

Communities In Transition

Participatory Design Process – Reporting Template

Please complete this report following each participatory design session (i.e. one per session) to record the key of the discussion. Please use the sections below to structure the report. If any area was not covered during the discussion, please note that in the relevant section.

Please return the completed report to cit@cooperationireland.org within one week of each participatory design session.

Area: Brandywell and Creggan

Theme: Environment & Culture

Date: 04/02/19

Number of attendees: 23

1. Proposed interventions discussed to address the issues identified in Phase 1 fieldwork?

(a) An all-year-round arts and culture programme to involve:

- Engagement with hard-to-reach children, young people and young adults, within the wider context of promoting arts and culture for all;
- A programme of activities geared towards raising awareness of the cultural traditions and opportunities that exist in the area, the nurturing and development of artistic and cultural skills, and an end product (e.g. a film, a show) that celebrates the community and leaves a positive legacy.

(b) The development of protocols around flags, parades and bonfires in order to mitigate the potential for unnecessary disruption/conflict (flags and parades) and gradually reduce the harm caused to the environment, people's lives and community relations (bonfires). These protocols would be developed at a community level and used to lobby statutory agencies (particularly the PSNI) for endorsement.

2. Comments on current community capacity to address issues identified?

Participants noted that there is a long tradition of successful cultural events in the area, but that there is a gap for more sustained activity in Creggan in particular. In addition, it was suggested that there are a number of cultural organisations and initiatives that offer services and opportunities but are not fully utilised or always given the support they need to reach wider sections of the community.

There are a number of community leaders and organisations who routinely engage with those responsible for unapproved bonfires and those involved in associated activities (drinking, drug taking, anti-social behaviour, violence). This work is vital and will continue, but participants acknowledged that there is a big challenge in finding ways to reach those who are consistently disengaged or are liable to become involved in troublesome activities at key times of the year.

3. Outcomes that participants suggested these interventions would achieve?

- Will encourage disengaged children, young people and young adults to become involved in arts and cultural initiatives on an all-year-round basis, moving them away from involvement in troublesome activities.
- Will help to build the capacity of community-based arts and cultural organisations to support disengaged groups;
- Will leave a positive legacy and help to build community confidence to promote inclusive, constructive forms of cultural expression and challenge negative portrayals of the area;
- Protocols will help to reduce tensions and incidents associated with flags, parades and bonfires.

4. How did participants suggest will we know if these projects/interventions have succeeded? (indicators/measures)

- A reduction in the incidence of anti-social behaviour, criminality and other troublesome behaviours;
- A reduction in inter- and intra-community tensions;
- An increase in the numbers of children, young people and young adults who become involved in community-based arts and cultural initiatives;
- A reduction in the harm linked to bonfires;
- A reduction in tensions and incidents linked to flags and parades.

5. Target beneficiaries/participants of the suggested interventions?

- Disengaged children, young people and young adults;
- Children, young people and young adults who are liable to become disengaged due to a lack of opportunities for artistic and cultural expression;
- Isolated groups such as the elderly, single parents, carers etc. who fall through the net of targeted programmes and have limited opportunities to engage in cultural activities;
- Community-based organisations, particularly those involved in arts, culture, music, sports etc.

6. How did participants suggest these projects/interventions will build the capacity/capability in the community?

The proposed interventions will seek to provide alternatives for disengaged or isolated groups; build community capacity to promote inclusive, constructive forms of cultural expression and challenge negative portrayals of the area; help to better establish community-based arts and cultural organisations as a key part of everyday community life; support ongoing efforts to build better relationships between and within local communities; and help create the space within which a common approach to the issues can be formulated.

7. How did participants suggest these projects/interventions will support the overall objectives of the Tackling Paramilitarism Executive Action Plan...?

a. Paramilitarism has no place.

The proposed interventions encourage disengaged children, young people and young adults towards sustained involvement in cultural activities and away from involvement troublesome activities as well as the influence of paramilitarism.

b. Citizens and communities feel safe and confident.

Citizens and communities will feel safer and more confident when there are fewer incidences of anti-social behaviour and criminality, a reduction in inter- and intra-community tensions, when there are greater numbers of people involved in community-based cultural activities, a reduction in the harm associated with bonfires, and reduction in tension and incidents linked to flags and parades.

c. The public support and have increased confidence in the justice system.

Public support for the PSNI and criminal justice system is likely to increase when communities feel that those agencies are working with them to find solutions to challenges relating to environment and culture.

d. Support is available for those who wish to move away from paramilitary activity and structures.

N/A

8. Any dependencies identified by participants?

The success or otherwise of any protocols developed at a community level will necessarily depend on the engagement and support of statutory agencies, particularly the DoJ and PSNI.

9. Any risks identified by participants?

N/A

10. Any other comments made by participants?

There was a discussion around how best to engage with the target groups in a way that challenges troublesome behaviours while providing an alternative and avoiding the risk of further marginalising those concerned. There was no consensus on this question, however participants seemed to agree that some

groups and individuals within the community are better placed than others to lead on this.

Participants were more unified in their perception that the media has contributed to tensions around the bonfire issue and that the community needs to be more proactive in challenging negative portrayals of the area. They also expressed concerns with the way the PSNI have managed parades and bonfires in recent years, citing examples of police interventions that have unnecessarily led to increased tensions and confrontations. In addition, the flying of Parachute Regiment flags was cited as an illustration of how existing protocols are not working. Participants were clear in asserting their commitment to formulating and codifying workable protocols, but insisted that everyone would benefit from the PSNI taking on board their advice and information.

11. Is a further follow-up workshop required? Please provide details.

N/A