

24th April 2024

E-Zine



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society

Welcome to Supporting Communities 230th 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

Ministers launch Good Relations Week 2024

First Minister Michelle O'Neill and deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly have launched Good Relations Week at an event in Girdwood Community Hub, Belfast.

Good Relations Week 2024 is taking place from 16 to 22 September 2024. Last year over 220 Good Relations Week events were hosted with every council area represented.

This year's theme is 'OpportUNITY' and is a call to action to create a brighter, inclusive future for all. Organisations which help deliver good relations activities attended today's event, together with World boxing champion Carl Frampton.

First Minister Michelle O'Neill said: "The Good Relations Week programme of events showcase the vital role of good relations work in peace building and community cohesion. On behalf of the Executive, we were delighted to join with the Community Relations Council in supporting the launch of Good Relations Week 2024.

"This annual celebration highlights the positive peace building work already being delivered, while also looking at the changes we can all make and the opportunities available to support our shared and sustainable communities.

"Now more than ever we need to work together, making the most of every opportunity to create a positive future for everyone within our society. We would therefore like to encourage all organisations to get involved in Good Relations Week this year."

Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly said: "We are delighted to celebrate the launch of Good Relations Week 2024.

"Improving community relations and continuing our shared purpose to improve relations that reach much deeper and wider into our communities is an



Pictured launching Good Relations Week 2024 is First Minister Michelle O'Neill and deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly alongside Carl Frampton, Chinese Dancer, Weihong Tu and Syrian Dancer, Mar Decena.

important part of the Executive's 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC) Strategy.

"We are committed to building stronger, more connected communities where everyone is valued, heard and included. We want to work with new and existing partners to deliver a shared society for everyone. The programme of events delivered as part of Good Relations Week provides the perfect opportunity to extend this partnership working and to engage with new communities.

"I would encourage everyone to visit the Good Relations Week website and to consider hosting an event this year."

The Community Relations Council is inviting registrations from local community groups, voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, businesses and local councils to host an event that aligns with the theme of 'OpportUNITY' and showcases their outstanding good relations efforts.

Entrepreneurship for All

Catalyst and Supporting Communities have partnered to bring you an exciting new opportunity – access to the Entrepreneurship for All programme.

The programme is open to ALL Women and other people who do not hold a degree (for clarification: women with a degree can register). This is an amazing opportunity for your local community, staff, volunteers and trustees.

The programme will be delivered in an area near you and commitment is limited to:

Attend 3 x 2-3 hour sessions

Lunch will be provided and the programme will be led by Innovation Specialist Jacqueline McCann.

Jacqueline is among the best in the business and has over 25 years of experience in innovation and business development <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/jacqueline-mccann-8a052112>

Please encourage as many people as you can to join the programme as we would love to build on this and bring more, exciting programmes to our grassroots communities.

To register, click on this link and complete the online form:

<https://forms.monday.com/forms/167da4e357d9ec69689598ebdea080a1?r=use1>

If you or anyone else needs any assistance to complete the registration, we are happy to assist in any way we can.

If you have a community facility and would like to host some of the programme sessions please contact: stephen@supportingcommunities.org

Catalyst



Ever thought about starting or growing a business?

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR ALL



Jacqueline McCann

Limited spaces so

REGISTER NOW!

FREE SHORT COURSE



100% Free
Learn from Innovation specialist Jacqueline McCann for FREE



Women?
Any Women aged 18+ can register.



Non-Degree holder?
Anyone else aged 18+ who does not have a Degree can register.



Commitment?
3 x 2-3 hour innovation sessions with free lunch!

In YOUR area

*Dates and venues to be agreed

Register now for our free short course and take the first steps to starting or growing your business! We are specifically targeting women 18+ and anyone else who does not hold a degree aged 18+.

Copy and paste the link below into your browser and complete the online registration form or speak to your local Supporting Communities contact.

BOOK NOW

<https://shorturl.at/nrsP3>

Please note only for Northern Ireland residents

Domestic Gas Safety Advice from NIFRS

Gas can be:

- piped supply to your home
- Butane or Propane in cylinders or bulk tanks
- Cylinders (barbecues, camping, etc)

If you have a fire, always remember Get out, stay out and get the Fire & Rescue Service out.

Hazards associated with gas

If you use gas, ensure you:

- Have a working CO alarm
- Know how to turn your gas supply off in an emergency.

More information about gas and gas safety see - www.hseni.gov.uk or www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk

or call the Gas Safe Helpline 0800 408 5500

If you have a gas escape

- > Shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve.



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

- > Open all doors and windows for ventilation and go outside into fresh air.
- > Do not operate any electrical equipment.
- > Gas Emergency Service (24hrs) Freephone number 0800 002 001.
- > If unwell, call 999 for an ambulance.

Landlords and tenants

For information on your gas safe responsibilities visit: [Landlord duties in relation to gas | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hseni.gov.uk\)](http://Landlord duties in relation to gas | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (hseni.gov.uk))

For more information, visit www.nifrs.org

£67m invested in energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures last year

HECA 2023 Annual Progress Report released

An investment of £67m for energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures across a wide range of programmes was made by the Housing Executive, Department for Communities and EU funding last year, the new Home Energy Conservation Authority (HECA) report reveals.

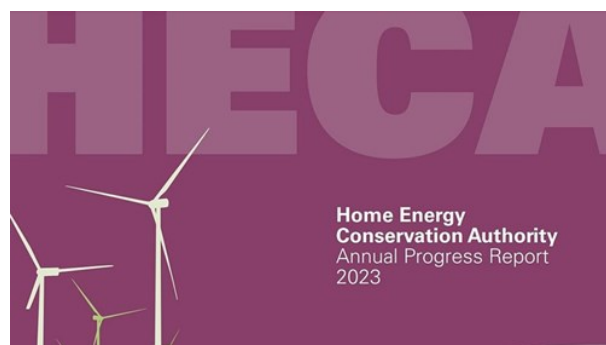
Highlights for the 2023 report include an investment of £21.3m by the Housing Executive in heating and boiler conversions in 4,596 of its homes.

Last year, 3,308 private sector homes benefitted from an investment of £16.3m from the Department for Communities (DfC) as part of the Affordable Warmth Scheme, which is managed by the Housing Executive.

Across the private and public sectors, a total of £7.4m was also invested in energy efficiency and heating programmes by the NI Sustainable Energy Programme.

Robert Clements, the Housing Executive's Head of Sustainable Development, said: "We continue to work hard to deliver energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures, which make our homes warmer and saves money on energy bills.

"A range of interventions are helping us achieve this, including retrofitting, the introduction of low carbon heating options and the use of renewable energy for power generation and electric storage.



"In collaboration with partner organisations we continue to explore new ways to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise the residential sector, with the key focus on reducing the financial pressure on householders, carbon footprint and improving health and wellbeing".

