils in providing voluntary services
- Social care: Personal, social or community activities or schemes.

Additionally, a particular focus within each of these priorities is how the projects demonstrate a commitment to improving diversity, equality and inclusion within the community.



There is particular interest in projects with the capacity to deliver significant impact and which reach the greatest number of people.

The funding can be used for most expenditure items, including salary and running costs. Large building or construction projects will not be funded, although minor structural improvements and refurbishments would be considered.

There are four application windows per year and applications will only be accepted during the quarterly windows.

**Applications will next be accepted from 1 to 28 February 2024.**

For more information and to apply please visit [Boots UK - Boots Charitable Trust \(boots-uk.com\)](https://boots-uk.com)

## Water Quality Improvement Strand of NI Environmental Challenge Fund Open for Applications

Funding is available to community-focused organisations for projects to help people improve and to connect with Northern Ireland's aquatic environment.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has launched the 2024/25 call for applications to the Water Quality Improvement Strand of its Environmental Challenge Fund Competition. The competition is open to applications from constituted not-for-profit organisations and local authorities, with projects beginning from spring 2024.

All on the ground project activity must take place in Northern Ireland, with the three key themes for funding under this challenge competition as follows:

- Connecting people with the aquatic environment to achieve behavioural change.
- Conservation and restoration of our aquatic environments.
- Nature-based solutions, particularly for climate



Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone

change mitigation and adaptation.

Capital grants of between £5,000 and £30,000 are available to cover up to 85% of eligible project costs. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that sufficient match funding is available to complete their project, and projects must be completed by 28 February 2025.

**The deadline for applications is 10 March 2024 (11.59pm).**

For more information and to apply, please visit [Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand 2024/25 | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://daera-ni.gov.uk)



## Funding to Support Rural Development Projects Across the UK

NFU Mutual Charitable Trust is offering grants of between £1,000 and £50,000 for organisations working in agriculture, rural development, and insurance across the UK to deliver projects and activities across one or more of the Trust's main objectives:

- To advance the education of the public using research and dissemination of information concerning agriculture.
- To advance the education of young people within rural areas.
- To relieve poverty within rural areas.
- To promote the benefit and social welfare of inhabitants of rural communities by associating together with the inhabitants and local authorities, voluntary and other organisations to advance education and leisure.
- To promote research into agricultural-associated activities.
- To advance the education of the public using

research and dissemination of information concerning insurance.

Priority will be given to larger initiatives that would have a significant impact on rural communities, as well as initiatives in the areas of education of young people in rural areas and relief of poverty within rural areas.

Trustees met twice a year to consider applications, typically in June and November.

**The next deadline for applications is 24 May 2024.**

For more information and to apply, please visit [NFU Mutual Charitable Trust: What do we do | NFU Mutual](#)



**NFU Mutual  
Charitable Trust**

## Call 1 2024-2025 Financial Assistance now open

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council invites applications for financial assistance towards the programme areas outlines below:

- Arts & Culture Projects
- Community Engagement
- Community Events, Festivals
- Community Summer Schemes
- Good Relations
- Irish Language
- Minority Communities Fund
- PCSP Community Safety Support
- Sports Programmes
- Tourism Events

All themes are subject to funding availability. Late application submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**Closing: 28 February 2024 at 12 noon**

Due to the new system being built at present, please keep an eye on the Council's [Grants and Funding](#) page for where to apply and access the guidance notes. If all goes to schedule with the system build this information should be available the week commencing 15th January 2024.

### **Information workshops**

We will be running a series of online and in person workshops and recommend anyone interested in applying for financial assistance come along as we



Comhairle Ceantair  
**an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne  
and Down**  
District Council

will be able to introduce you to the new grant management system. There have also been quite a few changes to the eligible and ineligible criteria of some of the themes. Should you still be experiencing difficulty backing-up your information from the existing grant management system we will be offering support after the in-person workshops in Newry and Downpatrick, so if you wish to utilise this support please bring a laptop or tablet device with you to the session.

