Full Members

African Community Trust  
Age Concern East Belfast & Castlereagh  
Antrim Youth Club  
Ardcorn Residents  
Ardcorn Women's Group  
Arlington Boys High School  
Ayrton Association  
Ballymena Women's Centre  
Ballymacarrett Trust  
Ballymacarrett Self Help Support Group  
Belfast East Seniors' Forum  
Belmont Community Association  
Bering Wells  
Belfast Community Association  
CEIHT  
Clontarf Tenants Forum  
Clowanstown  
Clowanstown Community Association  
Conduit Community Association  
Cosswater Women's Group  
Cosswater Community Group  
Covenanter Law Church  
Craighead Community Association  
Crossroads Project Ltd  
Crown Project  
Dundonald Community Concert Band  
East Belfast Area Youth Project  
East Belfast Churches Forum  
East Belfast Enterprise  
East Belfast Historical & Cultural Society  
East Belfast Mission  
East Belfast Survivors of Suicide Support Group  
EBAC - East Belfast Independent Advice Centre  
Glaisrenny Quality Centre  
Greenway Women's Group  
Helping Honds Autism Support Group  
Home Start South and East Belfast  
Inner East Youth Project  
Knights Men's Group  
Lions Women's Group  
MACCA Women's Group  
Mountsorrell Methodist Church  
Netherton Primary School  
Newtownards Road Lst Presbyterian Church  
Newtownards Road Women’s Group  
NCAS  
Oasis Partnership  
Oasis Caring in Action  
Oasis Trading  
Old Mill Bowling Club  
Open Door Housing Association - Inverary House  
Parsonage Residents’ Association  
Round Tower Community Project  
Short Strand After School Club  
Short Strand Play Group  
Short Strand Community Forum  
Short Strand Residents Group  
Short Strand Festival  
Short Strand Work Matters  
Short Strand Women’s Group  
Short Strand Men’s Group  
Short Strand Partnership  
Shankill Project  
Sally's Stars FC  
TADS  
The Bridge Community Association  
The Bridge Project  
The Byes Project  
The Centre  
The Forward Group  
The Hopeful  
The Rivers Community Project  
Tulacharnet Community Support Services Ltd  
Victors PAC  
Widowsfield Community Association  
Windsorworth Area Residents’ Group  
Windsorworth Community Association  
Wiglar Community Forum Association  
Widowsfield Parish Church  
Widowsfield Parish Community Association  
Wise Men of the East Network  
Women 2 Gather  
Youth Initiatives

Thanks

We are very conscious that the success and delivery of our work could not be done without the support of our volunteers. We thank our volunteers involved with our community development work and our health development work. We are also grateful to the other organisations within East Belfast and beyond that supported the development of all our work.

Thanks also to our funders, Belfast City Council, Strategic Investment Board (SIB), Dept for Social Development, Voluntary Community Unit, Belfast Regeneration Office, Public Health Agency Belfast Health Trust, Princess Regeneration Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, Lloyds Foundation, Paddy & Eithne Fitzpatrick Memorial Fund, American Ireland Funds, Funerals Services NI.

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ANNUAL REPORT
1st April 2011 – 31 March 2012

East Belfast Community Development Agency
exists to provide resources, support and capacity building programmes for community groups that are based on partnership, equal opportunities and sustainable outcomes.
**Chair's Comments**

This Annual Report provides an overview of the work of ERCDA for the period April 2011–March 2012. During this 12-month period, the Agency has continued to play an important and fundamental role in targeted the specific needs of the community sector and acting as a catalyst and advocate in supporting and developing the sector in East Belfast.

For the past number of years we have used our AGM and Annual Report to inform the sector of how the funding environment is changing. At the end of 2011, we saw these changes begin to take shape through the sector’s renewed support to community renewal funding. Changes will continue throughout 2012 and 2013, building towards the full implementation of the Review of Public Administration processes by April 2015.

Templemore Avenue School has made great developments within this period, under the auspices of Templemore Avenue School Trust, guided by chair Mike Smith.

In February we said goodbye to Sarah Lorimer, Templemore Avenue School – Pocci History Coordinator after being with us for 18 months. In October 2011, Emma Tricek joined us as part-time Good Relations Co-ordinator and in March also took on the part-time role of Templemore Avenue School – Pocci History Coordinator.

2011/2012 also saw us developing a greater working relationship with East Belfast Partnership sharing ideas, resources and the joint development of programmes and projects.

As Chair of ERCDA, I am pleased to know that we have a highly skilled and committed staff team and the Board of Directors are grateful to all the staff for their continued commitment. The time, effort and commitment our Board of Directors give to the Agency is very much appreciated and I thank them for their support.

**Director’s Report**

The conclusion of the second year of our 5 year strategy 2010-2015 has presented some great opportunities and challenges for the whole Agency. As always funding is probably the biggest challenge, we have talked for the past 3-4 years about the changing funding environment and this year we have seen these changes beginning to take place, with changes still to come. The changes to the neighbourhood renewal funding resulted in some hard work towards the end of 2011 to sort out the new programme could commence in April 2012.

East Belfast Network Centre Templemore Avenue School continues to be the biggest piece of work for us in terms of physically, £250,000, but also in terms of time. The building is an attraction to open in March/April 2013. We have also been recording stories of past pupils and past teachers of the school and we will be publishing a book containing these in early 2013. We have gathered a lot of photos and documents to cable into a permanent display when the Network Centre is opened.

The most important element of our work, which underpins everything we do, is our people. The venues preferred to written reports. This Annual Report have resulted in ERCDA having contact with over 3500 people within the year.

The conference at the end of March “East Belfast: The Future” which we organised with East Belfast Partnership, was a great success. This provided wonderful examples of the things that are happening on a daily basis in East Belfast communities, as well as providing presentations and information on what is in store for East Belfast in the future.