You can view the HECA 2023 Annual Progress Report at: [Home Energy Conservation Authority Annual Progress Report 2023 \(nihe.gov.uk\)](http://Home Energy Conservation Authority Annual Progress Report 2023 (nihe.gov.uk))

**Housing
Executive**

Minister Muir announces milestone in meeting Climate Change Act obligations

DAERA Minister Andrew Muir has said new regulations introducing climate change reporting duties on public bodies such as Councils will have a crucial part to play in delivering and supporting climate action in Northern Ireland.

The Minister was speaking as he announced the laying of regulations that will place climate change reporting duties on specified public bodies in line with duties under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

The regulations will come into operation in early May 2024, 21 days after they are laid in the Assembly. However, the first reports by public bodies required under the regulations, will not be due to be submitted until October 2025.

Minister Muir said: “These regulations are a positive milestone in delivering on our obligations in relation to the Act and reporting will give bodies an opportunity to show continued leadership on climate action within the public sector, providing positive examples and shared learning of what effective climate action can deliver.

“Many public bodies are already gathering some climate change data, but requirements to report under these regulations brings structure, transparency and comparability to that process and will allow sharing of experience and expertise across public bodies which is of benefit to all of us,” he added.

In all, some 40 bodies including councils, health trusts, the police, and fire service, are required to report on their carbon emissions, as well as their plans and progress in reducing these emissions. The bodies will also, report on what they plan to do about, and their progress in, tackling their risks and impacts from climate change.

The Minister’s announcement follows Executive approval and an extended 13-week public consultation period.



“It is important that all public bodies take action to reduce emissions, recognize the impacts of climate change on their functions and have a clear plan in place to reduce these risks and manage impacts,” Minister Muir said.

“These regulations will put in place a climate change reporting framework for the specified public bodies, which can enable them to take informed, and timely climate action.

“This will make those bodies more sustainable and will give them the opportunity to provide a positive example and exploit the opportunities that early and effective climate action can deliver.”

The approach to these regulations is balanced, minimizing the risk of undue burden, by requiring only those public bodies which are large sized organizations to report.

Large sized public bodies are more likely the highest emitters, and they can help most in contributing to ensuring a climate resilient and sustainable Northern Ireland, while also having the capacity to deliver on reporting requirements and show leadership in climate action.

Through DAERA’s consultation and engagement it was evident that many public bodies that will have reporting duties placed on them by the regulations are preparing for this reporting and eager to get started.

The Safeguarding Board for NI New Online Safety Hub

The Safeguarding Board for NI are delighted to officially launch the new Online Safety Hub for young people, parents, carers and professionals. A massive thank you to everyone who has helped to shape, curate content and test the Hub, especially the dedicated and much valued Online Safety Steering Group and Online Safety Committee organisations.

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) is delighted that the [Health Minister Robin Swann](#) has officially [launched](#) the new Online Safety Hub for young people, carers and professionals. The Hub was developed in partnership with Ineqe Safeguarding Group, and delivered as part of the NI Executive’s



Keeping Children and Young People Safe: An Online Safety Strategy. It is split into two sections, one for adults and one for young people and brings together expert advice and resources from a range of member and partner organisations so that audiences can easily access education and support all in one central place.

Consultations



Our Community Policing Survey 2024 has launched!

Click on the link below to find out more, or scan the QR code to complete:

[Have you worked with PSNI to tackle local issues? We want your views! | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk)

We'd appreciate if you would circulate this information to relevant networks.

You can stay up to date on the latest news by following us on social media:

[NIPB on Twitter](#) / [NIPB on Facebook](#) / [NIPB on Youtube](#)



Can we bank on the banks? Voluntary sector banking challenges survey 2024

Over the last few years banking has been cited as one of the most frustrating challenges that voluntary and community organisations experience.

These obstacles range from difficulties in opening new accounts, particularly on the High Street, to frustrations encountered while updating essential business profile information.

NICVA is part of a UK wide working group that been working to improve banking services for charities and voluntary organisations by communicating the issues to the banks.

As part of this work we are conducting research to ascertain if organisations are still encountering problems with their banks so we can continue to advocate for better banking services for voluntary organisations.

We would be very grateful if you would complete the



survey below by Wednesday, 15 May at 12pm to let us know about your banking experience.

This survey is for anyone with responsibility for managing a voluntary organisation's banking activities. To complete it, you will need to be very familiar with the day-to-day management of your organisation's bank account(s).

[Take the survey here](#)

Draft Water Resource & Supply Resilience Plan

NI Water

[Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan 2024 Consultation - NI Direct - Citizen Space](#)

Closing Date; 24th May 2024

Rethinking Our Resources: Measures for Climate Action and a Circular Economy in NI

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[Rethinking Our Resources: Measures for Climate Action and a Circular Economy in NI Consultation | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing Date; 30th May 2024

NIHE launch public consultation on draft Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy 2024 – 2029

Northern Ireland Housing Executive has launched a public consultation on their draft Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy 2024 – 2029.

The consultation gives our customers, members of the public, partners and stakeholders the opportunity to help shape services delivered by the Housing Executive to build strong, vibrant and inclusive communities.

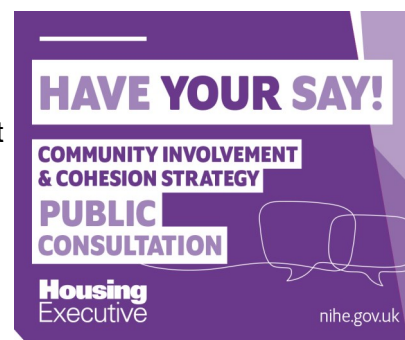
Director of Housing Services, Jennifer Hawthorne explained: "A tremendous amount of work has been undertaken to create our draft Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy. We have conducted research and carried out pre-consultation work with the Central Housing Forum and Housing Community Network, hard to reach groups and key stakeholders.

"We believe this draft strategy will enable us to build on the success of our previous Community Involvement and Cohesion strategies and will enable and engage communities to interact and work together to co-design Housing Executive services and support a more cohesive society."

The consultation will run over 12 weeks, with a number of regional engagement events planned to take place over the coming weeks.

Ms Hawthorne continued: "What is really important to us now is that we hear the voice of our tenants, residents, customers, partners and stakeholders. We want to listen to their views and develop the strategy so that we have a strong framework to support and develop our communities up to 2029.

"Community involvement and tenant participation is at the heart of our services and I would encourage everyone to read the draft strategy and complete our online consultation survey at: www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/consultations."



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 and most recently at the Plenary Session on Monday 8th April 2024, [Shared Future: Strategic Framework](#).

[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

Professor Ken Gibb: Student housing - an impact story



Professor Ken Gibb

Professor Ken Gibb discusses the complexities of student accommodation research in Scotland, referencing the work carried out by the University of Glasgow's Road to Home initiative and key recommendations.

