BUILDING CAPACITY TO SUPPORT TRANSITION IN CARRICKFERGUS AND LARNE

(Castlemara and Northlands/Antiville and Kilwaughter ward)

FIELDWORK REPORT FROM PHASE 1 – BUILDING CAPACITY IN COMMUNITIES IN TRANSITION

AUGUST 2018

The Executive Office

Foreword

In July 2016 the Northern Ireland Executive published an Action Plan setting out 38 actions it would take to address some of the most difficult issues which continue to disrupt peaceful and democratic society, in particular, the issues of continued paramilitary activity, criminality and organised crime.

This plan seeks to achieve four ambitious outcomes; a society where citizens and communities feel safe and confident; where paramilitarism has no place; where the public support and have even more confidence in the justice system; and where those who wish to move away from paramilitary activity and structures are supported to do it.

The Executive Office has responsibility for delivery of Action B4 of the Executive Action plan through the Communities in Transition project, which aims to support eight areas where there has been a history of paramilitary activity and coercive control to transition into open and accessible communities where paramilitary activity no longer plays a role.

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme Board, which oversees delivery of the Executive Action Plan, commissioned independent research which identified the eight areas of focus for this project that have been most impacted by paramilitary activity and associated criminality. The report will focus on Carrickfergus and Larne (Castlemara and Northlands/Antiville and Kilwaughter ward)

In September 2017, we appointed a Consortium, led by Co-operation Ireland in partnership with the Mitchell Institute (QUB), INCORE (Ulster University) and the Institute for Conflict Research (ICR) as Strategic Partner to develop a two-phase programme to build capacity to support transition within these communities.

A partnership approach sits at the very heart of this project; we recognise that delivery on the ground needs to include those people who are most affected by these issues.

Phase 1 of the project consisted of extensive consultation with local communities and key stakeholders in each of the areas. This report provides a summary of the findings from Phase 1 and our proposed next steps as we move forward.

We recognise and value the extensive range of important and often challenging work that has already been undertaken by individuals and groups at local level in tackling these issues. This project gives us the opportunity to further drive forward with a new and innovative approach to tackling paramilitary activity and we look forward to continuing to work alongside the communities involved, who are often best placed to propose and deliver solutions to the problems they face.

The Executive Office, in partnership with the Communities in Transition Consortium

Introduction

It has been twenty years since our society said YES to peace. Although much has changed, there are still many challenges as we continue to transition into a peaceful society.

The Executive's Action Plan on Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime recognizes the role communities must play in tackling paramilitarism by developing a culture sympathetic to the rule of law and addressing the systemic issues that these groups seek to exploit. Lawfulness is binding on all, extending across communities, the justice system and statutory agencies. Many of the actions within the plan seek to promote culture of lawfulness across society.

ACTION B4

seeks to provide programmes to build community capacity so that they can move beyond the coercive control and malign influence of groups involved in criminality. As such, Action B4 will **'Support ambitious initiatives aimed at building capacity in communities in transition, including through developing partnership across civil society and across community divisions.'**

OUR AREAS OF FOCUS:

- Antiville and Kilwaughter in Larne together with Northland and Castlemara in Carrickfergus

- Brandywell and Creggan in Derry/Londonderry

- Kilcooley (Clandeboye 2&3 SOA) and Rathgill (Conlig 3 SOA) in North Down

- Drumgask and Kilwilkie in Lurgan

- Lower Falls, Twinbrook, Poleglass, Upper Springfield, Turf Lodge and Ballymurphy in West Belfast

- New Lodge and Greater Ardoyne in North Belfast

- Shankill (upper and lower, including Woodvale) in West Belfast

- The Mount and Ballymacarrett in East Belfast

Between November 2017 and March 2018, the CIT consortium conducted an engagement process in each of the selected eight areas as part of the phase 1 of the project.

The process included a desk-based review of the locality in conjunction with interviews and focus groups with a range of stakeholders in each area, including services providers, community groups, faith-based groups, elected representatives, the business sector, residents and others.

THIS REPORT REFLECTS THE MAIN FINDINGS THAT EMERGED FROM THE FIELDWORK AND THE PROPOSED NEXT STEPS.

