

20th March 2024

E-Zine



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society

Welcome to Supporting Communities 228th Edition of E-Zine, bringing you Best Practice from the Community Sector; Funding and Training Updates and Policy Developments in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Republic of Ireland

Housing Executive announce energy efficiency investment of £55m

Northern Ireland Housing Executive will invest £55m in energy efficiency measures for their homes over the next year, it was revealed at their annual Sustainability Symposium today.

A ground breaking £9m scheme involving the low-carbon retrofitting of 300 homes will form part of this investment.

The scheme will see upgrades to 300 homes by March 2025 in the Strabane, Dunmurry, Newtownards, Sion Mills, Dungannon and Antrim areas.

Chief Executive of the Housing Executive Grainia Long, said: "Our Low Carbon Retrofit Programme will deliver a 'whole house' solution with the desired outcome of reducing carbon emissions, lowering householder bills and providing a healthier environment.

"A range of interventions will help us achieve this, including improving energy efficiency measures through retrofitting, the introduction of low carbon heating options like air source heat pumps and the use of renewable energy for power generation and electric storage.

"This exciting programme is just one strand of our £55m investment plan. These plans will help combat the very real pressures created by fuel poverty and the cost of living crisis.

"The low carbon retrofit scheme follows the completion of our first large-scale retrofit programme with EU Interreg funding and match funding from the Housing Executive at over £31m.

"Thanks to this programme, 1400 of our houses are warmer, more energy efficient and have a reduced carbon footprint."

Housing professionals who attended the Sustainability



(L-R) The Housing Executive's Head of Sustainable Development Robert Clements with Chair Nicole Lappin, Dr Inna Vorushylo, Chief Executive Grainia Long and Ciaran Byrn

Symposium at Riddel Hall, Queen's University Belfast, received an update on the latest developments in this programme.

Ms Long also discussed the Northern Ireland Home Energy Conservation Authority annual progress report and attendees heard about Sunningdale, a new build pilot project in north Belfast - the Housing Executive's first housing development for nearly 25 years.

Work on the new build began in November 2023 and construction is now well underway on six semi-detached homes, being built using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and ultra-low energy building techniques, to Passive House standard.

Other speakers at the event included Ciaran Byrne, Director of the National Retrofit Directorate in Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Angus Kerr, Director of Climate Change, Department for Communities, Dr Inna Vorushylo, Ulster University, and Eddie Murnin, Associate Director of GEDA Construction.

Spring Budget 2024: Key announcements

Shauna O'Neill of NICVA reports



The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt MP delivered his Spring Budget on Wednesday, 6 March. It focused on the economy 'turning a corner' and delivering tax cuts for working people.

The majority of policies were structured with the aims of:

1. Creating a fairer tax system
2. Supporting people with the cost of living
3. Reforming delivery of public services

Announcements made include:

- Reducing National Insurance from 8% to 6% from 6 April 2024.
- Abolishing 'Non-Dom' tax status and replacing the system with new rules from April 2025.
- Extending the Household Support Fund to provide £500 million to families.
- Raising the child benefit charge threshold from £50,000 to £60,000.
- Extending a 5p cut in fuel duty rates for 12 months.
- Investing an extra £2.5 billion of funding for the NHS in England.

As is normally the case with spending announcements in the Budget, devolved regions receive additional money through a Barnett Consequential. In today's Budget, the NI Executive has received an additional £100 million for public services.

Other NI-specific measures:

- One-off regeneration funds of £20 million each for Londonderry and Coleraine as part of the UK Government's Towns Fund.
- £2 million allocation to be spent on "global investment and trade opportunities for Northern Ireland."

NI POLITICAL REACTION

- Northern Ireland Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris MP said that the budget "underlines the UK Government's commitment to Northern Ireland and to the Union." He welcomed the £100 million additional Barnett funding for 2024-25, on top of the £3.3 billion spending settlement, as a boost for the Executive's spending power.
- Finance Minister and Sinn Féin MLA Caoimhe Archibald described the budget as a "real

opportunity missed for investment in public services." She said the cut to National Insurance will provide "some relief for workers" but that the additional £99 million the Executive will receive will not "make a dent in the many financial challenges we face."