### **Workshop date, times and location:**

- 25 January 2024, 7pm – Conference Room, Downshire Civic Centre

[Tickets are booked via TicketSource.](#)

Should you have any queries, please contact:  
**Grants & Funding Unit**

T: 0330 137 4040 / 0330 137 4782  
E: [programmesunit@nmandd.org](mailto:programmesunit@nmandd.org)



## Creative Youth on a Shared Island Programme Invites Applications

Grants are available for sectoral organisations to facilitate projects encouraging creativity among 0-24 year-olds across the island of Ireland.

The Creative Youth on a Shared Island funding scheme seeks to reach children and young people by leveraging the experience and expertise of organisations working in the creative, cultural, arts, community and youth sectors. The primary focus is to encourage collaboration among young people, fostering opportunities for creative engagement across the island of Ireland.

The programme is seeking projects from partnerships that are of significant scale and ambition. Applications must be jointly made with at least one partner based in the Republic of Ireland and at least one partner based in Northern Ireland, with a lead partner identified for the project.

Eligible projects may include expanding existing initiatives or pilots, and applications are sought from diverse entities, including youth organisations,

community development groups, arts institutions, charities, philanthropic bodies, and more.

It is anticipated that a maximum grant of £154,000 (€180,000) will be awarded per project and that at least three projects will be funded. The timeframe for the projects to run is June 2024 to December 2025.

Applications are particularly sought which will foster sustained engagement between young people, as distinct from once off stand-alone events or engagements. Additionally, due to the commitment within the Creative Youth Plan 2023-2027 to young people who are considered seldom heard, it is envisaged that at least one of the projects funded would target a cohort in this category.

**The deadline for applications is 25 March 2024 (5pm).**

For more information and to apply, please visit [Applications are open for the Creative Youth on a Shared Island Fund - Creative Ireland Programme](#)

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## Openreach Community Fund

Constituted grass roots community and voluntary groups – grants between £500-£2000  
Criteria:

- Priority will be given to applications from small groups, typically with an annual income of less than £200,000, as evidenced in most recent set of accounts
- Projects must aim to directly support one of the following specific groups:
  - Young people
  - Older people
  - People with disabilities
- The Fund will not support projects targeting all ages.
- Priority will be given to projects that will benefit groups dealing with disadvantage (e.g. rural isolation, low income, social exclusion, reduced access to services), and projects that involve the beneficiaries in their development and delivery.
- In the event of oversubscription, priority will be given to lower income organisations

Examples of types of projects that may be supported within Fund themes:

- Community education and training opportunities
- Communication and leadership skills
- Local initiatives to improve resources and community facilities
- Creativity and self-expression through drama, music or a range of arts activities
- Inclusion and involvement of disadvantaged communities
- Out of school projects for young people

The   
Community  
Foundation  
Northern Ireland

**This round of the Openreach Community Fund (previously the Telecommunity Fund) will close for applications at 1:00pm on Tuesday 30 January 2024. To apply please check the website – [www.communityfoundationni.org](http://www.communityfoundationni.org)**





## The Brian Conlon Foundation

The Brian Conlon Foundation is an independent Charitable Trust set up in Brian's memory to continue his legacy by supporting causes that were close to his heart and that he was passionate about.

Brian was hugely successful in many walks of life – a high achiever in education, entrepreneurship, sport and in business. When a knee injury ended his budding Gaelic football career, Brian turned his attention to business, setting up First Derivatives from his mother's spare bedroom in 1996. Now one of Ireland's most successful companies, it employs nearly 3,000 people with fifteen offices globally. Thousands of local graduates have passed through the company's HQ in Newry, many of whom ended up being deployed to large financial institutions throughout the world.

Brian was immensely proud of his roots and his hometown of Newry, and, despite all of his success, he remained a humble and generous individual throughout, supporting numerous people and deserving causes, often quietly.

Grants will be awarded to community associations and groups in the Newry area, who are working to advance education, amateur sport, provide opportunities for young people, and assisting communities in the local area.

Grants up to £3,500 will be open for applications. The Brian Conlon Foundation will support the provision of support for projects based in Newry City – view boundary map [here](#)

The fund will focus on the following priorities:

- Advancement of Education
- Advancement of Amateur sport

- Opportunities for young people from the local area
- Assistance for communities in disadvantaged areas

This might include:

- Educational activities supporting people from disadvantaged areas
- Projects that provide enhanced sporting opportunities for people who are particularly disadvantaged
- Projects that will directly benefit those disaffected from mainstream education
- Early years intervention, particularly in disadvantaged areas, within Newry city

Awards will be available of up to a maximum of £3,500 to support small community projects. We anticipate, however, that the average grant will be around £2,000.