The information presented in this document represents the views and suggestions expressed by the participants in Phase 1 of the project. We are conscious that there will be other views and perspectives on the document and the purpose of the publication is to stimulate discussion and promote debate on issues that are of utmost importance to the continuing development of your community. In addition, as stakeholder conversations took place over a limited period of 3-4 months, it was not possible to speak to everyone within the community.

With this in mind, it should be noted that the suggested interventions are therefore not funding commitments but the starting point for continued dialogue on the possible options moving forward.

Outline

The first section of this report presents an outline profile of the area, the headline findings and the relevant context for successful transition in the area. The second part of the report provides a detailed thematic description of the findings and possible solutions as suggested by various participants. Although each area is unique, seven common themes arose as the major issues regarding building community capacity for transition – Community safety and policing; Young people; Health and well-being; Environment and culture; Community development; Restorative justice and restorative practices and; Personal transition. The final section presents the next steps in the project and the timeline for their implementation.

Area Profile and Headline Findings

Area Profile of Carrickfergus and Larne

(Castlemara and Northlands/Antiville and Kilwaughter ward)

"*People here** (Carrick and Larne) *feel left behind and that they haven't really benefitted from the 'Peace Process'. We are miles behind other areas in terms of capacity and development and we need to start catching up.***"**

Politics

Carrickfergus and Larne both lie within the East Antrim constituency area used for Parliamentary and Northern Ireland Assembly elections. The constituency elected two UUP, two DUP, and one Alliance MLA at the last election in 2017. The serving MP for East Antrim is Sammy Wilson of the DUP.

Both Carrickfergus and Larne are located within Mid and East Antrim Council. At a council level, Carrickfergus is represented by five councillors elected for the Carrick Castle ward (two DUP, one UUP and two independent councillors), while in Larne five councillors represent the Larne Lough ward (two UUP, two DUP and one Alliance councillor).

Social and Economic Issues

Carrickfergus (Castlemara and Northlands)

1) In the Carrickfergus area, according to NISRA, **Castlemara** is located within the Love Lane ward, adjacent to the Sunnylands and Victoria wards.
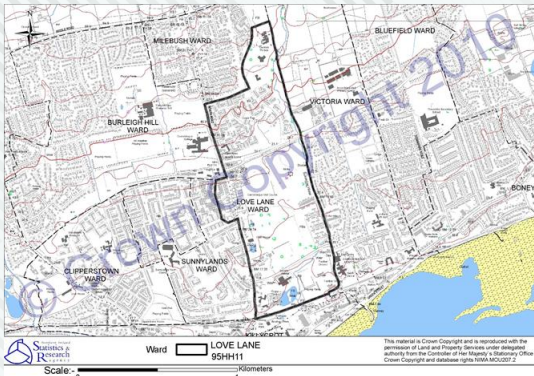
- 2011 Census data indicated that more than half of adult residents in Love Lane (55%) have 'no' or 'low-level' qualifications; this can be contrasted to the figures for Carrickfergus and NI respectively (38% and 41%). Only 10% of residents in Love Lane held a degree or higher qualification, while in NI and Carrickfergus the corresponding figures were 24% and 23%;

- There is a significant discrepancy in the numbers of residents who own their own homes in NI (68%) and Carrickfergus (72%) and in Love Lane (46%);

- According to the census, 17% of adult occupants in Love Lane were 65 years or older and lived alone;

- The 2017 NIMDM highlighted that Love Lane was 173rd most deprived of 890 areas in NI. It was the 54th most deprived in terms of education, training and skills and 95th most deprived in terms of employment.