- DUP Treasury Spokesperson Sammy Wilson MP expressed disappointment in the budget's failure to adequately reward working people, whom he sees as crucial to Northern Ireland and the UK. He said "there is no game-changer in this Budget to show that work pays. Families once again will be seeing more of their income taxed than previous generations yet very little action to tackle the global tax avoiding online corporates."
- Alliance Deputy Leader Stephen Farry MP criticised the Budget, saying it is "short-sighted and irresponsible," as it does not address the economic and social challenges facing the UK, while doing little to help Northern Ireland specifically. He added "this should have been a Budget which addressed the cost of living crisis, boosted declining public services, driven upskilling and delivered a Green New Deal"
- UUP Finance Spokesperson Steve Aiken MLA described the budget as one that "few will be happy with." He said the cut to National Insurance and Barnett consequentials are positive, but that "the real term squeeze on public services will dampen down the stuttering attempts to boost the economy."
- SDLP Leader Colum Eastwood MP said, "a 2p cut in national insurance will be cold comfort to people facing higher prices, higher household bills and a desperate squeeze on public services." Colum Eastwood MP also noted the tangible consequences of budget decisions, such as longer hospital waiting lists, stretched housing waiting lists, declining public sector pay, and underfunding of priority capital projects.

Please find a summary of the economic overview and the main announcements attached, listed by policy area. The full text of the statement from the HM Treasury can be found [here](#) and the Chancellor's Speech can be found [here](#).

Minister Murphy announces additional £1m of financial support for students

Economy Minister Conor Murphy has announced an additional £1million to support students facing financial hardship as a result of increased costs of living.

The funds will be distributed to Queen's University, Ulster University, The Open University, St Mary's University College and Stranmillis University College for eligible students at those institutions to apply for. Highlighting the additional funding, the Minister said: "I am acutely aware of the impact of cost of living increases on students and am pleased to make this additional £1million available immediately. The support funds are distributed by the higher education institutions to students who find themselves in financial hardship and who, without additional financial support, might not be able to complete their course.

This funding of £1million is in addition to the £2.8million of support funds already committed by the

Department for the Economy this year and is in response to the high level of demand being experienced by the higher education institutions.

The Minister continued, "A thriving higher education sector is critical for a strong, regionally balanced economy and I am engaging with my officials to fully scope the options for further changes to financial and other means of support. I encourage any student who feels that they may be eligible for additional support to contact their higher education institution and apply. I also urge the institutions to ensure they apply eligibility criteria as flexibly as possible when considering applications for support from students."



Appointments to the Board of the NI Housing Executive

Communities Minister, Gordon Lyons MLA, has appointed Councillor Keith Kerrigan, Councillor Paul McCusker and Councillor Cathal Mallaghan as Board Members of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) with effect from 1 March 2024 until the next local council election

The Minister has also reappointed Mr John McMullan as the Vice-Chair of the NIHE Board from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2029. Mr McMullan has served as the Vice-Chair from 1 April 2019.

The NIHE was established by the Housing Executive Act (NI) 1971 to take over the housing responsibilities of the 65 separate housing authorities that existed at that time. It is now the overall housing authority for Northern Ireland with a budget of over £740m and a staff of approximately 2,700.

These appointments have been made in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland's (CPA NI) Code of Practice. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, CPA NI requires the political activity of appointees to be published.

Councillor Kerrigan is a Democratic Unionist Party elected representative in the Derry City and Strabane District Council, and sits on its Policing and Community Safety Partnership Board



Councillor McCusker is an Independent elected representative for Belfast City Council. He sits on number of Council Committees including the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders Committee, is a Member of the Cathedral Quarter Trust in Belfast and founded the charity Peoples Kitchen Belfast.

Councillor Mallaghan is a Sinn Fein elected representative in the Mid Ulster Council, where he is the Group Leader. He sits on the Council's Environment and Planning Committees. He is a director of a local agricultural and farming company, and former Member of the Libraries NI Board Mr McMullan is the former Chief Executive Officer of Bryson Charitable Group, a business he developed from a traditional charity into a modernised fit for purpose Social Enterprise, delivering a range of social purposed services in NI, GB and RoI. He holds voluntary roles on a number of boards including as Chair of Social Enterprise NI and The Bank of England NI Citizen's Panel. He has declared no political activity in the last five years, and he holds no other public appointments.

Could you help restore good governance to a charity?

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is adding to its list of prospective trustees who may be called on to provide assistance in a charity either on a short or long term basis – and is looking for interested parties to apply.



Under the *Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008*, the Commission has the power to appoint trustees to a charity where it is satisfied there is, or has been:

- misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of a charity
- or it is necessary or desirable to act for the purpose of protecting the property of a charity or for its proper administration.

The Commission may appoint a person to be a charity trustee where, for example:

- there are no charity trustees
- there is a single charity trustee and a need to appoint others for the proper administration of the charity.