Until 2021, my housing research path had never led me to work on student accommodation. In the autumn of that year, I was contacted by staff involved in student recruitment at my college and in senior management, who asked whether I could write a short briefing paper about the apparent tightening of the student accommodation market in Glasgow. I interviewed a few people internally and externally and started to get a sense of the student accommodation eco-system comprising student halls, people living in their own or the parental home, students in the HMO part of the private rented sector and also the private institutional player, Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA).

Doing this first piece of work also taught me that the evidence is flimsy regarding student housing; also, that there was strong anecdotal evidence (I would go as far to say a consensus) that HMO landlords were exiting the student market because it was more risky than HMOs for people in work. This increased the number of students chasing fewer bed spaces (and PBSA was not growing fast enough or arguably targeted at the right market segments), creating excess demand.

During the interviews, I spoke to the Scottish Government team, which was convening the Government's review of PBSA. They were planning to re-tender a large research project on PBSA in Scotland. CaCHE decided to bid for it, with colleagues from the Universities of Sheffield, Liverpool and Cardiff joining us at Glasgow and collaborators from Rettie and Co. We won the tender and carried out the project through 2022, publishing the report in December. The research worked closely with the review team and the Scottish Government funders, triangulating evidence review, key actor elite interviews within the sector and three case studies (Glasgow, Edinburgh and St Andrews) based on semi-structured interviews with students and local stakeholders. The [report](#) included recommendations to inform the wider PBSA review that would, in turn, put recommendations to Scottish Ministers.

Meanwhile, in the autumn of 2022, a crisis emerged in several Universities but primarily in Glasgow, where rising student numbers could not be fully housed by available accommodation, and guarantees were not

met, resulting in student homelessness, emergency solutions, reputational damage to the institution, but also suffering and anxiety for all those involved. The University made a gargantuan effort to solve individual problems and invested in additional nominated spaces in the local PBSA sector. As a result of these problems, the Road to Home homelessness initiative at the University, in partnership with CaCHE, decided to examine the causes of this crisis and consider possible immediate and structural solutions. A [policy briefing paper](#) on this research has now been published, and more research is still to come.

CaCHE also collaborated with Rettie and Co to write an as yet unpublished paper for the regulator of the codes used by PBSA providers, Unipol, about the state of student accommodation in Scotland in 2023. The main message from this paper is that student numbers have fallen in an unplanned way across the UK – particularly for international students, and this has, to an extent, reversed the excess demand problem, at least temporarily. There are specific reasons for this trend reversal, including readjustment after the initial post-COVID boom, countries like Nigeria reducing applications after their currency weakened, and the UK Government's ending of family visas for international students. The PGT world is one of one-year planning horizons. As a result, Universities are looking nervously at what will happen in the autumn of 2024. In 2023-24, Glasgow turned out not to need all the nominated spaces it had in the PBSA sector.

In the last six weeks, CaCHE has supported the development of a new cross-party group (housing) project at Holyrood on student homelessness and wider student accommodation. The work is not just about students directly but for instance debates the impact of extensive PBSA development in pressured housing markets with insufficient affordable housing, like Edinburgh but increasingly also in Glasgow.

In the first workshop meeting of this project earlier this month, one of the attendees posted in the chat the Scottish Government's response to a question in Holyrood asking for the [long-awaited Ministers' response to the PBSA review in 2022-3](#). The key government proposals arising from the review

included a number taken directly from the CaCHE research (items 2-4 and 5-10 below):

‘The Scottish Government received 11 recommendations formulated by the Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) Review Group. These are listed below and have been fully accepted by Ministers.

1. That the Scottish Government works with partners to develop a Model Terms and Conditions to apply across all PBSA, both institutionally and privately operated.
2. That the Scottish Government consults widely on the scope to legislate on PBSA regulation, specifically in respect of notice periods and cooling off period for PBSA tenants, including identifying what circumstances should apply in such cases and potential impact on investment and rent levels.
3. That Higher Education Institutions work with partners to develop and distribute information packs for student tenants in both institutional and private PBSA properties, outlining the existing routes for progressing complaints and redress, including through the SPSO and the First-Tier Tribunals system. These information packs should contain clear links to regularly updated relevant online content.
4. That the Scottish Government works with partners to scope the development of a Model Complaints Procedure to be adopted across all types of PBSA.
5. That the Scottish Government convenes a national round table discussion with HEIs, private PBSA providers, investors/developers, students, and local authorities, to explore improvements in relation to ensuring the housing needs of students are met.
6. That strategic partnerships be established at local level, involving all those involved in provision / use of student accommodation to consider / address supply issues at local level in the short, medium, and long-term.
7. That the Scottish Government works with partners to identify and address barriers to expanding the supply of affordable accommodation for students through e.g. the repurposing of existing buildings and the utilisation of alternative housing models e.g. housing co-operatives.
8. That the Scottish Government and Higher Education Institutions actively engage with property investors/developers in the private sector to encourage the development of a more diverse range of student accommodation properties, which could meet the needs of families and those on lower incomes.

9. That Higher Education Institutions and providers of private PBSA work more closely together to ensure students get the information they need, including consideration of data sharing agreements.
10. That Higher Education Institutions provide to all tenants residing in University or privately-run PBSA information on student support available through institutions, and how to access this. This should be available in formats other than online, and frontline staff working within all types of PBSA should have ready access to this information in order to provide advice when needed.
11. That the Scottish Government engages with Home Office on the provision of student dependents’ data for international students taking up places at Scottish universities’.

We were particularly pleased to see recommendations 5, 6, 7 and 8 were included as they are essential to better long term planning for student housing and widening the offeror range of provision, thereby helping with affordability. We also welcome the 3rd 4th and 10th recommendations that also came out strongly from our research. I would also note that we supported the appropriate repurposing of existing accommodation – not in any way a blanket approval.

Given that student accommodation research was not among our CaCHE priorities set in 2018, this has been a remarkable journey to policy impact in less than three years. Now, we need to carry on and make the case for much better evidence and data in the sector, as well as supporting a range of different models of affordable provision – we still don’t know for sure how many student HMOs have departed that market segment in Scotland, and we still have poor data on student affordability, both for rents and especially incomes. We are also engaging with Glasgow City Council regarding the longer-term requirement for PBSA and other accommodation models to help solve the city of Glasgow’s structural student housing imbalance. This is an important research agenda for CaCHE to continue with over at least the next three years.

Thanks in particular to all of the people who have contributed to this research journey including Tom Moore, Jenny Hoolachan, Jenny Preece, Moira Munro, Victoria Lawson, John Boyle and Katy Dickson, all of our willing interviewees, and the many non-academic colleagues at the University of Glasgow working in student recruitment, accommodation services, counselling and planning.