2) The Northlands area in Carrickfergus lies within the **Northland ward.**


- In relation to the 2017 NIMDM statistics, Northland is within the 10% most deprived areas of NI; and it is the 13th most deprived in relation to education, skills and training and the 50th most deprived of all 890 super output areas in NI in terms of income. This data for 2017 indicates little progress from the 2010 NIMDM where Northland was the 37th most deprived area overall of 582 areas across NI; in 2010 it was the 16th most deprived area in terms of education, skills and training and 48th most deprived in terms of income;

- The 2011 Census data revealed that more than half of adult residents in Northland (57%) have 'no' or 'low-level' qualifications; this can be contrasted to the figures for Carrickfergus and NI respectively (38% and 41%). Only 8% in Northland held a degree or higher qualification, while in NI and Carrickfergus the corresponding figures were 24% and 23%;

- There is a high prevalence of single-parent families in the Northland area. More than one-fifth of households in Northland (21%) are single parents with dependent children. To put this in to context, the corresponding figure for Love Lane is 14% and for Carrickfergus and the rest of NI it is 9%;

- Census data also reveals that the age profile of the Northland ward is not only much younger than Love Lane (only 11% of residents were 65 or above, in Love Lane 21% were 65 or over), but with 25% of the population aged 16 or under, it is also a younger age profile than Carrickfergus as a whole (20%) and the rest of NI (21%).

Social and Economic Issues

Larne (Antiville and Kilwaughter ward)

1) The **Antiville estate** in Larne town constitutes its own ward area.
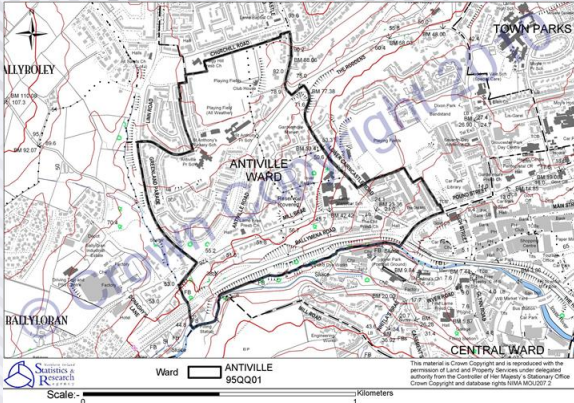

- According to the 2011 Census data, 53% of adult residents of Antiville had 'no' or 'low' level qualifications;

- In terms of the 2017 NIMDM, Antiville was ranked 156th most deprived of 890 super output areas across NI. It was 117th most deprived in relation to employment and 118th most deprived in relation to crime and disorder;

- Levels of home ownership are relatively low in Antiville (55%);

- Antiville is an ageing community (21% of residents are aged 65 or over) and 30% of residents have a long-term limiting illness.

2) **Craigy Hill** also exists in its own distinct ward in Lane, next to Antiville. It became apparent that for research purposes it was more relevant to focus upon Craigy Hill than the Kilwaughter ward, given that the latter (further divided into Kilwaughter 1 and Kilwaughter 2) is primarily a large rural hinterland with less challenges associated with paramilitarism than other parts of Larne town.
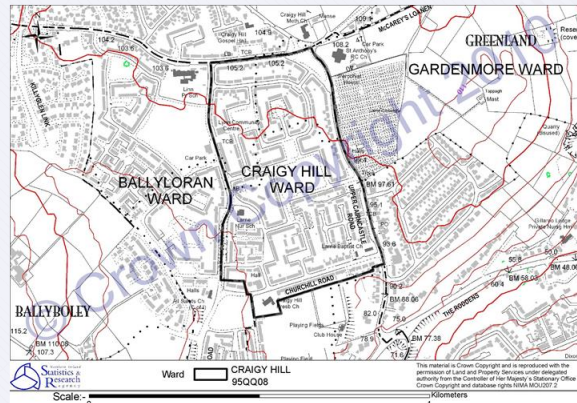
- Like Antiville, Craigy Hill is an ageing community - 24% of residents are aged 65 or over, with the resulting issues relating to a long-term limiting illness (32%);

- According to the 2011 Census data, 55% of adult residents in Craigy Hill had 'no' or 'low' level qualifications;

- Levels of home-ownership are also relatively low in Craigy Hill (57%);