Commission staff may also facilitate the introduction of prospective trustees with charities facing particular challenges.

To support the Commission in updating its list of prospective trustees, the Commission is calling for applicants to contact them via email to: admin@charitycommissionni.org.uk (or by post to

Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon, BT64 1AD) to express their interest and make an appointment to discuss what may be involved.

Applicants are encouraged from all areas of experience; however, previous experience at Board level would be advantageous. For a briefing sheet on the legal requirements and guidance on conflicts of interest, please contact the Commission via the details above.

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is committed to equality. The Commission encourages diversity and inclusion throughout the charity sector and is keen to improve this in our role as a public body. Expressions of interest are welcome from all eligible persons regardless of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants.

An order to appoint a trustee does not constitute a contract between the Commission (or the charity) and the trustee, nor does it create a legal right to remuneration.



Please see the list of following jobs currently available at the Housing Executive:

- 2024-72 - Housing Benefit Assistant Systems Manager
- 2024-82 - Executive Assistant - Regional Services

Further information on these jobs can be found at the GetGot website which can be accessed by clicking this [link](#) and typing 'Housing Executive' into the search bar.

Consultations

Greater use of the Mutual Exchange Service

The Housing Executive's Fundamental Review of Allocations (FRA)

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nihe/hcn-survey-great-use-of-the-mutual-exchange>

Closing Date; 28th March 2024

Call for Evidence: A Future Focused Review of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement on the issue of Climate Change

Department for Infrastructure

[Call for Evidence on A Future Focused Review of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement \(SPPS\) on the issue of Climate Change | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nihe/hcn-survey-great-use-of-the-mutual-exchange)

Closing Date; 28th March 2024

New Strategy for Victims and Survivors

The Executive Office

[Public Consultation on the New Strategy for Victims and Survivors - NI Direct - Citizen Space](https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nihe/hcn-survey-great-use-of-the-mutual-exchange)

Closing Date; 29th March 2024

Public Consultation on the Arts Council NI new 10 year Strategy (2024 to 2034)

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

[Strategy Consultation 2024-34 | Arts Council NI \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nihe/hcn-survey-great-use-of-the-mutual-exchange)

Closing Date; 5th April 2024

Codes of practice issued under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002

Department for Justice

[Consultation on codes of practice issued under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nihe/hcn-survey-great-use-of-the-mutual-exchange)

Closing Date; 10th April 2024

Assembly Update

Assembly Round up shares news, photos, and resources with you about what's happening at the Northern Ireland Assembly and how you can get involved.

You can go directly to the Assembly Round-up page at; <https://blog.niassembly.gov.uk/>



Assembly Business

The most recent plenary sessions of the Assembly considered a number of issues including [Executive Committee Business](#) comprising the [Budget Bill: Consideration Stage](#) and [Private Members Business](#) including [Waiting Lists: Action Plan](#) and [Speech and Language Therapy: Criminal Justice System](#).

Members heard a number of statements from individual members on a range of topics including Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal, Young Carers Action Day, Racist and Intimidating Signs, Child Poverty: NIAO Report and Together Campaign: Ban Hunting with Dogs, A5 Road Upgrade and School Absences.

[Oral Answers to Questions](#) were provided by the [Communities](#) Minister, the Justice Minister and the Minister for Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs.

The report of the plenary sessions of the Assembly are available at; <http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/officialreport.aspx>

Committee for Communities

The minutes of meetings of the Communities Committee are available at; [Committee for Communities: 2022 - 2027 Mandate \(niassembly.gov.uk\)](#)

Policy and Practice Focus

Advancing housing practice: Education development paves the way forward in Northern Ireland

Justin Cartwright CIHCM, national director Northern Ireland



In the ever-evolving landscape of housing practice, education stands as the cornerstone of progress. As we navigate through the intricacies of modern housing management, it's imperative to equip ourselves with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the increasing demands of the field. At the forefront of this endeavour, CIH's commitment to education development is not just a choice but a necessity, ensuring a robust foundation for the future of housing professionals.

Reflecting on our journey so far, we take pride in the strides we've made in shaping the educational landscape for aspiring housing practitioners. The success of the first cohort of the level three apprenticeship in housing practice at North West Regional College (NWRC) serves as a testament to our dedication to nurturing talent and fostering growth within the industry. As we gear up for the second cohort, we stand firm in our resolve to provide unparalleled learning opportunities for the next generation of housing professionals.