Advocacy and information are also important elements of our work. Within this report you can only get a brief flavour of the extent of our work. Our staff have attended nearly 1000 meetings, seminars, information events and conferences representing a view from the sector in East Belfast to the wider Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and other parts of Europe.

In my capacity as Director I represent ERCDA and East Belfast on a number of local and regional forums, partnerships and organisations. As part of our representation role we have continued to develop and maintain contact with MLA’s, Councillors, MP Belfast City Council, Inner East Forum, East Belfast Partnership, Belfast Renaissance Office, BRG, Costereenghoch, NICVA, Community Development Networks Forum, Inner East Neighbourhood Partnership, Community Places, DIS, Public Health Agency and Belfast Health Trust.

**Community Support Unit**

This year has seen the development of new support opportunities, as the unit has adapted to the changing needs of the community sector in East Belfast. We responded to over 75 direct requests for governance support, funding support and general networking support during the year. A significant development has been an increased demand from groups for support with good governance and strategic planning.

East Belfast Community Workers Forum met in venues as diverse as Titanic Quarter, RSPB Belfast Lough reserve and The Duke of York as well as the usual community venues, with average attendances of 25 people. 75% of the new members said they got a make-over as it reached it's 30th edition. We also embraced the information sharing potential of social media through twitter and facebook, adding our bi-monthly eulletin which goes out to over 250 groups and individuals. Our publication "East Belfast’s Community Development Framework" was reprinted with more groups agreeing to the framework as the basis for their work.

We aim to develop local leaders and have fostered emerging community structures in the Kinlockadon and Lower Castlereagh areas, and continue to support local action plans developed in areas of weaker community infrastructure in East Belfast. Most significantly we have been working closely with Belfast Green Recovery Group, supported through their CSD funders Areas at Risk Programme. With the development of future leaders in mind, we successfully piloted a mentoring programme in East Belfast during the year. It is our intention to offer this support to emerging leaders on an ongoing basis.

In response the local concerns on the impact of welfare reform we arranged a successful information session. A notable outcome has been the development of quarterly briefing sessions in partnership with East Belfast Independent Advice Centre and East Belfast Partnership. We facilitated consultation sessions and submitted responses relating to the Programme for Government, Social Investment Fund, the implementation of new Planning and Community Safety Partnerships and the Public Health Agency’s Community Development Strategy.

Training programmes this year focussed on lobbying and policy development and First Aid. A fundraising clinic was also arranged in Ballyban. The Community Support Manager continues to sit on a range of local and regional partnerships and forums relevant to community development in East Belfast.

**Community Resource & Finance**

Forty years ago when ERCDA first opened its doors the scope of the work was providing the services of photocopying, typing, collating binding, laminating and room how to community groups, particularly small voluntary emerging groups and today this is still an essential service for the sector. In addition we provide a wide range of services, independent and exciting advice for the sector. We have carried out a number of one to one finance training sessions and governance advice packages, which help the sector understand the processes they need to implement good financial and governance management.

**Health Development & Social Connections Programme**

Once again we delivered the popular programmes of "Cook-it" and Mental Health First Aid training to community groups and this year also saw the introduction of a new health awareness training programme. Four Relationship and Sexual Education programmes were delivered to local young people.

We supported health development programmes in Greaghe, Kinlockadon, Ardorn, Bloomfield, Castlereagh and Woodvale. We teamed up with Boots Pharmacy to deliver on extensive Community Pharmacy Project to 70 participants and 150 people through their social networks.

We worked with a wide range of community groups, partner and toddler groups, nursery parents, older men and a crime community women's group.

East Belfast was represented at the Annual suicide awareness “Walk of Light” event culminating at the City Hall. Survivors of Suicide (SSS) "Celebration of Life” event in McQurston Memorial Presbyterian Church, was a fantastic event and emotional event for those involved as it allowed us to see them come together and also provided hope and support for those bereaved and highlighted the work going on around suicide prevention and information. The provision of counselling services and complementary therapies also continued to offer support to people throughout the year. Program staff also played a representative role on various East Belfast city wide strategic health alliances.

Men's health continues to be a focus of our work. A volunteer-driven fortnightly evening men’s club was attended by a total of 100 men and provided an invaluable way of engaging hard to reach men on their specific health issues. A men’s physical activity group has provided opportunities for cycling, fishing and gardening with support established for the development of a local garden community. We continue to support and develop local men’s groups through the Wise Men’s East Network and linking with new Belfast wide initiatives.

What has now become our annual Health and Well Being Week, in January 2012, was a huge success with over 160 people participating in a range of activities at venues across East Belfast.

**Volunteer Project**

Within our Volunteer Development Project we aim to promote and raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering and promote Good Practice. We work with around 20 groups to look at how they volunteer with volunteers when they get them and also how they retain them within their organisation. We link between groups that use volunteers and encourage an exchange between those groups so that we have a strong network within the East Belfast area regarding all things volunteering.

This year we had a total of 77 projects for volunteering opportunities and placed 66 with organisations. We have also supported local small but local groups in East Belfast so that larger one off tasks happen such as environmental clean ups, then there are lots of volunteers we can contact who would be interested in helping with that particular task. We facilitated courses for volunteers in emergency, first aid and fire cooking and held 2 training sessions on volunteer management for volunteer managers and coordinators. We were pleased to work with Urban Ballymena manager’s group who worked with us on the 52 Schools SFI funded project.

Supported volunteering in a local community garden in East Belfast. We have also facilitated links with outside volunteering support schemes so that little projects haven’t become isolated from the rest of the volunteering happening in the greater East Belfast area and beyond.