- In terms of the 2017 NIMDM, Craigy Hill was ranked 209th most deprived of 890 super output areas across NI. It was 104th most deprived in relation to employment, 145th most deprived in relation to education, training and skills, and 156th most deprived in relation to health and disability.
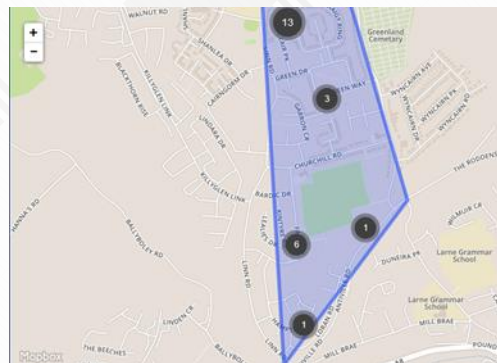
Crime Statistics: REPORTED crime in September 2017
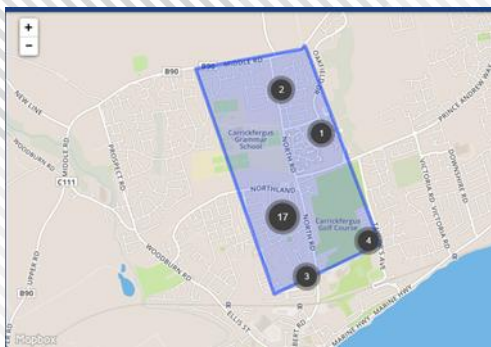
Carrick B4 areas
(with Crime Clusters) [1]

Total	27
Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)	11
Violence & Sexual Offences	9
Drugs	4
Criminal Damage & Arson	1
Possession of weapons	1
Other theft	1

Larne B4 areas
(with Crime Clusters) [2]

Total	24
Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)	13
Violence & Sexual Offences	4
Criminal Damage & Arson	3
Burglary	2
Shoplifting	1
Other theft	1

[1] Please note these crime statistics do no relate to Carrickfergus as a whole (194 crimes in September 2017), but only Castlemara, Northlands and neighbouring streets.

[2] Please note these crime statistics do no relate to Larne as a whole (197 crimes in September 2017), but only Antiville, Craigy Hill and neighbouring streets.

Context for transition:

- Meaningful 'transition' towards a more peaceful society in Carrickfergus and Larne must also address the underlying socio-economic, educational and employment conditions in local communities. B4 is one part of a much longer process of improving underlying social conditions facing people living in Carrickfergus and Larne.

- The value of education needs to be promoted to challenge a lack of aspiration (and attainment).

- There is a clear need to build capacity and skills within local communities to develop a sustainable community infrastructure to engage in grassroots peace-building initiatives.

- Mental health and addiction issues which make some people particularly 'vulnerable' to the negative impacts of paramilitarism must be addressed.

Headline Findings Arising from Carrickfergus and Larne

Eleven key principles emerged throughout discussions which provide a platform from which to begin thinking about 'transition' moving forwards:

1. It was agreed by the vast majority that paramilitaries (and paramilitarism) in their current form should have no place in Carrickfergus and Larne. This includes ending the related paramilitary practices of 'punishment' beatings/shootings, money-lending, extortion, protection rackets, drug dealing, issuing threats, silencing opponents and any other negative/coercive influence which armed groups may historically have exerted upon local communities;

2. Those within armed groups who wish to move on with their lives should be supported to do so and have a legitimate voice and role to play in local communities. But this must be as 'one of many' voices in a community, not the sole or dominant one which silences others;

3. Those who do not wish to 'transition' away from paramilitary activity and violence should be dealt with by the police, the Task Force and the criminal justice system;

4. There should be visible and effective neighbourhood policing with local communities;

5. The criminal justice system should aim to be accessible, work in a timely fashion and treat everyone equally, regardless of their background;

6. Attention should be paid to raising the aspirations, socio-economic conditions and life-chances among people in the working-class communities in both towns which are particularly affected by the continued presence of paramilitaries;

7. Capacity and community infrastructure needs to be built from the 'grass-roots' up;

8. Any programme should ensure that the target neighbourhoods are viewed as valued and integral parts of their respective towns rather than as 'places apart' or spaces to be avoided;

9. Respondents were keen that any stereotyping of Carrickfergus and Larne as 'hotbeds' of paramilitarism should be challenged consistently to encourage greater levels of civic pride amongst local residents;

10. Traditional aspects of working-class cultural practices (such as parades and bonfires) should be carried out in a respectful manner and accorded respect by others; and

11. The macro-political process must strive to provide leadership and set an example to grassroots communities in the spirit of reconciliation and 'transitioning' away from sectarian party politics and the legacies of a violent and difficult past.