Listening attentively to the needs of our members, we recognise the importance of accessibility in education. That's why we're thrilled to [announce the launch](#) of a foundation degree in housing practice at the Northern Regional College, in partnership with Open University. This initiative, subject to validation, will open doors for individuals in Belfast and beyond, offering a comprehensive educational pathway tailored to the demands of the housing sector.

Our commitment to addressing the training needs of our members goes further. Through meticulous planning and collaboration, we've designed a customised training plan for Northern Ireland, crafted to meet the evolving demands of the industry. Spearheaded by our engagement and external affairs manager Julie Steele, and in collaboration with our training manager Louise Smylie, our face-to-face sessions serve as a platform for learning, networking and skill enhancement. Covering a diverse range of topics such as hoarding, conflict resolution, and damp and mould, these sessions have garnered overwhelming interest.

One highlight for me was the opportunity to design and deliver the introduction to social housing training, spending the day with housing leaders of the future. Together with Loma Wilson from Radius Housing and Greg Bell from Clanmil Housing as guest speakers, we delved into the intricacies of building communities

and understanding housing finance, enriching the learning experience for all participants. As we embark on this journey of education development, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to these endeavours. From the collaborative efforts of Caroline McKeever of NWRC and Karen McCambridge of NRC, to the unwavering support of our members, everyone has played a pivotal role in shaping the future of housing education in Northern Ireland.

In addition to the intrinsic value of developing professionals' knowledge and skills, there's also a regulatory imperative driving our education initiatives forward. The social housing regulator in Northern Ireland has underscored the significance of workforce development by mandating housing associations to demonstrate concrete plans for enhancing the skills, knowledge and competency of their workforce. Education plays a pivotal role in fulfilling this requirement, and our expanded suite of educational offerings will enable associations to showcase their commitment to meeting regulatory standards.

Moreover, discussions around potentially further mandating professionalism within the sector have been initiated, with the regulator forwarding considerations to the Department for Communities housing policy division. This aligns with the trend observed in England, where qualifications are in the process of becoming mandatory, signalling a shift towards more regulated and professionalised housing management. By proactively investing in education and skill development, we not only empower individuals but also contribute to a culture of excellence and accountability within the industry. Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing housing practice through education. With the launch of new apprenticeships and educational pathways, we stand poised to cultivate a new generation of housing professionals equipped with the skills, knowledge, and passion to drive positive change in the industry.

Together, let's embrace the transformative power of education and pave the way forward for a brighter, more sustainable future in housing practice.

Publications

Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey – Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Statistics on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) were published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Young people who were NEET

- There were an estimated 15,000 young people aged 16 to 24 years in Northern Ireland who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in October to December 2023. This was equivalent to 7.6% of all those aged 16 to 24 years in NI.
- The NEET rate among males aged 16 to 24 was 7.0% and among females was 8.2% in October to December 2023.
- The number who were NEET decreased from the previous quarter and over the year; the quarterly change was statistically significant.
- In October to December 2023 there were an estimated 12,000 young people aged 16 to 24 years

who were not in education, employment or training and who were not looking for work and/or not available to start work (economically inactive). The remainder of those who were not in education, employment or training were looking for work in the previous four weeks and available to start within the next two weeks (unemployed).

The latest LFS reweighting was introduced in February 2024, affecting data from July-September 2022 to September-November 2023, to incorporate the latest estimates of the size and composition of the UK population. More information on this reweighting can be accessed through the [Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators: 2024](#)



Catch up on what's been happening with the Chief Constable's Report to the Board at [chief-constables-report-northern-ireland-policing-board.pdf \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#) and the Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing at [Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)

In addition the November edition of Policing Matters is available at; [Policing Matters March 2024 | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)



The NIEL Environmental Priorities for the NI Assembly 2024 is available at [NIEL-briefing-for-MLAs-8th-Feb-24.pdf \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#). For the latest environmental news, go to [Environmental News, Research & Analysis - February 2024 \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#) For other NIEL publications and events, go to; [www.nienvironmentlink.org](#)



Please click the link below to access the latest newsletter for PCSPs which highlights local events and initiatives; [PCSP Projects coming to Life | Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(pcsp.org\)](#)



Following a consultation process in 2023, The Executive Office is pleased to inform you that "The Executive Office Equality Scheme 2024-2029" has now been published on our website at the following address <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-scheme-executive-office>

Events

Join the effort to keep Northern Ireland beautiful with The BIG Spring Clean!



Looking for a fantastic opportunity to give back to your community? Look no further than Live Here Love Here's flagship volunteering programme, the BIG Spring Clean. The BIG Spring Clean, Northern Ireland's largest volunteer clean-up campaign, is designed to support local community action through clean-up support.