Prof Ken Gibb is director and principal investigator of the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE). He is professor of housing economics (urban studies) within the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Glasgow

This article was originally published on the [CaCHE website](#)

Stuart Etherington: What the charity sector should be asking of the next government

NCVO's former CEO compares this election year with 1997 and suggests priorities for the charity sector's lobbying efforts.



It is tempting to compare the situation now with that of 1997 and to look for similar policy solutions for civil society and government relationships. Tempting but wrong. Wrong for three reasons.

Firstly, the policy leadership of the sector has more diverse voices.

Secondly, in 1997, two years had been invested by the sector in the Deakin Report which paralleled the report by Alun Michael entitled Building the Future Together. This meant that there was a strong joint agenda which created both permanent and temporary success in the first term of the incoming Labour administration. Although the sector's influence waned as Brexit became the dominant issue. This election year, despite the [recent welcome Labour interest](#) in the sector, it is clear that they have no clear policy agenda.

Thirdly, and most significantly, the outgoing Major government had left the public finances in a reasonable state. This time it will not be the case and any public monies available are likely to be devoted to the NHS and to possible rearmament in the face of a significant threat from a resurgence of Russian expansionism. So, to put it simply, in the first term at least, the sector will need to look for relatively low-cost policies in generic areas. What might these be?

Finance

There are a number of measures which might release resources at relatively low cost. Whilst unused assets have been released and will continue to be released from the private sector there are many underutilised assets within the charitable sector.

The Charity Commission does some valuable work behind the scenes with community foundations to release some of these but we don't know much there is or where they are on a systematic basis. Perhaps a major investigation by an independent commission might be of value here.

Philanthropy itself might also be encouraged by policy changes. The culture secretary is in discussions with the Treasury to boost tax advantages for donors and simplifying the process for reclaiming tax on gifts as in the US. This initiative should be encouraged both by the sector and across political parties.

Two further initiatives might also be considered. First, an asset-based scheme which would encourage tax effective matching for particular boosts to parts of the public sector – a sort of citizens' PFI with donations rather than private investment. Second, tax incentives for direct giving via local platforms to local projects – a citizen direct service. This would enable local giving to be linked to local projects via local giving platforms.

Finally, social investment. Again, incentives could be encouraged to encourage institutional investors to deploy their resources and national and local growth funds for private investment could be created to operate in partnership with a citizens' PFI initiative to integrate the deployment of social investment and philanthropic giving.

Volunteering

On volunteering, three initiatives in recent years could be built on at relatively low cost. The local response to the pandemic, Helpforce and the Big Help Out.

I doubt if there has been enough analysis of the local spontaneous response to creating local resilience during the pandemic but this might help to shape local capability in the future. Helpforce has certainly begun to shape volunteering in the NHS and the Big Help Out has tapped a rich vein of volunteering. Now is the time to bring the learning from these initiatives together and to explore the scope for increasing volunteering particularly but not exclusively in the public service and to create statutory time off for volunteering as for trade union activity and magistrates.

Institutional framework

At a macro level, government should focus on measuring and reporting on wellbeing as the principle measure of the nation's success rather than GDP. Not only is that more sensible but it also identifies a key driver of civil society action. It is not only the final impact of what civil society does but the intermediate impacts of how it does it that mark it out as unique and different from a consumerist model for. We are more as people than economic actors. The regulatory environment needs to place more emphasis on enhanced public benefit to justify the special status accorded to charities together with transparency of reporting. Whilst I don't take a view on the status of think tanks, they should be required to publish a list of their donors so a more informed view can be formed of their recommendations in the public arena.

We also need to see a restoration of a high-level minister within the Cabinet Office as civil society activity transcends government departments. Government might also experiment more with citizen forums and participatory budgeting as a way of getting better informed decisions and citizens. Perhaps there is room for one blast from the past. Compacts were useful in the early years of the last Labour government not only because they had some outcomes, for example enshrining the right to campaign irrespective of the funding relationship. But as important, negotiating them, particularly at a local level, increased the visibility of the sector.

If, of course, a new government succeeds in increasing growth and productivity and more money is available then there might be a more ambitious agenda. Others will be ready I'm sure but my top three would be: the reform of social care, the sorry state of which has caused major problems; increased investment in the sector of AI capability to reduce costs; and most ambitious, greater focus on universal basic income with a citizenship premium. But that's perhaps for another day.

Publications



Catch up on what's been happening with the Policing Plan 2020-2025 and Annual Performance Plan 2024/25 at [Policing Plan 2020-2025 and Annual Performance Plan 2024/25 | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk). In addition the March edition of Policing Matters is available at; [Policing Matters April 2024 | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)



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



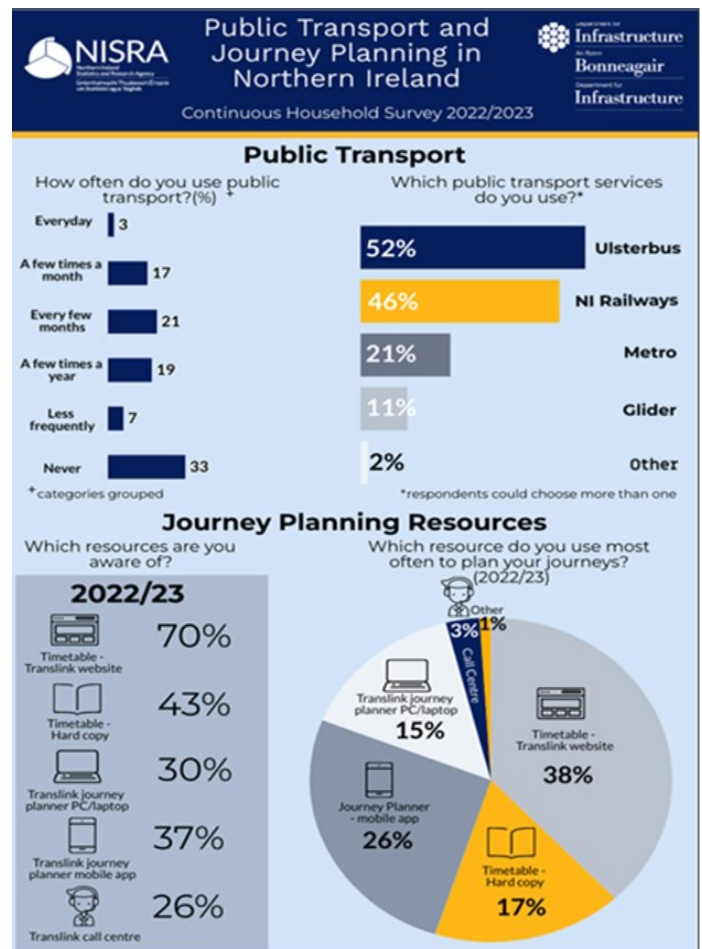
Please click the link below to access the latest newsletter for PCSPs which highlights local events and initiatives; [PCSP Projects coming to Life | Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(pcspso.org\)](https://www.pcspso.org)

The Public Transport & Journey Planning in Northern Ireland 2022/23 Report

This report presents findings from the 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey in relation to public attitudes to and awareness of resources for planning journeys on public transport.

