Minister Announces a Review of the Strategies to Tackle Deprivation.

In a statement to the Assembly (22nd November) the Communities Minister, Paul Givan MLA, announced that regeneration powers, that were due to transfer to the new Councils, will now remain within the Department for Communities (DfC). Outlining his decision to retain regeneration functions within DfC, the Minister said regardless of where legislative responsibility lies, Local Authorities will continue to play a huge role in ensuring the successful implementation of our regeneration programmes.

The Minister also announced that he is to review the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme as part of a wider consideration of how best to address deprivation. The Programme has seen an investment of £280m in 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas since 2003.

There has been some narrowing of the gap between the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and the rest of NI on a range of the social and economic outcome indicators, however NR Areas remain some way behind when compared to the rest of the country. (continued on Page 3)

“The current Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has provided many good news stories across all of the areas that have participated in the programme. But we have to recognise that things have moved on. There is a different context now, with the Programme for Government placing responsibilities on us to focus our efforts on things that make a difference and make a positive impact on the outcomes it sets out to achieve.”

Paul Givan, Minister, NI Department for Communities
NW Bike Share Survey

Derry City & Strabane District Council are exploring the potential for a public bike share scheme within the city & region and would like your views. Aecom and Sustrans are conducting the survey of both stakeholders (via the Council's Active & Sustainable Travel Forum) and general public.

Bike share schemes are run as a service in which bicycles are made available for shared use to individuals on a very short term basis, allowing people to borrow and return a bike from various points. Many cities across Ireland such as Belfast, Dublin, Galway, Cork and Limerick already run schemes, benefiting a variety of users from residents & commuters to visitors & tourists.

All views & opinions welcome. The consultation will formally close on Dec. 11th 2016. The public version of the survey can be accessed at www.derrystrabane.com/greenways.

Light Up Your Christmas at Northside

Share in the festive fun at Northside Village Centre this year and join Santa to switch on our Christmas Tree Lights.

Friday 2nd December

Activities start at 10.00am and finish up at 8.00pm. Adm. FREE

Why not pick up the perfect present at a range of market stalls – bringing together a selection of contemporary & traditional craft products, gifts and fancy goods.

Spread some festive cheer as you sing along to our range of local school choirs (10.30 – 3pm), local singers (3pm – 6.30pm) and Colmcille Pipe Band (6.45pm). Bring the kids to keep our face-painters and balloon modellers busy from 2pm to 6pm.

Santa will bring the festivities to a close by switching on the Christmas Tree Lights at 7.00pm. Everyone Welcome!

For further information contact Lorraine (GSAP) 7135 8787 or lorraine@shantallow.net
The Neighbourhood Renewal programme has had many successes in helping to nurture community development & in improving the physical fabric, facilities & environment of many of our most deprived areas - with ample evidence of the benefits accrued through capital investment, including sports facilities, childcare facilities, community centres, business units & play parks.

There have been significant improvements across a number of social and economic indicators during the lifetime of the existing strategy. It has laid many of the foundations necessary for ensuring that communities are able to engage in Community Planning with local councils.

It is my intention to review the current strategies for tackling deprivation, with a view to replacing them with a programme that will be more closely aligned to support the delivery of the new Programme for Government outcomes.

It is in all our interests to see if we can design a programme which will have a greater impact on the intractable social and economic barriers which limit life chances for so many in our community. It will be important to ensure that any new programme builds on and does not lose the real benefits of the existing programme.

The new draft Programme for Government signals a new way of working, a renewed focus on outcomes which requires us to think differently and to challenge the way we do things.

For the Minister’s full statement check out:-

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PLANS for GALLIAGH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Plans for the development of a new Council owned Community Centre in the heart of Galliagh have being finalised - the final draft designs, layout and site plan have been presented this month to a range of local community & voluntary organisations (8) who have expressed an interest in using the facilities & acted as a steering group for the development.

It is envisaged that the construction tender will be issued by DC&SDC early in the new year, with a contractor appointed soon thereafter.

(continued from page1).
**Programme for Government Consultation**

The Executive agreed & issued its draft Programme for Government for consultation on Friday 28 October 2016. It was the second major announcement that week. Health Minister Michelle O’Neill published the Bengoa Report and outlined her 10 yr plan for radically reforming health services in Northern Ireland. Seamus McAleavey of NICVA argues that both indicate a new departure in government that is very welcome and necessary. Like many organisations NICVA has constantly called for a more strategic and long-term approach to government planning and this is now what we are getting.