What does this mean for the Executive Action plan

- Engaging with local communities and building capacity and skills

- Building the relationship between the community/voluntary and statutory sectors

- Building relationships between local communities and the police

- Improving youth provision and opportunities for young people

- Addressing mental health, addiction and other issues which continue to impact upon the lives of some residents

- Joining up B4 with other (ongoing) funding streams to avoid duplication of resources

- Reducing tolerance for violence through working with the community

Themes for transition

Although each area is unique with its own set of circumstances, needs and challenges regarding paramilitarism and associated criminality, seven common themes have arisen out of the fieldwork.

These themes have been used to frame the findings in this next section which are based on the participants opinions and suggestions.

It is important to note that solving the issues raised by the participants will take a multi-faceted and collective response and it is beyond the scope of this project to solve on its own.

Transition will take time and cannot be achieved by communities alone. This project seeks to help build capacity within communities to forge their own pathways towards a peaceful, democratic society were paramilitarism has no place as part of a wider programme. The next section should be read within this context.

Community Safety and Policing

Key issues

A perceived cut in police resources coupled with the questioned use of tactics such as 'stop and search' and alleged lack of knowledge among the police have contributed to negativity in relation to neighbourhood policing.

There is a widespread perception among respondents that policing in both towns, and particularly in Carrickfergus, has been impacted upon by a reduction in police resources required to police the ongoing paramilitary related feud. While the police in Carrickfergus have doubled the numbers of their neighbourhood team in recent months, there were perceptions within communities that the closure of the local police station and budget cuts had reduced the effectiveness of policing on the ground. While recognising that the police 'had a job to do', a number of respondents questioned the effectiveness of tactics such as 'stop and search' and suggested that it was difficult to attempt neighbourhood policing alongside more targeted TSG operations (without the latter more negatively impacting upon perceptions of the PSNI).

It should also be noted that at times the police are blamed 'wrongly' if a case does not make it to court or for the general 'speed' of the criminal justice system. It would appear that education is required on the role of the police (and the limits of their power) within the more general structures of the criminal justice system. This issue needs to be addressed within the wider context of building a 'culture of lawfulness' amongst the general public.

"Sure what's the point in reporting it when nothing is done?"

" Waving a flag is a criminal offence but getting caught with guns isn't? Sure, they are charging soldiers with war crimes while they gave the Provies (sic) get out of jail free cards. How does that create confidence in the unionist community?"

"We never see the police here — we joke if we see two police cars in Larne."

Possible solutions

Improve communication between the police and residents with a view to improving knowledge of the police and confidence in neighbourhood policing.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

• Reviewing policing in target areas to ensure visibility of neighbourhood policing and increase confidence (action A5);

• Improving communication between police and the community on 'Fresh Start' and promoting a 'culture of lawfulness' (under actions A1-A3);

• A training and support programme for local communities around the key principles of a 'culture of lawfulness', language of criminality rather than 'paramilitaries' (action C1), human rights and policing and a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities in the criminal justice system;

• A review of the potential for the 'speeding' up of cases to increase community confidence (actions A10-14).

Young People

"*Transition is all to do with young people – let's give them aspiration and hope to move on so they don't join up.*"

"*Nine years ago there used to be nine youth clubs in this town. Now there is one.*"

Key findings

It was evident to many that young people, especially young men in vulnerable situations, are at risk of being drawn into paramilitarism.

Three key issues were perceived to impact upon young people from the B4 areas in Carrickfergus and Larne; a 'poverty of hope' in terms of educational aspiration and attainment; a lack of adequate youth provision; and high levels of anti-social behaviour (which some young people may either be victims or perpetrators of). Although the YMCA have a significant presence in both locations and work with children and young people from all B4 areas, most other youth clubs within the areas have closed or are open under limited hours.