The Public Transport and Journey Planning in Northern Ireland 2022/23 report has been published. The report provides information on people aged 16 and over in Northern Ireland who use public transport, their frequency of travel, which forms of transport and which methods of journey planning they use, their levels of satisfaction with public transport provision in their local area and their feelings of safety while using public transport.

This report has been produced by the Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch (ASRB) of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and can be accessed on the DfI website by clicking [here](#).



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](#)

Linking Generations Global Intergenerational Week 2024 Campaign in NI

This annual campaign takes place from the 24th to the 30th April and LGNI will be joining 15 country leads from across the globe to celebrate everything intergenerational!

LGNI will be leading on varying initiatives to promote the week and intergenerational activity in NI including – Council Building Light ups, All Ages April activities, online events, photo competition, producing ideas & resources and having policy conversations. Check out our LGNI GIW page here for more information Global Intergenerational Week – Linking Generations NI

Ideally we would love your help with getting our campaign message out by promoting the week and LGNI's activities but most importantly your own intergenerational activities and key messaging. To support this I have created and attached a Comms/PR guidance document which can be shared with the relevant comms person in your team and the GIW24 resource folder including all the campaign graphics and the supporters pack.

As a small team your help with our campaign will make a big difference and also offers an opportunity to showcase the amazing intergenerational activity and support that takes place and exists across NI.

Click on pic or contact Vicki Titterington, LGNI Director Vicki.titterington@bjf.org.uk

Get involved!
Sign up to your local
LGNI
Network Now!

www.linkinggenerationsni.com/sign-up/

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.



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
Communities**
Empowering Society

Training

Volunteer Now Training Sessions in May 2024

Keeping Children Safe: Training for Staff and Volunteers (NB over two evenings, 28/5 and 29/5)

DATE: Part 1: 28th May 2024 from 6.30pm to 9.30pm
Part 2: 29th May 2024 from 6.30pm to 9.30pm



****PLEASE NOTE BOTH SESSIONS MUST BE ATTENDED****

This certificated training course is suitable for staff and volunteers who have regular and/or direct contact with children and young people (e.g. supervisor, leader, officer in charge). It will assist staff and volunteers with meeting good practice standards in safeguarding children and young people.

It will cover:

- the legal and policy context of safeguarding children;
- what abuse is and what we know about abuse;
- procedures for reporting concerns;
- creating a safe, child centred environment; and

- code of behaviour for staff/volunteers and children/young people.

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

This training programme is a suitable foundation for completing the Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training.

Joining information will be sent out 24 hours before the session.

[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/>

Face-to-Face Training Dates

Did you know Volunteer Now are now offering some face-to-face safeguarding training? We still have online sessions but on certain dates, you can book in-person training.

The courses below are what is currently available and where. To find out more and see the dates and venues, please click here bit.ly/VNSafeguardingCourses

Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training:
⇒ Belfast, Newry, Omagh & Ballymena

Keeping Adults Safe: Adult Safeguarding Champion & Appointed Person Training:
⇒ Belfast, Omagh & Newry

Keeping Children & Adults Safe: Training for Staff & Volunteers:
⇒ Belfast



Housing Rights Training

Sustaining tenancies in the social rented sector

- Social tenants
- Social rented sector
- Tenancy

Help your clients address problems they are encountering in maintaining their social rented tenancy.

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

Book now

Location; Online, Via Zoom

Date; 14th May 2024

Time; 10 am to 1 pm

This course will help you to support clients who are facing difficulties in their current social home. You will find out about possible resolutions to help clients work with their social landlord to retain their tenancy.

What we will cover

- rent arrears and affordability
- anti-social behaviour
- abandonment
- disrepair
- Suitability

Who should attend?

- housing advisers
- community / residents group
- benefits advisers
- constituency office staff
- social and hostel accommodation providers
- solicitors

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

Northern Ireland LEVEL 2 AWARD: Introduction to Domestic Renewable Low Carbon Technologies

Tuesday 30th April & Wednesday 1st May
9.30am – 12 noon

This course is tailored to Northern Ireland
Learners must attend both sessions

This course will provide an introduction to the role domestic scale renewable technologies can play in reducing carbon emissions. It will provide a non-technical explanation of how the technologies work, the factors to consider when installing these technologies, costings, potential carbon savings and their advantages and drawbacks.

Course Audience

Anyone who requires an introduction to decarbonising energy use in the home through the installation of the main renewable technologies.

Duration

Two half-day webinars followed by an open book assessment.

How will the Assessment work?

The assessment consists of one open book exam which will take around 3 hours to complete.

For further information, course fees and booking, please contact:

Nichola MacDougall
Training Officer (NI)
National Energy Action NI
Tel: 028 9023 9909
E-mail: Nichola.MacDougall@nea.org.uk



2024 Scholarships Launched!

Supporting Communities is delighted to announce we are bringing back both of our scholarship programmes for 2024.

Supporting Communities Scholarship


Now entering its third year, The Supporting Communities Scholarship Fund is aimed at helping students from the Ballymena area who want to pursue full-time STEM or Business related degrees at a university in Northern Ireland. Again, this year, we will award this scholarship to two students. They will receive £2,000 per year for up to four years and £1,500 for IT equipment in their first year.

The fund is officially open for applications and closes on 30th June 2024.

Applicants are assessed at two stages, firstly via their application and secondly by interview if their application has been accepted.

The application form can be accessed here: <https://supportingcommunities.org/scholarship-fund>

If you have any queries regarding any of our scholarship programmes please contact Stephen Marks: stephen@supportingcommunities.org



YEAR 14 BALLYMENA STUDENTS

Supporting Communities Scholarship Fund



Ballymena A-level students! This one is for you!

The Supporting Communities Scholarship Fund is for upper 6th form students in Ballymena who are applying to Queens or Ulster University this year to study STEM or Business degrees.

We are offering **£2,000 per year** for up to four years of your degree! We will also provide **£1,500** to buy IT equipment in your first year. Apply now!

Deadline for applications:
5pm on 30 June 2024

www.supportingcommunities.org/scholarship-fund

JK
The James Kane Foundation
Supported by The James Kane Foundation

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE & CRAIGAVON STUDENTS


The James Kane Foundation Scholarship Fund

The James Kane Foundation Scholarship is for Year 14 A-level students in the **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area** who are applying to a NI University this year to study for a STEM degree.

We are offering **£2,000 per year** for up to three years of your degree! Apply now!

