Annual Report
1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014

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.
### Board of Directors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairperson</th>
<th>Vice Chairperson</th>
<th>Hon Treasurer</th>
<th>Hon Secretary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cliff Kennedy</td>
<td>Janice Cherry</td>
<td>Sammy Douglas</td>
<td>Bennie McConnell</td>
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<td>Des Meredith</td>
<td>Rachael Davison</td>
<td>Rev Mervyn Gibson</td>
<td>Tommy Sandford</td>
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<td>Liz Olson</td>
<td>Alison Baxter (Resigned December 2013)</td>
<td>Glenn Jordan</td>
<td>Karen Purdy</td>
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<td>Beryl Carson (Resigned December 2013)</td>
<td>Bobby Ellison (Co-Option)</td>
<td>Richard Williamson (Co-Option)</td>
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### Staff Members

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director</th>
<th>Community Development Director</th>
<th>Suicide Prevention Development Officer</th>
<th>Health Development Worker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Briggs</td>
<td>Jonny Currie</td>
<td>Clare James</td>
<td>Alan Houston</td>
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<td>Kim Briggs</td>
<td>Tracey Traylor</td>
<td>Alan Houston</td>
<td>Sharon Traynor</td>
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<td>Emma Trueick</td>
<td>Colin McRae</td>
<td>Catherine Clarke</td>
<td>Trisha McQueen</td>
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<td>Emma Trueick</td>
<td>Cathy Clarke</td>
<td>Jean Higgins</td>
<td>Kathy Gaston</td>
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<td>Good Relations Co-Ordinator &amp; Templemore Avenue School, Peoples History Project Co-Ordinator (Until August 2013)</td>
<td>Community Support Officer (Ballybeen)</td>
<td>Admin Support Officer</td>
<td>Finance Manager Receptionist/Admin Worker (Ballybeen)</td>
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### Full Members

- Addiction NI
- African Community Trust
- Age Concern East Belfast & Castlereagh
- Ardcarne Residents
- Ballybeen Women’s Centre
- Ballymacarrett District LOL No 6 District
- Ballymacarrett Somme Festival
- Belfast East Seniors Forum
- Bloomfield Community Association
- Boring Wells
- BRACE (Ballymac Regeneration & Com Enterprise)
- Braniel Community Association
- Carryduff Play Care / Playgroup
- Clonduff Community Association
- Connswater Women’s Group
- Connswater Community Group
- Cregagh Community Association
- Cregagh Retired Active Gentlemen
- Dundonald Sea Cadets
- East Belfast Enterprise
- East Belfast Mission
- MACARA Women’s Group
- Mountpottinger Methodist Church
- Newtownards Road Elim Pentecostal Church
- Newtownards Road Women’s Group
- Oak Partnership
- Oasis Caring in Action
- Oasis Trading in Action
- Open Door Housing Assocn - Inverary House
- PACT
- Palmerston Residents Association
- Round Tower Community Project
- Short Strand Community Forum
- Short Strand Festival
- Short Strand Partnership
- Silver Liners Group
- Skianos
- Solway Stars FC
- Survivors of Suicide Support Group
- Sydenham Gardening Association
- Taggit Fishing Club
- The Asian Association
- The Hopefuls
- The Rivers Community Project
- The Well Project
- Titanic School Project
- Tullycarnet Community Support Services Ltd
- Walkway Community Association
- Wandsworth Area Residents’ Group
- Wandsworth Community Association
- Willowfield Parish Church
- Willowfield Parish Community Association
- Wise Men of the East Network
Welcome to our annual report covering April 2013 – March 2014. Despite the promise of changes for the sector over the previous 5-6 years, from many different quarters, the sector has seen very little change in 2013, other than procedures for funding and perhaps slightly reduced pots. Though we do expect to see sweeping changes for the sector over the next 2 years, some of that began to take affect towards the end of this reporting period.

Throughout this report you can get a flavour of the work we have supported and developed through the year as well as providing you with a brief financial picture.

This year we were pleased to see the dream become a reality when in June we moved into our new offices in East Belfast Network Centre. Throughout July and August we also worked with other organisations as they moved into the building.

We continued to manage the Inner East Neighbourhood Renewal, Community Development and Youth Development programmes funded by BRO, supporting 10 organisations and 20 staff. At the request of BRO we started a process of exploring how youth workers and youth work organisations in the Inner East Neighbourhood Renewal Area might work in a more collaborative way throughout the area. This focussed on training, organisational development, youth workers and young people. The University of Ulster’s Community Youth Work Department at Jordanstown facilitated a series of meeting for us and we hope to roll out the programme in late 2014.

We also worked closely with Ballybeen Improvement Group (BIG) in finalising and launching their development plan during their final year of DSD Areas At Risk funding. BIG also managed to influence DSD policy by appealing to the DSD Minister to extend their programme for a further year, which was agreed. We supported BIG in helping them develop a programme for their extension year to March 2015.