The campaign takes place annually from 1st March to 30th April and is open to everyone, including individuals, schools, community groups, and businesses from all backgrounds. Together, let's work towards a cleaner environment by eliminating litter this spring!

Get involved...

The Live Here Love Here team are hosting lots of events across the country in our partner council areas. Why not get involved in an event happening in your local area? Everyone is welcome! Simply register using the link below and turn up on the day:



List of Events

Track the amazing difference your litter picking efforts make!

The Litter Log form was created to keep track of all the litter collected by communities and individuals nationwide during the BIG Spring Clean campaign. The more data we accumulate, the more effectively we can sway government and public opinion.

If you participate in a litter pick during March and April, please complete the form below:

Litter Log Form

National Lottery Heritage Grants: Information session (Northern Ireland)

Do you have an idea for a heritage project that could benefit your community and want to find out more about our grants programme?

National Lottery Heritage Grants is our open programme for all types of heritage projects in the UK. Under our new strategy, Heritage 2033, grants fall under two categories: **£10,000 to £250,000**, and **£250,000 to £10 million**. Whether you apply for £10,000 or £10 million, we want the projects we support to value, care for and sustain our heritage for everyone, now and in the future.

If you want to learn about our funding, then our **free online information sessions** are for you. Hosted by the Engagement team in Northern Ireland, each session will cover:

- What heritage is and our definition
- The types of organisations we can fund
- What makes a fundable heritage project
- The four investment principles which will guide our

- funding decisions
- Our new application process under Heritage 2033 and deadlines for each grant programme.

There will also be time for a Q&A at the end of each session.

Session which will take place on the following date:

- **8 April 2024, 6.00 –7.30pm:** <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/t-dvxpzrpz>

If you would like to attend, it is essential that you **sign up in advance** via **Ticketsource** to secure your place. **Each session is limited to 25 people. To sign up, please use the above links for your chosen date.**



Heritage Fund

Engaging Young People in Your Tenant Participation Structure

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Join us for a special open meeting of the [Tenant Participation Practitioners Network](#) to share good practice in engaging younger tenants in your housing association's/AHB's activities.

Special guest speaker Kirsty Peake from [Bolton at Home](#) will share her experience working with Reclaim Youth to involve young people and to form a Young Person's Scrutiny Panel made up of 16 to 25-year-olds. Find out how she did it!

Open to members and non-members from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, let's talk about what works and what doesn't and share ideas to get more young people talking about housing.

Register

If you are not a TPPN member, please register for this free event.

Email Siobhán O'Neill at

siobhan@supportingcommunities.org.



ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

IN YOUR TENANT PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE

Online Discussion 15 May, 10:30 am

Join us for a special open meeting of the **Tenant Participation Practitioners Network** to share good practice in engaging younger tenants in your housing association's/AHB's activities.

Special guest speaker Kirsty Peake from Bolton at Home will share her experience working with Reclaim Youth to involve young people and to form a Young Person's Scrutiny Panel made up of 16 to 25-year-olds. Find out how she did it!

Open to members and non-members from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, let's talk about what works and what doesn't and share ideas to get more young people talking about housing.



Register Your Place

If you are not a TPPN member, please register for this free event. Email Siobhán O'Neill at siobhan@supportingcommunities.org.



www.tpsupport.org
www.supportingcommunities.org



**Supporting
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Training

Volunteer Now Training Sessions in February and March 2024

Keeping Adults Safe: Adult Safeguarding Champion and Appointed Person Training

DATE: Monday 25th March 2024, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

VENUE: Seaforde Room, First Floor, Skainos Centre,
239 Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 1AF

COST: Standard Course from £80 +VAT - Face to Face Training, Belfast
Limited Spaces



The Adult Safeguarding Champion role combines responsibility for strategy, operations and oversight for an organisation in relation to adults at risk of harm under “Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership” (2015) and the “Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures” (2016). Some organisations will also have Appointed Persons, with delegated responsibility for day to day adult safeguarding operations.

This is a full day’s training for Adult Safeguarding Champions and Appointed Persons. It covers:

- The role and responsibilities of the Adult Safeguarding Champion/Appointed Person

- The safeguarding adults structure for Northern Ireland
- Determining the correct course of action in relation to safeguarding concerns
- Consent, capacity and coercion
- Organisational and Trust responsibilities
- Monitoring and reporting duties of the Adult Safeguarding Champion.

Places are allocated in a first come, first served basis and are limited to a maximum of 3 per organisation.

Joining information will be sent out the day before the session.