Deadline for applications:
5pm on 30 June 2024

supportingcommunities.org/james-kane-foundation-scholarship



The James Kane Foundation Scholarship

[The James Kane Foundation Scholarship](#) targets students in the Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council (ABC) area who are applying to Queens or Ulster University this year to study STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) degrees.

There will be two recipients of this award, worth £2,000 per year of your course for up to three years (£6,000 in total).

We have had some genuinely excellent recipients of both awards in the past, and we are excited to meet future scholars through the programme this year.

Stephen Marks, who manages the scholarships, remarked, "I am thrilled to have been able to continue our work with both the Gallaher Trust and The James Kane Foundation to support deserving young people to achieve their goals for higher education. At Supporting Communities, we are passionate about ensuring these scholarships reach those most in need, and I look forward to facilitating a rigorous application and interview process for both funds."

Applications for both funds must be submitted by 5 pm on 30 June 2024. Get applying, and good luck!

Funding

Funding for Financial Wellbeing Projects Focused on the Transition to Net Zero

Abrdn Financial Fairness Trust makes around 15 to 20 awards each year and intends to award around £3 million annually to organisations undertaking charitable activities in the UK for projects focused on financial wellbeing. This includes voluntary organisations, think tanks, campaigning groups, research bodies and universities.

Funding is intended for strategic work that has the potential to improve financial wellbeing for those on low to middle incomes and on a national scale, including:

- Policy work
- Campaigning
- Research

New for 2024, the Trust has launched a Climate Change and Household Finances in the UK programme. The programme aims to support projects focused on the household finances of people on low-to-middle incomes in the UK during the transition to Net Zero and adjustment to climate change. The Trust's general funding criteria apply to the programme, and projects must focus on Net Zero and financial wellbeing within one of the main funding programme themes: income, assets and spending.

Eligible projects under the programme may focus on the following areas:

- Transport
- Consumerism
- Energy use



- Labour market transitions
- Other relevant Net Zero and financial wellbeing themes.

Funding is available for UK-wide projects. However, the Trust is keen to support work in Scotland, including UK-wide work with a Scottish element.

There is no minimum or maximum size of grant. Grants typically range between £10,000 and £200,000, with most being between £50,000 and £120,000 in total. The funding may be spread over one, two or three years, and sometimes shorter periods, for example six months.

Project and ongoing costs are eligible for funding, including staff salaries and overheads.

Applicants to the Climate Change and Household Finances in the UK programme must contact Abrdn Financial Fairness Trust before applying.

There are typically two application deadlines per year.

The second deadline for outline applications is 3 June 2024 (13:00).

For more information, please visit [Home | abrdn Financial Fairness Trust](#)

Wellbeing of Women Launches Women's Health Community

Working in partnership with Holland & Barrett, the charity Wellbeing of Women is offering grants of up to £5,000 to small, grassroots organisations and community groups to deliver health information and support to women, girls and people from underrepresented groups in the UK.

The funding is for projects that address the following key points:

- Projects that aim to improve information, education and support for menstrual health, related gynaecological conditions e.g. PCOS, endometriosis, adenomyosis, fibroids, PMDD, and menopause.
- Support people and groups that are often underrepresented in mainstream healthcare, information and services, for example people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds (BAME/global majority), LGBTQI+, people living with disabilities, deaf people, blind and partially sighted

people, people experiencing homelessness, addiction, people living in areas of economic deprivation.



Women's health community fund

Grants of up to £5,000 are available to spend across 12 months. Funds will be distributed in two tranches, 50% at the beginning of the project and 50% upon receipt of a six month report.

The deadline for applications is 19 May 2024.

For more information, please visit [Women's Health Community Fund - Wellbeing of Women](#)



Steel Charitable Trust Accepting Applications for Rolling Grants Programme

Charities, charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs) and municipally funded museums across the UK with an annual income of more than £50,000 can apply for funding to deliver a variety of projects and activities across the following core categories:

- Arts and Heritage
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Social or Economic Disadvantage

Proposed projects for the health category should have a focus on one of the following:

- Programmes and activities that aim to support, maintain, and improve mental health in any demographic.
- Health care for older people.

Proposed projects for the social or economic disadvantage categories should focus on one of the

following:

- Disadvantaged children
- Housing and homeless people.

Funding can be used to cover core costs, capital works, and specific projects.

The minimum grant size is £10,000. Awards of more than £25,000 are rare.

There are typically four application periods throughout the year.

The next application deadline is 11 July 2024.

For more information, please visit steelcharitabletrust.org.uk

The
Steel

Charitable Trust

Fibus Community Fund Open for 2024

Funding is available for community groups and voluntary organisations to address digital poverty in rural communities in Northern Ireland.

The Fibus Community Fund is awarding grants of a maximum of £2,000 to assist local groups and organisations in certain areas to improve digital access for the most marginalised members of the community, with a particular focus on older people, people on low income and people with disabilities.

Examples of the types of projects that could be funded include:

- Projects that provide access to engage with a range of digital devices (laptops, tablets, iPads, smart phones, etc), such as a community loan facility, etc.
- Projects that strengthen the capacity of individuals to use a range of available digital services, such as training workshops or courses.

- Projects that provide access to enhance connections with others, such as a community-use internet hub, or internet café, etc.

The 
**Community
Foundation**
Northern Ireland

The Fibus Community Fund will have one round of funding in 2024. Applications will be accepted from community groups, voluntary organisations and other local, grassroots or community-led organisations with an annual income below £50,000. A detailed list of eligible postcodes can be found on the Community Foundation Northern Ireland website.

The deadline for applications is 17 May 2024 (1pm).

For more information, please visit [The Fibus Community Fund - Community Foundation Northern Ireland \(communityfoundationni.org\)](https://communityfoundationni.org)

Community Cashback is back!

Does your local community group need funding? Spar's grant scheme is aimed at supporting and giving back to the communities that they serve.

This year, they've got 20 x £1000 grants to give back to local communities.

Applications for this year's scheme open on Thursday 11th April 2024 and close at 23:59 on 22nd May 2024.



To apply for a grant please visit [SPAR NI donate £20,000 to local community organisations | SPAR \(spar-ni.co.uk\)](https://spar-ni.co.uk)



Sports Forum and Capital Grants 2024-2025

Funding is available to clubs through the annual Sports Forum Grant and Capital Grant Scheme. Both grants are managed by Sports Development.

Further information on grants and making an application is available by emailing the team at: sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Sports Forum Grants

Sports Forum Grants are now available for 2024/2025 to affiliated Sports Forum members.

The various funding streams available include the following:

- **Anniversary** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £750.
- **Club Travel and Accommodation** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £500.
- **Coach Education** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £500.
- **Equipment** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £1000.
- **Event** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £1000.
- **Goldcard** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Access to Council Leisure facilities at reduced rates.
- **Individual Travel and Accommodation** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £500.
- **Schools Clubs Pathway** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £500.
- **Seeding** - [Application/Guidelines](#) - Grant value up to £250.