Under the most recent funding round (May 2023) – 43% of applicants were successful.

### Who can apply?

Constituted organisations with charitable purposes based within and to support beneficiaries in the Newry city area

**Closing date for applications is 9th February 2024.**

For more information and to apply, please visit [The Brian Conlon Foundation - Community Foundation Northern Ireland \(communityfoundationni.org\)](#)



## The Foyle Foundation Completes its Grant Giving Programme in 2025

***The Foyle Foundation will complete its grant giving programme in 2025, marking 25 years of giving to the fields of the Arts, Learning, Community Small Grants, State Schools Libraries and formerly Health.***

We are delighted to announce that applications are still open for the final rounds of grants for projects which will complete by the end of 2025. For full details, including timings of the application process and cut off dates, please see the relevant specific section of each of our grantmaking schemes ([Main Grants Scheme](#), [School Library Scheme](#), [Small Grants Scheme](#)). Please also see [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

### What We Currently Fund

The Foundation awards funding in three main areas:

- **ARTS** and **LEARNING** charities predominantly via the [Main Grants Scheme](#)
- **SMALL CHARITIES** of all descriptions (with a turnover of less than £150K per annum) via the [Small Grants Scheme](#) (grants between £2K and £10K)
- **STATE FUNDED SCHOOLS** predominantly via the [Foyle School Library Scheme](#) (grants between £2K and £10K)

For more information, please visit [The Foyle Foundation](#)



## Cregganconroe and Inishative Community Benefit Fund's are now open

### Cregganconroe Community Benefit Fund

#### Purpose of the fund:

This local community benefit fund was set up by Gaelectric in 2016 and is now managed by CGN Europe – a wind energy and energy storage company that believes in a sustainable future. GCN is committed to ensuring that their wind farms, whilst having obvious environmental benefits, also provide significant economic benefits to the local community.

Cregganconroe wind farm is based just off the Loughmallon Road, Pomeroy, Co Tyrone. The areas located within a 6-mile radius of the wind farm are largely rural, having a rugged mountainous terrain within the Sperrin Mountains and comprises dispersed rural settlements including the hamlets and villages of Cappagh, Galbally, Pomeroy, Carrickmore, Kileenan and the Rock.

The Cregganconroe Community Benefit Fund is administered by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland.

The Cregganconroe Community Benefit Fund is available for local community projects within a 6-mile radius of the wind farm. Applicant organisations must be located in this area.

#### [Cregganconroe Boundary Map](#)

The fund aims to encourage:

- Any programmes/projects that address marginalisation and help tackle rural isolation. In particular, support will be considered for transport solutions that allow a greater sharing of local community resources and to allow for improved mobility for the most isolated.
- Projects that have a particular emphasis on maximising community space by providing minor capital works that bring premises or facilities up to modern standards and in line with current building control regulations.
- Activities/services that are specifically aimed at children and young people and older people; provision of local educational classes/training courses and health related initiatives and arts/cultural activities.
- Projects designed to improve and develop local environmental schemes.
- Priority will be given to beneficiaries within the Pomeroy area given their close proximity to the wind farm.
- Projects that encourage greater cross community interaction at a local level with a focus on improving relations between nationalist and unionist communities in the area. Consideration will be given to activities and events designed to encourage this interaction and cohesion e.g. – Open Days, Festivals and other Community Events including programmes of shared culture, music, sport, drama and dance.

### Inishative Community Benefit Fund

#### Purpose of the fund:

This local community benefit fund was set up by Gaelectric in 2016 and is now managed by CGN Europe

– a wind energy and energy storage company that believes in a sustainable future. GCN is committed to ensuring that their wind farms, whilst having obvious environmental benefits, also provide significant economic benefits to the local community.



The Inishative Community Benefit Fund is administered by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland. The Inishative Community Benefit Fund is available to local community projects within a 6-mile radius of the wind farm. Priority is given to applicant organisations based within the Carrickmore (3.5 miles), Galbally/Cappagh (4-5 miles) and Sixmilecross (6 miles) areas.