Those young people engaging in anti-social behaviour were also perceived to be at particular risk of coming to the attention of paramilitaries, the police and criminal justice system, or both.

A number of interviewees also felt that young men aged between 15-25 were particularly 'at risk' of becoming involved in paramilitarism, either to avoid a 'punishment beating', to provide protection against the 'other' organisation, or to provide them with a sense of group identity, respect and social status.

Possible solutions

Increased resilience of those vulnerable to paramilitaries to reduce levels of coercive control and influence.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- A review of youth provision with a view to (re)establishing several youth clubs in target areas;

- A review of the lack of training/education facilities/classes in target areas;

- Education work on the 'reality' of life in a 'gang' – possibly through drama/arts in schools (linked to actions A2 and A4);

- Further support for *Early Intervention* work with vulnerable young people (under action B13);

- Support for families and young people who are failing to attend school regularly and at risk of exclusion. Also, to include wider promotion of aspiration with regards to educational attainment (under action D1 and possible link to work of Goliath Trust in this regard);

- Workshops/youth programmes (in schools and community youth settings) to increase understanding among young people of a 'culture of lawfulness' and the PSNI's role in this (under action A2).

Health and Well-being

Key findings

Drugs are a major concern for the interviewees in the area. Addictions can also be a 'pathway' into paramilitarism for some young people.

Drugs were a real concern for interviewees, certainly one of the main social issues impacting upon both Carrickfergus and Larne. Several interviewees reported that young people as young as 12/13 had 'overdosed' and in some cases drugs can be bought 'online' or prescription medicine can be 'sold' (e,g. lyrica/pregabalin). While Carrickfergus Connect and Preventing Addiction Larne (PAL) work to support those with addiction in Carrickfergus and Larne respectively, both are small, voluntary groups with limited funding and capacity.

Addiction can also be a 'pathway' into paramilitarism as some young people (in particular) may run up a drug debt which they are unable to pay and therefore are forced to 'join up'. Several interviewees spoke of needing to build 'resilience' within families and individuals to deal with the complex and overlapping social/health issues they may face which can contribute to the development of an addiction. This was viewed as particularly important to achieve within young people given that having four Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) or more can lead to physical and psychological problems later in life.

"There are real problems here to do with mental health, gambling and addiction. People end up getting in to debt and don't know who to turn to."

"Organisations here are doing their best, but they need more support and funding in working with people."

Possible solutions

Improving awareness, education and support around addictions and mental health has the potential to reduce coercive control and influence.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- Education work around negative impact of drugs/alcohol (early intervention);

- Support work for those with an addiction/mental health issues;

- Education/promotion of alternate ways/means of securing loans/financial assistance for those in debt (including signposting to support organisations and the 'Make the Call' initiative');

- Improve inter-statutory coordination (Health Trusts, support hubs, social services, PSNI etc.) on working with vulnerable individuals 'at risk' of coming into contact with armed groups.

- Support for interventions for conflict related trauma, including suicide prevention, and self-harm, depression and anxiety.

Environment and culture

Key findings

Recognition by interviewees of the need to hold a more respectful and positive expression of cultural manifestations and move beyond paramilitary symbolism.

Parades and bonfires in particular remain symbolically important aspects of working-class loyalist culture. But there was a recognition that such cultural manifestations need to be held in a proper and respectful manner and move beyond the use of paramilitary symbolism.

While a number of murals in Carrickfergus and Larne have been 'reimaged', there also remain a number of paramilitary related murals in prominent locations which many respondents were in favour of changing to more positive expressions of cultural heritage and celebration.

Possible solutions

Engaging with the community to assess views on how to promote more positive manifestations of communal expression can reduce the visible manifestations of paramilitarism.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- Building upon ongoing re-imaging work in the area (Council and NIHE) to assess views within communities as to more positive manifestations of communal expression;

- Engaging with young people to consider their views on how the local community can best be visually represented;

- Further work to engage with communities to reduce negative manifestations associated with some bonfires in the areas.

"It's important to reimage murals. But they are only a symptom of wider problems, not the underlying causes."

