

The following individuals and organisations have agreed to use this Community Development Framework as the basis for the delivery of their work in East Belfast:

Ardcarn Residents Association
Alison Wightman
Ballymac Trust
Ballymacarrett Youth & Community Project
Belfast East Seniors' Forum
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Belfast Interface Project
Belvoir & Milltown Action Group
Bloomfield Community Association
Braniel Community Association
Bracken House
Clonduff Community Association
Community Places
Contact NI
Cregagh Community Association
East Belfast Area Youth Project
East Belfast Churches Forum
East Belfast Community Development Agency
East Belfast Independent Advice Centre
East Belfast Mission
East Belfast Partnership
Glentoran Football Club
Home-Start South & East Belfast
Inverary Bytes Project
Inner East Surestart
Lower Castlereagh Community Group
Northern Ireland Child Minding Association
Northern Ireland Housing Executive (East Belfast)
Oasis
Old Belmont School Preservation Trust
Opportunity Youth
RECALL
RUBICON
Round Tower Community Project
Short Strand Community Forum
Short Strand Partnership
Skainos
Strand Presbyterian Church
The Bridge
Titanic Schools Project
Ullans Academy
Walkway Community Association
Walkway Community Centre
Westbourne Presbyterian Church
Youth Action Northern Ireland
Youth Initiatives

East Belfast Community Development Agency



East Belfast Community Development Agency

269 Albertbridge Road, Belfast BT5 4PY
T 028 9045 1512 F 028 9073 8039 E info@ebcda.org
www.ebcda.org

The Work of East Belfast Community Development Agency is supported by:



East Belfast's Community Development Framework

What is the Community Development Framework?

A joined up vision for the future of East Belfast. Achieved through refocusing the skills, awareness, knowledge and experience of community development workers, the voluntary sector and the statutory sector to empower local people to speak and act on their own behalf and provide a framework that enables local groups to participate more widely in society.

This could be achieved by the statutory Sector having an emphasis on:

- Fostering the growth of self-sustaining community-led initiatives based on the National Occupational Standards;
- Developing innovative ways to engage local communities in local governance and service delivery;
- Should be sourced to a level that ensures its future.

And the Community Sector having an emphasis on:

- Working and/or volunteering with local communities to identify and meet their needs;
- A common, cross-sector framework of community development training and support, linked to personal and career progression;
- The Framework must be a living, working document that will be owned collectively with those engaged in community development work.



What is Community Development?

The following is a definition of Community Development agreed by the Scottish Community Development Association and used by a number of organisations in Scotland and England and which EBCDA adopted.

- Community development is action that helps people to recognise and develop their ability and potential and organise themselves to respond to problems and needs which they share. It supports the establishment of strong communities that control and use assets to promote social justice and help improve the quality of community life. It also enables community and public agencies to work together to improve the quality of government.
- Community development is an occupation (both paid and unpaid) which aims to build active and influential communities based on justice, equality and mutual respect. Community development work is done in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities. It involves changing the relationships between ordinary people and people in positions of power, so that everyone can take part in the issues that affect their lives.
- Community development work involves working with communities to:
 - Identify their strengths, needs, rights and responsibilities;
 - Plan, organise and take action;
 - Assess the effect of any actions taken.
- It also involves working with agencies to increase their capacity to understand and work with communities. Communities can be based on where people live (geographic communities), or on a shared concern, issue or identity (communities of interest).

What community development is not!

- Quick. Community development is a long term process, focusing on people and their needs and aims. This long term approach is essential to ensure that changes are sustainable and long-lasting.
- A numbers game. If only five people turn up to the public meeting, these are the five people you start working with.
- Partnership working. Community development is the activity which enables many people to get to the partnership table in the first place.
- Consultation. Community development is much more than consulting on decisions already made.
- A cheap way of delivering services, demonstrating management efficiency or validating funding bids.
- Talking with three 'community representatives' and saying that their responses are the demands of the community. Community development enables many more voices to be heard.
- Volunteering. For most people involved in community activity, it is because if they want a service such as a playgroup, they have to provide it themselves. It is not necessarily because they want to be volunteers.
- The answer to everything.



This is what we are going to do:

Recognise and build on what exists

This means recognising the assets and strengths of the community, and using them as a starting point for development and change, as well as focusing on the needs and deficiencies of an area. And building on...

...1 **Local people** – the skills, knowledge, interests, experience, ideas and enthusiasm.

...2 **Structures** that already exist in area – area committees, partnership boards, residents' networks and tenants' associations, that communities establish for themselves.

...3 **Resources** – these can include funding, land and buildings, and the practical facilities and professional expertise that can be found in most local institutions such as telephones and photocopiers, and knowledge about how local political systems work.

...4 **Social capital** – the strength of relationships that can be found within particular communities. This might for instance be found in a strong faith community.

...5 **Diversity** of the local voluntary and community sector.



The Community Development Framework for East Belfast

The framework aims to benefit individuals, community groups, the organised community and voluntary sector, and local agencies through the following outcomes:

1 Strong, diverse and prosperous communities:

- Ongoing support for the forums/networks which have been established.
- Better self-esteem and social networks in communities of identity.
- Easier involvement in community development activities by disadvantaged communities.
- Improved community cohesion in areas.
- Lower social exclusion in areas with community development.

2 Inclusive community, communities of Identity play an active part in service delivery and governance:

- Working closely with target groups, assisting these target groups to establish appropriate support and representative structures.
- Assist people with disabilities, refugees, older people, young people, homeless people and offenders in developing plans and actions which are appropriate and relevant to the needs of these target groups.
- Improved service delivery to communities by more organisations adopting a community development approach.
- A stronger voluntary and community sector network better able to support community and voluntary involvement in services and local governance.

3 Improved quality of life in communities:

- Local communities actively participating in neighbourhood renewal.
- Better health for communities at risk of social exclusion.
- People in local communities feel empowered to address public health issues.
- Locally based learning developed in disadvantaged communities.
- Reduction in fear of crime through community based activities.
- Young people feel part of communities; adults feel young people are part of communities.

4 Citizens and communities are engaged in creating a healthy and sustainable East Belfast:

- Improved health and reduction in health inequalities.
- Access to knowledge and skills which promote healthy lifestyles.
- Social networks for those marginalised by poor physical or mental health, or by disability.
- Easy access to green spaces and leisure activities.
- Increased understanding and awareness of actions for sustainable communities.

5 Community development support is delivered to the highest standards:

- Communities recognise improved effectiveness in the delivery of community development.
- Co-ordination and Information Sharing.
- Communities experience consistent, high quality community development.
- Improved community consultation, participation and engagement.

Information for local people: How will East Belfast Benefit from this?

- Clearer framework.
- More coherent vision for East Belfast.
- Improve the influence you have.

How can the strategy benefit organisations?

By adopting the Community Development Framework organisations will be able to:

- Develop more effective ways of working more closely with local communities and communities of identity.
- Enable scarce resources to go further through joint working.
- Improve their service delivery on equal opportunities and diversity.
- Build effective work on social inclusion into their service delivery.
- Deliver more effective services on the ground through joint working.
- Improve standards in community development.
- Identify outcomes and performance measures for community development to nationally agreed standards.

Your place: How can you help deliver the vision?

We all have a shared interest in making our local areas better places to be. Active communities can transform an area and we encourage and welcome involvement and participation.