Risk and Change Made Simple: Tools for Success

DATE: Tuesday 26th March 2024, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

VENUE: East Belfast Community Development Agency, East Belfast Network Centre,
55 Templemore Avenue, Belfast, BT5 4FG

Free Course

Are you involved in a volunteer group and want to learn how to navigate change and manage risks effectively? Look no further!

In this engaging one-day course, we’ll equip you with practical strategies to handle change smoothly and cope with day to day risks. No jargon, just straightforward tips you can apply right away.

Don’t miss this chance to boost your group’s effectiveness and resilience.

Limited places available!

[Click here for instructions on how to create a Training Account.](#)

Find out more and book your places here – <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/training/courses-scheduled/>

Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Refresher Training

DATE; Thursday 11th April 2024 from 10am – 1pm

Online

Standard Course from £30 + VAT



This is a half day's refresher training for Designated Officers who have already attended a full day's training. It covers:

- The role and responsibilities of the Designated Officer
- Health and Social Care Trusts structures and processes
- Issues and experiences around referrals and sharing information

Recent developments in safeguarding children and young people.

Participants should ensure their basic awareness training is also refreshed every three years (or earlier if required).

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis and are limited to a maximum of 5 per organisation.

Joining information will be sent out the day before the session.

Housing Rights Training

Financial support to address housing poverty

Help your clients address housing poverty to help keep their homes.

Voluntary and Community from £64 / £77; Public and Statutory from £115 / £138

Book now

Location; Online, Via Zoom

Date; 17th April 2024

Time; 10 am to 1 pm



We developed this course in response to problems people are facing with growing poverty and the cost of living crisis.

It will cover the various forms of financial support available to help people alleviate poverty and keep their homes.

What we will cover:

- forms of discretionary support financial assistance & eligibility
- changes to Discretionary Housing Payments

- changes to Support for Mortgage Interest charitable help and other cost savings available

Who should attend?

- private landlords and agents
- social housing sector staff
- advice agencies

information on Housing Rights training courses and events, go to; [Training and events | Housing Rights](#)

Funding

Community Services Project Development Grants

Grants are available to voluntary and community organisations in Fermanagh and Omagh to help identify local need and/or further develop community project ideas.

Background

The Community Services Project Development grants programme is provided and administered by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Objectives of Fund

The funding is intended to build community capacity and create positive change, promoting social inclusion and fostering collaboration with other local, county or regional groups or agencies.

Value Notes

Grants of up to £2,000 are available, to fund up to 75% of total project costs.

Match Funding Restrictions

Applicants are required to provide at least 25% of their total project costs from other sources.

Who Can Apply

Applications are accepted from voluntary and community organisations located in the Fermanagh and Omagh district.



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Where an application relates to a capital project, the group must own or have a long-term lease on the property.

Eligible Expenditure

The funding can support costs including the creation of:

- Action plans.
- Feasibility studies.
- Economic appraisals.
- Technical drawings.

Projects must align with the Fermanagh Omagh 2030 Community Plan and other relevant policies or strategies.

For more information please visit [FODC \(submit.com\)](https://www.fodc.com)

7Stars Foundation Accepting Applications for Second 2024 Funding Round

7Stars Foundation is offering grants of up to £2,500 for registered charities with an annual turnover of less than £1.5 million across the UK to deliver projects and activities that support young people aged 16 years and under across the priority themes of abuse, addiction, child carers, and homelessness.

Funding is offered across the following streams:

- Project grants of up to £2,500 to cover the costs of projects that:
 - Enable young people to have the best start in life and aim high.
 - Have a direct impact and respond to a need in an immediate manner.
 - Are hosted in geographical areas of deprivation and socioeconomic disadvantage.
 - Respond to one or more of the funding priorities of the 7stars Foundation.
 - Address a lack of provision (due to a lack of funding from alternative sources).

- Provide immediate support, not just in the short-term but with long-term benefits too.
- Shine Bright grants of up to £1,500 for registered charities to purchase educational, well-being, or recreational items for young people, aged 16 years old or under.
- Social Impact funding for three charities across the year for projects that align with various awareness days (such as Race Equality Week, PRIDE month, World Homeless Day or Black History Month).



The trustees typically meet four times a year to review grant applications.

The next deadline for applications is 30 April 2024.

For more information, please visit [Apply for Funding - the7stars foundation](https://www.the7starsfoundation.com)



Woodroffe Benton Foundation

Small Grants

The Woodroffe Benton Foundation's Small Grants programme offers applicants one-off grants in the range £500 to £2,500.