Sports Forum Grants are only available to Sports Forum members who have been affiliated for a minimum of three months prior to application. £45,000 has been allocated for 2024/2025 financial year, application forms and guidance notes for each grant are available:

- By emailing

sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

- Contacting Sports Development on 07741 235231/0300 0133333 ext.40338
- Online at www.leisureardsandnorthdown.com/sports-development/funding
- Sports Development, Londonderry Park, Newtownards BT23 8SG

Capital Grant Scheme

The Sports Development Capital Grant Programme provides financial assistance to eligible Sports Clubs for the delivery of capital projects and the purchase of capital equipment. 'Capital Expenditure' is defined as expenditure for purchase, improvement, restoration and construction of an asset directly related to the applicant organisation. It should have 'physical substance' i.e. be a tangible asset that can be listed on an asset register or a company's balance sheet (e.g. equipment, buildings) for use in the delivery of an organisation's activities; and it should have a useful life of more than one year.

The Council has set aside £45,000 for 2024/25 financial year and can award up to 50% of eligible capital costs with a maximum award of £5,000 in respect of any one project. Following grant assessment and allocations and if there is funding remaining, Council may consider awarding grants of more than £5,000 should the need be identified and in merit order.

Capital Grants are now open for 2024/2025. Deadline for submission is July 29th 2024 for assessment.

Application Process

Download an Interactive form by clicking here - [Capital Grant Form](#) and [Guidance Notes](#)

Please submit forms to [Sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)



Comic Relief Launches New Youth Homelessness in the UK Fund

This is a new funding opportunity for UK based not-for-profit organisations that specialise in providing holistic support to young people aged 16-25 in the UK, who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness.

Comic Relief is offering flexible, core funding in the way of grants of up to £200,000 over a three to five year period to organisations which do both of the following:

- Specialise in the provision of holistic support to young people aged 16-25 in the UK, who are at immediate risk of, or experiencing homelessness. Support services should be tailored, inclusive and accessible, to remove barriers and better meet the multiple and diverse needs of young people at immediate risk of or experiencing homelessness. This work could be delivered by the applicant alone or in partnership.
- Meaningfully involve young people with lived experience of homelessness, or who have been at risk of homelessness. This should include involving young people in the development of the organisation's work and priority areas, and/or in the running of the organisation.

Although not a requirement, there is interest in organisations who work to change public attitudes towards youth homelessness and/or reduce the stigma and discrimination that young people face. This

influencing work can be done either by the applicant or by working in partnership with others to effect change.

To be eligible, applicants must have an annual income of between £250,000 and £10 million and a set of annual accounts.

Comic Relief predominantly funds charities. Organisations that are not a registered charity must have a governing document that outlines the organisation's social purpose, demonstrating that any profit or assets are used for this purpose, and show that an asset lock is in place.

Flexible, core funding is designed to support the good work of organisations, and not just projects. This could mean core funding of the organisation's annual budget to continue its good work, or funding to expand the work, or to add something new that amplifies the work or its results.

The deadline for applications is 7 May 2024 (15:00).

For more information and to apply, please visit [Youth Homelessness in the UK | Comic Relief](#)



Breast Cancer Charities have until 31 May to Submit a Grant Application (UK)

The Pink Ribbon Foundation is currently accepting applications from across the UK to its annual grants programme.

Grants of up to £6,000 are available to breast cancer charities in the UK that assist people affected by breast cancer and organisations that work on breast cancer research and prevention. The funding is for projects and initiatives that make a direct impact on individuals with breast cancer in the UK.

For the 2024 grant period and with requests for assistance growing, the Foundation decided to focus in the main on organisations with limited financial resources to deliver their services.

Application should relate to a specific project, not 'business as usual' or core costs. However, the Foundation has 'helped out' with core costs should the need be vital to the continuity of an organisation. Up to 15% of requests can be for unrestricted funding for the organisation to use as it deems necessary.

In most instances, the Foundation will consider funding delivery for projects that are already up and running. These can also be pilot programmes that are being



rolled out to reach a new or much wider audience or projects that take a new approach in tackling a specific challenge.

Registered charities, community interest groups and social enterprises with a legal constitution and charitable objectives may apply.

The Foundation welcomes applications from all ethnic and minority groups.

Grant applications must be hard copy and reach the Foundation by the deadline.

The deadline for applications is 31 May 2024.

For more information and to apply, please visit [The Pink Ribbon Foundation](#)



Ultach Fund for Irish Language Community Activities Invites Applications

An annual funding programme available to community organisations in Northern Ireland wishing to use and promote the Irish language is accepting applications.

The Ultach Fund is administered by Community Foundation for Northern Ireland after originally being established with capital from The Iontaobhas Ultach Trust. The fund is accepting applications for projects taking place in 2024/25 from registered charities and constituted grassroots community and voluntary groups based in Northern Ireland.

Funding is intended for projects that promote and encourage the use of the Irish language at community level and demonstrate cross-community aspects. Examples include:

- Irish language classes, courses and other relevant learning opportunities.
- Structured Irish language social events to improve fluency and/or support fluent Irish language speakers, including families.

- Production of Irish language learning or awareness resources, such as innovative publications and relevant digital resources.
- Irish language arts based activities.



Eligible costs include:

- Small capital costs, where essential to the project.
- Running costs may be deemed eligible for Irish language centres.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available.

The deadline for applications is 7 May 2024 (1pm).

For more information and to apply, please visit [An Ciste ULTACH / The Ultach Fund - Community Foundation Northern Ireland \(communityfoundationni.org\)](https://www.communityfoundationni.org)

Cultivating Creativity: National Lottery Funding for Northern Ireland Arts Initiatives

An annual programme designed to assist organisations to deliver arts projects which contribute to the growth of arts in the community for new and existing audiences, and which reflect the diversity of Northern Ireland's society and culture, is accepting applications.

The National Lottery Project Funding programme provided by Arts Council of Northern Ireland is inviting applications from a wide range of legally constituted organisations including registered charities, public sector bodies, commercial organisations and partnerships of organisations working together.

Projects must take place between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. Eligible projects and activities include:

- Projects, events and programmes of activity together with related overhead costs associated with the delivery of the project/event or programme.
- Projects which contribute to the growth of the work force and/or artistic development through mentoring programmes or opportunities.
- Projects which promote mental health and wellbeing for all participants.
- Projects which have sustainable development at their core, or which address environmental issues.
- Accessibility costs: these are costs associated with the delivery of a project for people with particular needs as defined under Section 75 of The Northern Ireland Act 1998, eg sign language interpretation, Braille paperwork, transport costs, carer costs.
- Continuation of salaries of existing administrative and/or arts posts.
- New work commissions and productions in all art forms.