"Our culture deserves respect — but only if we do it respectfully towards others too."

Community Development Issues

Key finding

It was clear to many respondents that there is a lack of community-based organisations, skill and capacity in community development. Furthermore, there was a widespread perception that paramilitaries had a negative impact on community development.

The widespread view was that there was a real lack of significant or authoritative community-based organisations and a lack of capacity and skills in terms of community development in both Carrickfergus and Larne.

There is also a general sense of alienation among local residents and resistance to getting involved in community activities. On many occasions the activities of a group were driven forward by a few 'well intentioned' individuals. Community groups tend to be made up of some of the 'same faces'. Where individuals who are crucial to driving things forward either become 'burnt out' or ill, decide to move on, retire or pass away, a community group/women's group/youth club can fold almost instantaneously and there is little 'institutional memory' to carry on the provision.

In the past, the presence of perceived paramilitaries on committees was believed to have discouraged other local people from the community getting involved.

"There's been thousands pumped in on MUGA's, playparks etc. But it's all been about environmental regeneration, there's not been enough about education and jobs."

"Once the key person goes, things tend to crumble. We just can't get people to engage at all. They see things come and go and think what's the point?"

"We need basic work here in Larne which happened in Belfast 20 years ago. The problem is funders often won't refund the same project, even if it has been a success."

Possible solutions

Enhancing community development capacities with improved comprehensiveness can reduce coercive control and influence of paramilitaries.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- Mentoring work to establish groups and provide ongoing support to ensure appropriate governance structures and that groups have capacity to secure alternate sources of funding;

- Training to promote improved capacity for community development and volunteering in target areas (linked to MEABC Community Plan);

- Widen participation to ensure organisations are more reflective of a range of backgrounds from within the community (gender, minority groups, young people, ex-combatants/non-combatants etc.);

- Interventions to generate civic pride in a local community bereft of positive identity and a community development process that has (in part) been stymied historically by paramilitary actions.

Restorative justice and restorative practices

"*With anti-social behaviour, some people still go to paras (sic), and community workers will get a phone call before the police.***"**

Key findings

It was widely suggested that the absence of developed restorative justice initiatives or of restorative practices in schools and community have enabled paramilitaries to exert coercive control and influence.

It was suggested by a number of interviewees that there was still tacit support in communities for paramilitaries 'dealing' with 'criminal' or 'antisocial' behaviour. Indeed, one participant noted that typically after a punishment attack many people think "*They must have done something to deserve it*" rather than totally condemning such attacks, regardless of what the victim may or may not have done. This also relates to levels of trust and confidence in the police, which were believed to be relatively low in the B4 areas in Carrickfergus and Larne at present.

While there has been some limited restorative work in the target areas, restorative practices in Carrickfergus and Larne remain distinctly under-developed when compared to other parts of Northern Ireland.

Possible solutions

Providing restorative justice and practice initiatives has the potential to reduce coercive control and influence.

Our evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- The development of restorative practices within a definitive community base, with a focus on the intergenerational needs of the community – in particular a restorative approach to challenging issues in relation to young people engaging in anti-social behaviour;

- The development of a bespoke transitional toolkit to facilitate community dialogue on issues of transition, post-conflict legacy issues and empowering people to make decisions around 'lawfulness';

- The development of restorative practices as a response to the significant issues associated with the paramilitary feud in the area.

Personal Transition

Key findings

It was widely accepted that significant barriers still obstruct transition for those who want to end their association with paramilitary groups.

The Mid and East Antrim area is reportedly home to a large ex-prisoner population. It was suggested that a number of these individuals continue to suffer from mental health and addiction issues, alongside issues relating to a criminal conviction hindering home insurance, travel abroad or employment opportunities. Other issues reported to face ex-prisoners included the 'stigma' within the community which tended to face loyalists more so than republicans; the securing of a license for a legally held firearm; and attitudes towards the children of some ex-prisoners, who were viewed by some as having to 'pay the price' for the 'sins of their father'. There were also some issues identified which acted as barriers to individuals leaving organisations in the contemporary period.