Their next Small Grants Programme funding round will be open from 1 to 31 March 2024 and will focus on "Improving the quality of life and social engagement for older people in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland".

Trustees prefer to support smaller charities with incomes under £750,000. <https://www.woodroffebenton.org.uk>



Large Capital Grant - 2024/25

The purpose of the Large Capital Project Fund is to enable high quality capital projects that could bring significant benefit to the Borough to be delivered where a relatively small percentage of the overall funding is required. It is inevitable that a guidance manual cannot cover every single aspect of funding therefore potential applicants are encouraged to discuss individual applications with a relevant Council officer if they are uncertain about their eligibility.

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The guidance document sets out details of the funding programme and describes the process for making applications and details of how they will be assessed. Groups who read this manual are likely to be in a better position to make a good application than those who do not.

Please note the change within the Large Capital Grant that you **MUST NOT SUBMIT** your application until you have uploaded **ALL** your Essential documentation within the Guidance Manual.



All applications with all accompanying paperwork must be submitted by **12 noon on Friday 8 November 2024**. The initial point of contact for financial assistance is as follows:

Tel: Valerie Armstrong on 07515607480
Email: fap@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Funding size: £2,501 - £20,000

Suitable for: Eligible organisations as detailed within the Guidance Manual

Deadline: 08/11/24 at noon GMT

Small Capital Grant-Call 1 2024/25

The purpose of the Small Scale Capital Project Fund is to enable small high quality capital projects that could bring significant benefit to the Borough to be delivered where only a proportion of the overall funding is required.

It is inevitable that a guidance manual cannot cover every single aspect of funding therefore potential applicants are encouraged to discuss individual applications with a relevant Council officer if they are uncertain about their eligibility.

The guidance document sets out details of the funding programme and describes the process for making applications and details of how they will be assessed. Groups who read this manual are likely to be in a better position to make a good application than those who do not.

The first point of contact for queries is Valerie Armstrong on 07515 607480 or by email fap@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

[Click here for the guidance manual for Small Capital Grants.](#)

Funding size: Up to £2,500

Suitable for: Eligible organisations as detailed in the guidance manual.

Deadline: 12/04/24 at noon GMT

For more information, please visit [Small Capital Grant-Call 1 2024/25 | Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council \(armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk\)](#)



Women's Health Community Fund

The Fund can be used to start or improve conversations around the menopause in your community.

Well-being of women and Holland & Barrett will be providing small grants to groups and individuals working at community level to raise awareness and improve the education about the menopause. They will give successful applicants the support and resources needed to turn their ideas into positive action.

They will be releasing full details on the eligibility criteria, timeline and application process in the coming weeks. More information can be found on www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk and you can register your interest.

LCCC D-Day small grants programme

D-Day 80 marks the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings, a pivotal moment in history. The bravery and sacrifice of those who participated in this operation impacted the course of the Second World War.

This grant programme is being implemented as part of a wider programme of events being led by us to mark this significant milestone. It is to provide local groups with an opportunity to bring communities together to remember and commemorate an important part of our shared history.

Applications for funding, up to a maximum of £500, must

demonstrate how the proposal responds to the priorities as outlined below in the programme criteria.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **12 noon Monday 25th March 2024**.

Further information and to apply can be accessed here - <https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/w/lccc-dday-small-grants-programme>



Ulster-Scots Agency Opens Community Festivals

The 2024/2025 programme aims to support community festivals throughout Ulster from **1 June 2024 to 31 March 2025**.

These events provide important opportunities for people to learn about Ulster-Scots culture, heritage, and language; as well as raising awareness of Ulster-Scots within the wider community.

The inclusion of Ulster-Scots content in other community festivals is also supported through the programme. The maximum grant available for a major festival is £20,000 and £8,000 for a minor festival.

Groups interested in applying for funding should follow the link to register [here](#).

Following a successful registration, an application form and guidelines will be emailed to the group. A separate festival plan document will be emailed to groups who register. The festival plan is part of the application process, and groups are required to use the festival plan template provided.

Groups are required to provide match funding of at least 25%.

The Community Festivals programme is a traditionally a competitive programme, therefore groups are encouraged to read the detailed guidelines carefully, particularly:

- the definition of a Community Festival;
- the difference between a minor and major festival; and
- details regarding the eligible costs **before** completing the application form.

Support is available from the Ulster-Scots Community Network if groups require assistance with their submission.

The Community Festival Grant programme will close to applications at **3pm on Monday 8th April 2024**.

Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

For further information, contact Derek Reaney on reaneyd@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk or 07843 279 912.