- Research and Development.
- Audience Development - to meet the needs of audiences and to help arts organisations develop ongoing relationships with diverse audiences.
- Touring (in more than one local authority area).
- Presentations or exhibitions (in more than one local authority area) of work by artists and arts organisations, which develop opportunities for audiences to attend international events in Northern Ireland which they might not otherwise see.
- Projects which are planned to reach significant audiences through 'live', 'as live' or recorded digital performance, publication, broadcast, reading, recording, and/or other audience channels.
- Modest requests for capital equipment, website design and upkeep costs and digital platform development will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and these must be integral to project design and/or delivery and/or specific project costs.



Grants of between £10,001 and £75,000 are available. Applicants are required to provide a minimum of 10% of total project costs from non-Lottery, non-Arts Council sources, comprised of cash and/or in-kind funding.

The deadline for applications is 7 May 2024 (12 noon).

For more information and to apply, please visit [National Lottery Project Funding 2024-2025 | Arts Council NI \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](https://www.artscouncil-ni.org)



Heart of the Community Fund 2024

The Heart of the Community Fund is an open grant round designed to meet the needs of not-for-profit organisations delivering vital services and supports to people across the island of Ireland.

The Ireland Funds recognises the challenges organisations face in securing funding to build their capacity or meet their core costs, so the Heart of the Community Fund 2024 will provide Organisational Investment Grants. The application form will enable you to share what you're working towards and how you deliver on your mission, so we can get a picture of your organisation as a whole. If your application is successful, you can then allocate the funding to meet your most pressing needs.

How to Apply

Applications are being accepted through the **online portal only**, which will be available on the website **from Monday, April 15th**. Please read the [guidelines](#) in full before beginning your application.

The **closing date is Friday, May 3rd**. Late applications will not be accepted.

[APPLY NOW](#)

Funding Levels

The Heart of the Community Fund 2024 will provide grants between **€5,000-25,000** to not-for-profit organisations with an annual turnover of less than € / £3,000,000.

At least **€500,000** will be distributed through this grant round.

How will this work?

The application form includes questions that will help us understand what your organisation does, why you do it, who you do it for and how you monitor your effectiveness. It also includes questions about your budget for the year and how much your current shortfall is, as well as a section where you can provide some examples of what this funding could be used for. The Ireland Funds Grants Team will assess your application and, if your application is successful, will determine the most suitable amount to offer your organisation within the range available.

When you receive the grant offer, you will then be asked to specify the designation for the funding e.g. €10,000 for Marketing Manager Salary and €10,000 for Utility Bills.



THE
IRELAND
FUNDS

They understand the need to have flexible funding that can be deployed throughout the year as needed, so up to 25% of the amount you are awarded can be designated to your "Flexible/Contingency Costs Fund".

Please note that funds must be expended within 12 months.

Funding Priorities

In 2024, within **the four pillars**, they will prioritise applications from organisations working in the following spaces:

1. Community Integration and Inclusion

The focus here is 'Belonging'. Your organisation defines what community means to your work e.g. older people, LGBTQI+, people with disabilities, migrants etc.

2. Youth and Family Supports

This stream focuses on areas such as youth clubs, food provision and mental health supports. For the purpose of this grant round, youth is defined as 0-18years.

You will not be asked to self-identify as aligning with one or more of these priorities, our team will determine that based on your application.

If your organisation works outside of these areas, please still feel welcome to apply, just note that these areas are where we will focus the majority of funding.

Contact

Due to an expected high volume of applications, all inquiries will be dealt with through email. Please contact us at grantsinfo@irelandfunds.org if you have any outstanding questions that have not been addressed through the information provided.

For more information, please visit [Grants - The Ireland Funds, Progress through Philanthropy](#)



Access to Resilience

This programme is supported with money from Dormant Assets NI. Dormant Assets NI is an expansion of the Dormant Accounts Fund NI.

This programme aims to address the gaps in our Dormant Assets investment to date. We want to fund support organisations – sometimes known as network, umbrella, membership or community anchor organisations. We want these organisations to improve access to the help they provide to small, underrepresented community groups in Northern Ireland.

By small community groups, we mean groups with an annual income of around £10,000 up to £100,000.

By underrepresented community groups, we mean groups that focus on representing the needs of:

- older people
- disabled people
- women
- ethnically minoritised people
- faith-based communities
- LGBTQ+ people
- rural communities.

Specifically, we want to fund support organisations so that they can help community groups with things like:

- financial planning and budgeting
- project management
- good governance
- diversity and inclusion
- digital skills
- impact measurement
- strategic planning
- volunteer management
- collaboration
- leadership
- succession planning.



Delivered by

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY
COMMUNITY FUND

We want the projects we fund to address existing barriers and achieve meaningful and inclusive participation.

You might be a generalist support organisation that already helps a diverse range of community groups. You might want to improve access to underrepresented community groups who are not currently benefiting from that support.

Or you might be a specialist support organisation that already specialises in helping underrepresented community groups. For example, women, older people or disabled people.

Your aim might be to get more resources to meet the needs of these groups.

Area: Northern Ireland

Suitable for: Support, network, umbrella, membership or community anchor organisations.

Funding size: Up to £150,000, for up to 3 years.

Total available: £3 million. We aim to make around 25 to 30 grants.

Application deadline: 12pm on Thursday 4 July 2024

For more information, please visit [Access to resilience | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)



Triangle Trust to Open for UK Applications with New Focus for 2024

Following on from its change in funding strategy last year, the Triangle Trust 1949 Fund is focusing its funding in 2024 solely on not-for-profit organisations working with vulnerable young women and girls who have been in the criminal justice system or who are at a high risk of entering it.

The Trust holds two grants rounds per year with grants of up to £80,000 over two years (up to £40,000 can be requested per year):

- The Spring round is for proposals wanting to work with young people who already have a criminal conviction.
- The Autumn round is for proposals focused on targeted work with high-risk young people on the edge of the criminal justice system.

Registered charities, not-for-profit social enterprises and community interest companies that are working within the UK and have a UK office can apply.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have previous experience of working with vulnerable young women or girls either on the edge of the criminal justice system or who already have criminal convictions.
- Be requesting funding for a project working exclusively with young women and girls.



- Work solely with women and girls.
- Have a proven track record of running projects working with young women and girls that is both gender and trauma informed.
- Be proposing a project with targets that are specifically linked to either reducing the number of young women or girls who reoffend or reduce the number of young women and girls who receive a first conviction.
- Have an average annual income over the past three years of less than £1.5 million.
- Be a registered charity or an organisation set up with a clear social purpose and appropriate governing documents stating this.

The Trust particularly welcomes applications from organisations working in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The Spring 2024 application window opens on 18 April and closes on 23 May 2024.

For more information and to apply, please visit [The Triangle Trust](#)

May Funding Clinic Sessions

Tuesday, 14th May 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!

