

Conflict Transformation & Peacebuilding Project

DERRY MODEL PROJECT COMPLETES FOUR YEARS' WORK

The Conflict Transformation and Peace building project, otherwise known as 'the Derry Model', was launched on 30th April 2018. Since then, it has engaged with over 700 participants who have each completed two-day study visits to the city, exploring how progress and outcomes have been achieved on contentious issues such as justice/ legacy, parading, heritage and dialogue.

Participants have been inclusive and varied including representatives of loyalist East Belfast Shankill women's group; Crumilm Ardoyne Twaddell North Belfast Interface group/ Tascit; Former British soldiers; Former republican and loyalist combatants; Former RUC; Warrington Peace Centre; McGurks Bar families; Dublin Monaghan Families, Training for Women Network and Ballymurphy families.

Speaking about the success of the project the deputy First Minister commented:

"I am delighted that The Executive Office has been able to support this valuable PEACE IV project, which has successfully helped to deliver a range of initiatives to build positive relations and promote reconciliation and integration.

Projects like this are vitally important in helping our society to move forward as a united community where every individual is respected and valued equally.

"I would like to congratulate The Bloody Sunday Trust, the Pat Finucane Centre and all the participants on everything that has been achieved through this successful project. I look forward to seeing the benefits of the programme in supporting peace and reconciliation in the months and years ahead."

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Joe O'Brien TD, said: "I would like to congratulate the Bloody Sunday Trust and their project partner, The Pat Finucane Centre, on the successful completion of the Conflict Transformation and Peace-Building Project.

I am delighted that my Department was able to support this important EU PEACE IV funded project.

This impressive project involved bringing together participants from a wide variety of backgrounds to openly discuss key contentious

issues and the cause of past troubles.

It took great courage and commitment from the Bloody Sunday Trust, The Pat Finucane Centre and, in particular, all the participants to work together on the rebuilding of local level trust between people within communities, with different ethnicities and religions."

Commenting on both the need for the project and its success, Gina McIntyre Chief Executive of the SEUPB said: "One of the unfortunate legacies of our shared past is that our society still suffers from issues around segregation and mistrust, which can act as a barrier to the creation of a more confident



Project panel.



Youth group tour.

BLOODY SUNDAY TRUST

55-61 Glenfada Park, Londonderry BT48 9DR

Telephone: 028 7136 0880

museumoffreederry.org/bloody-sunday-trust

Peace
Northern Ireland - Ireland
European Regional Development Fund



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and forward looking society. The EU's PEACE IV Programme supports a number of different cross-border and cross-community based projects which are designed to tackle and overcome these issues.

The Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding project is an excellent example of this type of work and through its use of the unique 'Derry-model' has successfully delivered upon a number of education and social justice initiatives. It has also supported meaningful debate around diverse perceptions of our history, actively encouraging participants to recognise that it need not be divisive and that many different, yet valid, viewpoints can exist at the same time. I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the delivery of this project, particularly their fantastic efforts at the height of the pandemic."

"By providing an open forum and safe space for discussion, we can break down barriers and rebuild empathy and understanding between communities."

**Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council,
Alderman Graham Warke**

Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Alderman Graham Warke, said: "I want to acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that has gone into this project, and the contribution of all the partners involved. Reconciliation involves many challenges and one of the most difficult is actually bringing people together to work through the many contentious issues that fuel suspicion and breed hatred. This project has achieved that thanks to the shared aspiration of a peaceful, respectful and civilised society, and the strong commitment to delivering a better future for all. By providing an open forum and safe space for discussion, we can break down barriers and rebuild empathy and understanding between communities. I hope this framework will continue to shape progressive approaches to dialogue and peace building going forwards."

Speaking about the impact of the project, Maeve Mc Laughlin, Project Manager, reflected: "This work has been about uncomfortable and challenging conversations. It has been about exploring why Derry has achieved outcomes in terms of public inquiry, public apology, agreements on parading and the dialogue models required to keep all of this going in the current day.

Many participants and pundits have asked what the Derry Model is. Whilst we are all savvy enough to understand that you cannot simply lift the cities experience and translate

it elsewhere, you can translate principles, leadership and risk taking.