Planned Interventions Launch 2024

PIP is funded by the Executive Office (TEO) and administered by the Education Authority (EA). It is a wider commitment of the NI Executive's Community Relations Strategy, [Together: Building a United Community \(T:BUC\)](#).

The Programme provides funding for community and voluntary groups of up to **£6,000 to engage up to 25 young people aged 9-25** in positive activities and divert them away from anti-social or risk-taking behaviour. Groups may submit up to three applications, though if successful will only be awarded funding for a maximum of three projects. All awards are dependent on the availability of funding from approved budgets.

Previously referred to as a 'summer diversionary' programme, the programme has evolved. Key points to note are:

- Activity is not confined to just the summer period. Groups can deliver projects from June until November, to support interventions covering the Halloween period of 2024.
- Whilst residential activities and trips can be funded, projects can be delivered locally.
- One aim is to improve attitudes of participants towards people in other communities, though cross community engagement is not required under this programme.
- Activities must be delivered at interfaces or engage young people who could potentially become involved in risk taking behaviour at or near interfaces. However **'interfaces' does not just mean physical peace walls** and can be anywhere where there is potential for inter or intra community tensions as a result of this risk taking behaviour.
- **EA registration** is not required though encouraged. Groups will need to register a user account with EA online applications portal to apply.

Projects may include activity that:

- enables young people to become aware of their place within the community and look at how they interact with their wider community.
- brings young people into contact with others within their community such as older people, or people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds.
- enables young people to 'give back' to their community through social action such as organising events for others, or a community 'clean up'.
- Raises awareness of the impact of anti-social and risk taking behaviour.
- includes and involves young people in developing positive activity around cultural or commemorative

events.

- supports young people to become positive role models for other young people in their community.



Projects can also include additional activities/workshops to meet your own needs e.g.:

- Mental Health awareness
- First Aid
- OCN qualifications
- Leadership programmes
- And most importantly fun activities.

Delivery options can include elements such as team building, residentials, workshops, community events or educational visits. Funding can support transport, staffing, facilitation, equipment, materials, venue hire and more.

For further information on this programme:

<https://eanifunding.org.uk/plannedintervention/>

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/planned-interventions-programme>

There will be applications workshops delivered both in person and online for further guidance on the applications process. Attendance at these workshops is encouraged. Further details will be posted on Education Authority and TEO websites as well as social media accounts for TEO, EA Youth Services and T:BUC Camps. Dates for the workshops are provided below. Please register your attendance here: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/eayouthservice>.

- Thursday 21st March 5-7pm - Finaghy YC, 59-73 Finaghy Rd, South Belfast, BT100BY
- Tuesday 26th March 10am-12pm - Online Register attendance at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/eayouthservice>
- Thursday 28th March 3-5pm - Waterside Shared Village (Former Clondermott High School), Irish Street, Waterside, Co Londonderry, BT47 2DD

For more information, please contact plannedinterventions@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk.



Kellogg's School Breakfast Clubs Grants Programme Reopens for 2024

Kellogg's, in partnership with Forever Manchester, is offering grants of up to £1,000 to schools across the UK to help fund breakfast clubs aimed at pupils between reception class and year 13 to ensure that those who need it most receive a morning meal.

Priority will be given to schools that either:

- Have 35% and above of children eligible for pupil premium funding (for England) and eligible for free school meals (Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales); or
- Are based in an area which is classified as falling in the 10% of most deprived areas according to the

Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Only one grant per school in each academic year is available. A limited number of grants are available, and the fund may close at short notice if oversubscribed.



Applications can be submitted at any time.

For more information, please visit [Grants For Schools | Kellogg's \(kelloggs.co.uk\)](https://www.kelloggs.co.uk/grants-for-schools)

April Funding Clinic Sessions

Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 10:00 AM 3:00 PM

Finding the right funding can be difficult and time-consuming. Get some help to streamline the process and improve your chances of success!

HCN members can book a one-to-one funding support session with Anita Doonan, Funding and Social Value Officer, for advice and help to access the resources your group needs.

Start thinking about your next projects by asking questions like:

- What funding to apply for
- How to structure your application and plan accurate budgets
- How to carry out a community survey
- How to prepare for action planning
- How to do pre and post-monitoring and evaluation of your project

Book Your Place

Please [fill in this form](#) to request an appointment.

The funding clinic will run from 10 am - 3 pm with 30-minute slots available for individuals or groups to discuss their funding needs one-on-one with our funding officer.

This service is free for HCN members. If you are interested in becoming a member of the [Housing Community Network](#), please get in touch!