#### [Inishative Boundary Map](#)

The fund aims to encourage:

- Stronger more inclusive communities by ensuring that local people have ownership and involvement in the design and delivery of the project.
- Partnership working with community, voluntary and statutory agencies to ensure a coordinated approach.
- Sustainable solutions that address local issues.
- Projects that improve the utilisation of existing community space in each of the above areas.
- Particular emphasis will be placed on funding activities/services that are specifically aimed at older people, people with disabilities, children and teenagers (including pre-school children), providing skills development of local people and promoting health related activities or services.
- Given the remoteness of some of these locations, the isolation and lack of statutory transport provision consideration will be given to local transport initiatives.
- Projects and programmes offering invaluable advice and information and signposting on key rural issues e.g. Farm Support Services, Welfare & Benefits and Parenting/Family issues etc.
- Outdoor/Environmental projects will also be considered in terms of encouraging a healthier and active community as well as protecting and enhancing the local environment.
- Finally, wider community events and programmes that encourage greater community interaction (including cross community aspects) encompassing the local rich and varied cultural aspects of music, drama, dance and sport.
- Funding will be considered for costs associated with running/administration costs and for purchasing additional equipment to expand services/activities in each of the areas.
- Priority will be given to projects which demonstrate the ability to collaborate, network and share best practice.

For more information on both funds and to apply, please visit [Available Grants - Community Foundation Northern Ireland \(communityfoundationni.org\)](#)



## Halifax Foundation for NI launch new funding streams

Halifax Foundation for NI have launched their new website and Strategy for 2024 - 2028, 'Better Together' - the following new funding streams are now available;



### Community Flex

This is our main programme which will be a rolling programme, open to registered charities only which have 1 years full accounts published on the Charity Commission website. Maximum grant available £10,000. The charity income in the last 12 months needs to be less than £500,000 (this is a change to our last programme as it was open to those with an income of less than £1m) the charity must support those in greatest need and we can support running costs, salaries, materials, training, transport, activity costs and volunteer costs. Open now!

### Ignite

This is a seeding grant for new charities, this does not mean newly registered on the Charity Commission website this means set up within the last 2 years -we will check the constitution date for this information. Groups must be on the Charity Commission website. The maximum grant available is £2,000. There is a set budget for this programme and once this has been allocated we will not be able to issue any further grants. There is an option for mentoring or training support with this grant. Open now!

### Collaborate

This programme is for 2 or more registered charities coming together to tackle a social issue, both charities must have an income under £500k. This programme has a set budget and once this is allocated we will not be able to issue any further funding. Applicants must have a pre-application meeting with the Grants Team before applying online. This is for one year funding only. This programme is open for applications now. Max grant £20k.

### Empower

This programme is not currently open for applications however this will open for funding on **3rd June 24 closing on 28th June 24. Awards will be made in August with a starting date of September.**

This is for infrastructure charities supporting community groups to receive 1-2 year funding , maximum grant is £20k. The organisation needs to be a registered charity and must be strategic/ transformational in nature. Projects must not duplicate activities supported by or the responsibility of government departments. A pre-application meeting must take place before applying.

### 40 Invest

This programme is not open for applications. It's our 40th Anniversary in 2025, to celebrate we will be providing 2 year grants of £40,000 (£20k per year) 10% of this can be allocated as a contingency fund for unexpected expenditure.

**This programme opens for applications on Monday 2nd September and closes on Monday 30th September 2024. Awards will be made in December, with a start date of January 2025.**

An additional £5,000 we will held for each grantee to support capacity building initiatives. Income must be less than £250k.

More information on each funding stream can be found on their website - [About Us – Halifax Foundation NI](#)

## Coastal Foundation Fund Accepting Applications for 2024

Sea Changers is offering grants of up to £2500 for community groups and other not-for-profit organisations to help prevent negative impacts on UK coastal and marine environments and species by reducing marine litter through the provision of well-located coastal water fountains that will significantly reduce the use of non-reusable plastic drinks bottles.

The Coastal Foundation Fund will support groups to cover the cost of purchasing a water fountain unit for installation in a busy or environmentally important coastal location.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Need and impact – fountains should be placed in areas which either:
  - \* Have significant public use/a lot of littering.