In 2013 we asked our members to renew their 3-year membership with us for the period June 2013 – May 2016. Being a member based organisation is an important governance process for EBCDA. We are one of only a handful of organisations in Northern Ireland who still act as a members’ based organisation. Our membership is wide and varied. From organisations who have 2 volunteers to organisations who have 70+ employees. We have lunch clubs that meet once a week, bowling clubs that meet once a month, childcare organisations, after-schools, older people’s organisations, community development and youth groups and everything in between. Our membership very much reflects the rich fabric which makes up the wider East Belfast community.

The past year has defined further EBCDA’s important and fundamental role of targeting the specific needs of the community sector and acting as a catalyst and advocate in supporting and developing the sector in East Belfast. Advocacy and information are important elements of our work. Within this report you get a brief flavour of the extent of our work. Our staff and Board members have attended nearly 1,000 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 the UK. The culmination of various pieces reported on within this Annual Report has resulted in EBCDA having contact with over 4,300 people within the year.

We are grateful to our staff team and Board of Directors for their time, effort and commitment to the Agency. Thanks also to our core funders Belfast Regeneration Office, Voluntary & Community Unit, Belfast City Council and the Public Health Agency.
EBCDA continue year on year to provide the services of photocopying, typing, collating, binding, laminating and room hire to community groups, particularly to small and newly emerging groups. This is still an essential service for the sector. In addition to this we provide payroll services, independent examinations and finance advice for the sector. We continue to carry out a number of one to one finance training sessions and governance checks with groups, which help the sector understand the processes they need to implement good financial and governance management.

We also manage all the finances for EBCDA, the Neighbourhood Renewal funding for youth and community programmes in Inner East Neighbourhood Renewal Area and the Ballybeen Areas at Risk funding in conjunction with Ballybeen Improvement Group (BIG). During this year we also managed the finances for Templemore Avenue School Trust as they developed East Belfast Network Centre.
Community Support

The work of EBCDA’s community support unit continued to adapt to the changing needs of the community sector in East Belfast in 2013-2014.

Alongside the monthly Community Workers Forum, a number of other networking opportunities are now firmly established in the calendar. East Belfast Youth Practitioners Forum meets monthly to share information, improve youth provision, offer learning opportunities and provide mutual support for youth workers. Chaired by East Belfast Alternatives, this year the Forum sought to increase joint working through the development of a youth issues response plan.

A new Drug and Alcohol Stakeholder Forum met on a regular basis, bringing together service providers, community organisations and other relevant agencies, to oversee a new drug and alcohol action plan for East Belfast. This work is now ongoing, with FASA (Forum Against Substance Abuse) and Inner East Youth Project jointly chairing proceedings.

EBCDA has continued to support organisations directly involved in the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly diverse East Belfast. This year East Belfast Ethnic Minority Support Network organised a series of training events around migration awareness and ending hate crime.

Now that the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has begun the charity registration, EBCDA registered as a “helper organisation” with the Commission to support community organisations in East Belfast through the new process. We anticipate that there will be an increase in demand for this support over the coming years.

With social media becoming an increasingly effective tool for information-sharing, this year saw the discontinuing of EBCDA’s quarterly printed “E-Mail” newsletter. However the development of a revamped website and a new interactive eBulletin have provided new opportunities for EBCDA and the sector in East Belfast to highlight community news, events, and policy developments.

We facilitated the training of a new group of community coaches with University of Ulster at Jordanstown and we now actively promote the East Belfast Coaching Programme, which offers coaching and mentoring support to youth and community workers in East Belfast.

The Community Support Unit responded directly to over 100 queries relating to governance, funding or networking. We are always keen for the sector in East Belfast to influence policy developments in society and this year we responded to a number of Government consultations, with each response encompassing a range of diverse views from East Belfast groups.

EBCDA is represented on a range of local and regional partnerships and forums relevant to community development in East Belfast, such as the George Best Belfast City Airport Forum, NICVA, Joint Forum Voluntary and Community Sector Group, East Belfast SIF Steering Group, Inner East Forum, East Belfast Partnership and Inner East Neighbourhood Partnership.
Health Development and Connections Programme

The Health Development and Connections Programme has been working under the umbrella of the East Belfast Health Framework’s five themes: Healthy Hearts, Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies, Healthy Relationships and Healthy Neighbourhoods.

We continued to coordinate the East Belfast Community Response plan for Suicide which aims to support families and communities following a death by suicide. Members of the Community Response Plan Steering Group continued to build links with these key agencies. The steering group also participated in a series of mental health promotion events at venues including Connswater Shopping Centre, ASDA Dundonald and a Glentoran football match.

Our suicide prevention work focused on raising awareness of key services for those in crisis through the development of the “Message of Hope” suicide prevention booklet which was launched by Lynda Bryan at East Belfast Network Centre in August. Thanks to funding from BT and the Police and Community Safety Partnership, 36,000 booklets were distributed to homes across East Belfast between August and October. To complement this awareness raising work, we also sourced funding to support the delivery of two ASIST training programmes, PIPS Mind your Mate training for young people, Barnardo’s Child Bereavement Training and a Living Life to the Full programme with Aware Defeat Depression.