There are a number key messages coming from this work. Justice can have many variations, but truth can be a uniting factor. Whilst this work has been uncomfortable and often challenging, it has been empowering for participants and has exposed what can be achieved where leadership is applied. I want to pay tribute to all of those participants who took the risks, who showed the leadership and who took park over the last few years."

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"I think the accommodations that has been reached in Derry could be transferable to

our communities. The fact that there has been such leadership shown from community leaders, activists, working class people. Invaluable insight which just leaves me with a hunger for more." (PUL participant)

"Being a former "Para", I was very nervous about talking about my time in Northern Ireland, serving with the Parachute Regiment. I was glad that I was open, although the impact on me when I returned home to England was huge, bringing back lots of memories of when I was a serving soldier in Northern Ireland. This is a Module that very much needs to continue and grow. The chance to talk and reconcile with those, you were once told, were your enemy." (Former British Solider)



Belfast Down Donegal Derry 24 September 2021.



Black Mountain Group meeting Bloody Sunday Relatives June 2021.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK

JUSTICE/ LEGACY MODULE WITH WARRINGTON PEACE CENTRE 24 AUG 2020 AND 19 JAN 2021

'There Is No Acceptable Level of Peace'

I am dictated by my own maxim - there is no acceptable level of peace. We cannot ever just say 'well we have peace now, let's all go home'. Peace Building has to be worked at on a constant basis so every chance I get to listen to people from the PUL community, I take it. If nothing else these PUL people need their voices heard more in the ongoing debates.

I also wanted to learn more in order to live a better life and to play a role in making a better life for all. I was struck by (Name excluded) own maxim (which he has used several times I think) - 'to use our learning to lessen the hurt on the next generation' (Former Republican Prisoner / participant)

PARADING WORKSHOP REACT 23 JAN 2021

Shankill Women's Group

The difference that I see that Derry has it better I'm not saying life in Derry may be better because we all have our issues, have our problems and our conflicts, like when there is like the parades thing in Derry and we have had some illustrations of what can go wrong with parades, people are all around the table, everybody is around the table, there is not one one section round the table to discuss what happens in Derry. There is a number of different people, different organisations, there is community organisations, statutory organisations, deciding what happens in Derry.

I don't see that happening in Belfast when it comes to those issues, it looks to be and it seems to be the same people all the time around that table."

PARADING – MODULE 38 – 25TH & 26TH MAY 2021 ARMAGH GROUP

"Excellent, have learned a lot and made very welcome"

Has been a fantastic module would love to come back and learn more about this great city, visiting the old churches and going to visit the graves of special people would be lovely.

"The processes here is still very much ongoing and needs to be kept at to keep the peace ongoing. Educating us all is the way forward and these modules are the way to go".

"I still see the hurt in people's stories from bloody Sunday and some other events, it makes me want to help whatever I can do to help honour the dead but comfort the living", "seeing it in person is a lot better than print / videos etc".



Black mountain Shared Space project 26 Oct 2021.



NW Belfast Down Justice Legacy workshop.



NIWRN Siege | 12 August 2021.

**JUSTICE LEGACY – MODULE 39 – 29TH
MAY & 30TH MAY 2021 NORTH BELFAST &
DOWN**

“This whole two days has been a total eye opener for me, it would be of a total interest any other Irish history as I am unaware of the country and its history of which I live”.

“The Derry module experience is so educational I learn so much every time when new group of women experience the truth of families. The Derry module should be a long term project because you learn so much every time”.

**PARADING – MODULE 42 – 8TH &
9TH JUNE 2021 RURAL COMMUNITY
NETWORK**

Legacy issues do not have to relate to politics, social justice as well, I will take away from this module how long and delicate this process at reconciliations can be. (PUL Participant).

**HERITAGE – MODULE 47 – 12TH & 13TH
AUGUST 2021 NIWRN**

I have learnt how we would never have got to where we are and have the same rights we have now but to understand how much more we need to do to keep this alive. I have taken away knowing the difference between justice and truth and how seeking truth cannot ever be dropped. The way the module was done was really powerful and it actually brought into sharp focus where we have come from and the importance of this work.

“The hard work and dedication of the people involved has got to be applauded. I have learned so much and feel so much better informed and understanding of what happened the year after I was born but had such an impact on my life”. (PUL Participant)



Armagh Rural Participants at the City Hotel, May 2021.



RCN workshop Museum of Free Derry, 23 October 2021.



Falls WC at Siege 2.