\* Are of environmental importance or status.

- Viability to be operational within 2024.
- Sustainability.
- Value for money.

Funding is only for the cost of purchasing a water foundation. Installation or maintenance costs will not be considered.

**The deadline for applications is 23 February 2024.**

For more information and to apply, please visit [Coastal Fountain Fund 2024 | Sea-Changers](#)

## TBUC Camps Programme 2024-25

Applications are now open for groups who wish to run a Camp under the T:BUC Camps Programme 2024/25

Completed applications must be returned to the Education Authority no later than **4pm on Friday 9th February 2024.**

*\*Successful applications are subject to funding being made available*

The T:BUC Camps Programme is a headline action described in the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy which was announced by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2013. The relevant strategic aim relating to young people is:

“To continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.”

The Programme is about building positive relations and long lasting friendships among young people across all parts of the Northern Ireland community. Camps must therefore bring diverse groups together to get to know each other, try new experiences and help build longer term relationships between young people.

Good Relations learning must be at the heart of every Camp.

### All Camps must:

Have a significant good relations element throughout the Camp which must be clearly demonstrated in funding applications;

- Be run on a cross community basis and focus on ensuring correct variance of both Catholic and Protestant participants is met. Proposals are also

strongly encouraged to include participants from other communities including ethnic minority communities and those of different racial backgrounds;

- Target young people aged 9 to 25 years;
- Provide social action opportunities
- Be fun and be appropriate to the needs and interests of participants.

### Who is Eligible?

EANI registered youth organisations

- Bona fide voluntary and community organisations (including churches/faith based organisations, sports groups, arts groups etc.)
- Schools
- Regional organisations that have experience in working with young people
- Councils

The Education Authority will be running workshops to support groups to help develop their programmes and assist with applications.

Attendance at a workshop is strongly encouraged, as it will allow you to meet and network with other possible applicants, speak directly to members of the T:BUC team, receive support and guidance on programming and good relations resources, and be given support in how to make a good quality application to the T:BUC Camps Programme.

A number of the workshops are face to face, with online options also available. It is essential that a place is pre-booked. You can do so through the button below or by [clicking here](#).

For more information, please visit [T:BUC Camps Programme – EANI Funding](#)





## Community Festivals Fund and Social Connections Grant are now open for applications

### Community Festivals Fund

Grant Amount: £750-£3,000

Purpose: to support community organised festivals that enable communities to enhance their quality of life through participation and engagement in culture, arts and leisure activities.

**Closing Date:** Friday 2nd February 2024 at 12 noon

The following costs can be applied for: Event insurance, Venue hire, Performance fees, Transport within the community/ area that the Festival is taking place in, Equipment hire, Signage, Advertising, marketing and media costs, Printing, Administration (stationery, postage etc.)

### Social Connections Grant

Grant amount: £500

Purpose: to address loneliness and isolation and build social connections.

**Closing Date:** rolling programme

We want to fund projects that:

- create more opportunities to bring people together to make connections doing something they enjoy;
- help to reduce the social isolation that can be a result of experiencing financial difficulties;
- enable local activities to become more accessible.

You might be operating a Warm Space scheme, or planning an arts and craft programme or a community growing project or yoga classes and could apply for the grant towards the costs of venue hire, transport, refreshments, tutors or materials.



This is a rolling grant programme for activity from 1st April onwards and applications will be assessed on a regular basis within 3 weeks of applying.

You can find the online application forms and guidance notes at <https://grants.ccgbcapps.com/>

If you've any queries please get in touch with us at [community.development@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:community.development@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk).

There are a number of other grants open for applications and details of these can be found at <https://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/grantsandfunding>:

- Policing & Community Safety Partnership
- Sports Grant & Bursary Programme
- Personal Learning Account Fund
- Food Hardship Grant
- LiveSmart Grant
- Building A United Community Fund
- Culture, Arts & Heritage Grant
- Creative Practitioner's Bursary Scheme
- Youth Creative Skills Bursary Scheme
- Tourism Large Events Fund
- Tourism Events Growth Fund
- Landfill Community Fund
- Town Twinning Grant
- Town Centre Experience Fund