10 suicide awareness sessions were delivered to local groups in the community; and events took place to mark World Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day. EBCDA continued to support the East Belfast Survivors of Suicide Group (SOS) to deliver its programmes and events.

In 2013 EBCDA welcomed our new Health Connections Worker Alison Bryan, to the team. The Health Hub, a place where you can find out about local health programmes and services as well as information on the Health Framework’s five themes, was completed in March 2014 and is open for business.

Groups, individuals and organisations are welcome to visit the Health Hub. A calendar of health observances occurring throughout the year was collated and distributed throughout East Belfast. EBCDA organised over 12 events to highlight a range of observances. EBCDA developed the capacity of the local community to influence their health and wellbeing through the facilitation of six workshops for health and wellbeing-related policy consultations.

We continue to support the Wise Men of the East Network to develop health initiatives. Sixty men met on a quarterly basis for networking and information sharing at the Royal British Legion Cregagh and Wandsworth Club. The Men’s Sheds project received support from the International Fund for Ireland to take forward joint plans with Sligo Men’s Shed and was supported to develop work around social history, arts and crafts and physical activities. An evening men’s clinic is supported by volunteers and was attended by a total of 55 men through 15 clinics which provided reassurance and information about the importance of making healthier lifestyle choices.

East Belfast Physical Activity Forum was developed to improve coordination of programmes, encourage participation in physical activity opportunities and promote the benefits of being active. We facilitated the Bikeway East Club to arrange weekly cycling sessions and well-attended skills and safety sessions during the year.

EBCDA worked in partnership with Boots Pharmacy again this year to deliver an extensive “Building Community Pharmacy” programme to 64 direct participants and a wider range of individuals and community groups. Three additional groups were supported to apply for and manage their own Level One community pharmacy programmes. Four Relationship and Sexuality Education Programmes targeting young people were delivered to local youths, raising awareness and providing information to make better informed choices and reduce risk taking behaviour.

Using the five key themes of the East Belfast Health Framework, over 300 people participated in our annual health week in January 2014 with a range of activities at various venues across East Belfast.

We also delivered a 12 week women’s health programme, culminating in a health awareness evening ‘Women into Health’ which was attended by over seventy local women. Other programmes included a twelve-week ‘Walking off the Blues’ programme which emphasised the links between local walking groups and positive mental wellbeing.

EBCDA coordinated a number of themed health days and events in partnership with a wide range of organisations and groups in East Belfast. Themes included men’s health, women’s health, mental health, family support, young people and older peoples health – with over 700 attending in total.
Volunteer Development Project

The Volunteer Development Project enables EBCDA to work towards supporting volunteering in East Belfast for both individuals and community groups.

In addition we also promote and raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering as well as promoting good practice in volunteer management. We have built links between groups who involve volunteers, encouraging cooperation through a network of local organisations.

We have continued to help groups in East Belfast recruit volunteers through the advertisement of volunteer vacancies both online and through the quarterly production of “Volunteer News.”

East Belfast Men’s Health Clinic benefited from the promotion of a dedicated volunteer role to assist with the fortnightly service. A bank of “Event Volunteers” was also established to provide additional “hands-on” assistance at EBCDA–related events.

Links were facilitated with outside volunteering support schemes through National Volunteer Week, Queen’s University Freshers Fair and work with Volunteer Now to implement a “Timebanking” pilot project in East Belfast.

Below is an analysis of our volunteer enquiries and volunteer placement during 2013-2014.
Associate Members

Allison Wightman  
Ashfield Boys’ High School  
Avoniel Leisure Centre  
Avoniel Primary School  
Belfast City Council Youth Forum  
Belfast City Council/NI Housing  
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust (Corn Dev)  
Belfast Interface Project  
Belfast Regeneration Office  
Belmont Tower  
Bracken Beacon Day Support  
Castlereagh Community Safety Partnership  
Charter for Northern Ireland  
Citizens Advice Belfast  
Clara Park Tenants & Residents’ Association  
Connswater Homes Ltd  
Contact NI  
Creative Exchange Artist Studios  
Dundonald Green Belt Association  
East Belfast Alternatives  
East Belfast Area Youth Project  
East Belfast CAB  
East Belfast Learning Disability Services  
GEMS Northern Ireland Limited

Green Action  
Hosford Action  
Inner East Forum  
Inverary Community Centre  
Knocknagoney Primary School  
Live by the Word of God Ministries  
Newtownbreda Women’s Institute  
NI Housing Executive  
Opportunity Youth  
Ravenhill Presbyterian Men’s Fellowship  
Ravenscroft Nursery School  
RNIB (Belfast Activity Programme)  
Sport Taekwondo NI  
The Junction Club  
The National Trust NI  
The Ullans Academy  
The Ultra Rare Diseases Disorders & Disabilities Foundation  
Tuesday Mother & Toddlers  
Tullycarnet Yarnspinners  
Wilgar Community Forum Association  
Willowfield Credit Union  
Youth Action  
Youth Initiatives

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