Possible solutions

Providing support and legitimate alternatives to allow ex-prisoners/ former combatants to reintegrate into society and move away from any affiliation to a group will reduce coercive control and influence.

The evidence suggests that a transition plan could include:

- Supporting local individuals and groups to avail of the interventions under actions such as B1, B2, B3, B10;

- A leadership training programme for community organisations and ex-prisoners around models of community development and leadership;

- Outreach work with individuals on an intervention and mediation basis. Bi-lateral support mechanisms to support transition from organisational control and to assist those who want to leave organisations.

"Some people joining, who didn't really know what they were letting themselves in for, by the time they find out, it's too late."

"There are people who want out who don't know how to, or can't get out."

"I know some people who can't wait for the Task Force to do their job - so they can leave."

What next for the Project

Next Steps

The Executive's Action Plan on Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime sets out a range of actions which will work towards an end to all forms of paramilitary activity, the use of peaceful and democratic means and the rule of law in all communities.

This is a challenge for society as a whole and we all have a part to play. Delivery of the Executive Action Plan presents a unique opportunity for new partnerships to develop both across Government and with the community sector. Through the Communities in Transition project, we want to support areas that are significantly impacted by paramilitarism and criminal activity and build capacity amongst the people who live there and the community organisations that are working extremely hard to make a difference to their neighbourhoods.

The scope of the Communities in Transition Project is to build the capacity of these communities through specific, practical interventions to enable them to affect positive change for themselves, break the grip of coercive control and transition away from paramilitary activity.

Tackling Paramilitary Programme Outcomes:

- Paramilitarism has no place

- Citizens and communities feel safe and confident

- The public support and have increasing confidence in the justice system

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

The Project will work with those local communities to put in place interventions to develop capacity and confidence through:
- building capacity to address underlying social issues and achieve improved outcomes for all;
- building capacity to transition in neighbourhoods and places and for groups of people that make up local communities;
- building capacity to proactively move towards a culture of lawfulness; and
- building capacity to become open, accessible and lawful communities.

The area-based approach being taken forward in this project enables activities to be tailored to take consideration of local contexts and for them to be designed and delivered in a way which empowers and supports citizens to continue to deliver change in their communities beyond the lifetime of the project.

Underpinning Principles:

- **Empowerment**: Empower and support citizens and communities to address the problems they face.

- **Sustainability**: Embedding capacity within communities so that change can be continued beyond the lifetime of this programme.

- **Collaboration:** Working together within communities and between communities and statutory agencies.

- **Lawfulness:** Commitment to the use of peaceful and democratic means and upholding the rule of law across all communities.

- **Inclusivity, Fairness, transparency, impartiality and democratic accountability**

Next Steps- In Your Community

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

We would like to thank everyone who was involved during the first phase of this programme, and we look forward to continuing the collaborative work achieved up until now and extending the range of voices involved in the process.

Over the next few months we will bring together individuals from Carrickfergus and Larne who want to see an end to paramilitarism and are willing to act to make change happen. We will work together to define priorities, activities and outcomes that will form the basis of commissioned activity in Carrickfergus and Larne. The activities will add value to existing provision and develop the capacity and resilience of individuals and of the local community to address issues connected with paramilitarism and organised crime. This will mean both building capacity to proactively move towards a culture of lawfulness and to address the underlying systemic issues which are exploited by paramilitary and organised criminal gangs.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS

As part of the participatory design process and to help inform design discussions in this phase, there will be a number of supporting activities happening within your area:

- **Environment and Culture Activities**
  A process of engagement around the community ownership of the expression of culture and identity in the public space.

- **Community Learning and Safety Dialogue Activities**
  Community led events to increase knowledge and understanding of the justice system and the responsibilities of the different agencies within the system.

- **Young People Activities**
  Enable positive and innovative local youthwork activities by providing additional resources where current provision is insufficient to meet the needs identified by the community.

This document is the result of a community engagement process commissioned by TEO from the Communities in transition consortium: Co-operation Ireland in partnership with the Mitchell Institute (QUB), INCORE (Ulster University) and the Institute for Conflict Research (ICR)