We now see that Minister O’Neill has the clear united support of all her colleagues in the Executive for her plans which will transcend at least two mandates and a number of health ministers. This unity of purpose will deliver better outcomes for people which brings us to the central thrust of the new PfG.

Its whole focus is to shift towards the outcomes that government is trying to achieve like improving life expectancy and the quality of that life for all our people, not just the more affluent. Same for educational attainment. The Executive’s vision for a better, more effective service should begin to assure people that when acute services start to be reconfigured & brought together in centres of excellence it is not the thin end of the wedge of local hospital closures but about saving & improving lives. Prevention rather than cure is also going to get serious support as resources get shifted in health over the 10 years and this will have a huge beneficial effect on our people.

This is also an indicator as to the direction of the PfG in general. Everyone delivering public services will start to focus on what they actually joined up for – to make a difference to the lives of people. It’s a time to be optimistic now as to what can be achieved even in the difficult financial circumstances that face us all.

The PfG consultation runs to the **23 December 2016** and more info is available at [www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-consultation](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-consultation)

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**PEACE IV Funding**

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) have launched two new calls for funding, worth a combined value of €90.5 million, under the PEACE IV Programme.

€52.9 million will be made available under ‘Shared Spaces & Services’. This will create 8 new, largescale civic spaces that can be used by all sections of the community.

Applicants must demonstrate that their project will have a transformative effect both locally & regionally.

Secondly, €37.6 million will be invested toward ‘Children & Young People’ aged 14-24. This will target projects working with young people who are disadvantaged and are at risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour, violence or dissident activity.

For further info on either of these calls, visit [www.seupb.eu/2014-2020Programmes/PEACEIV_Programme/PEACEIV_Overview.aspx](http://www.seupb.eu/2014-2020Programmes/PEACEIV_Programme/PEACEIV_Overview.aspx)
Welfare Reform sees the introduction of a wide range of changes to the social security system in N.I. Some benefits will cease to exist and new benefits and payment systems are being introduced.

A key welfare change is the introduction of Universal Credit - a single means-tested benefit which will be paid to people aged 18 - 64 years and replaces a number of existing benefits, including:

- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

There’s a number of significant timescales developed to link in with the introduction of Welfare Reform, including:

- 17 February 2016 - now operational - No more new claims for ESA in Youth.
- 1 April 2016 - now operational - For ESA, JSA and IS, the waiting period before housing costs (including help with mortgage interest) can be met is increased from 13 weeks to 39 weeks.
- 4 April 2016 - now operational - Benefit overpayments - the amount a person can pay as a penalty in order to avoid prosecution changes from 30% of the overpayment to 50% (subject to a max. of £2,000).
- April 2016 - now operational - Child Benefit and certain amounts of Tax Credit are frozen for 4 years.
- 23 May 2016 - now operational - Introduction of Mandatory Reconsideration & Direct Lodgement of appeals - this is a change in procedure for challenging benefit decisions. If you challenge a decision you will not receive payment of the benefit while the decision is being reconsidered so you may need to seek advice to protect your income.
- 31 May 2016 - now operational - Introduction of the Benefit Cap. Regulations for supplementary payments for those disadvantaged by the Benefit Cap and by ESA changes coming into force.
- 20 June 2016 - now operational - DLA is abolished for new claims and replaced by the Personal Independence Payment. Existing DLA claimants whose award is due for renewal and claimants who report a change of circumstances will also be invited to claim PIP instead.
- 5th September 2016 - now operational - The family premium in Housing Benefit is abolished for all new claims and new births. The maximum period for which Housing Benefit claims may be backdated for working age claimants is reduced from six months to one month.
- November 2016 - now operational - New provisions on changes to overpayments and how they can be recovered come into effect.
- 7 November 2016 - now operational - The benefit cap amounts will reduce from £500 to £385 and from £350 to £258 per week.

For info. on how Welfare Reform may impact on you, contact the Independent Welfare Changes Helpline (0808 802 0020).

The helpline is operated by the Welfare Reform Advice Services Consortium (Advice NI, Law Centre NI & Citizens Advice) - available 9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri.

Check out www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/independent-welfare-change-helpline
St Joseph’s ABC have recently opened their new purpose built boxing facility at the site of the old 4 Block, Slievemore. The Club secured in the region of £450k from the Sport NI ‘Pound for Pound – Boxing Investment Programme’ and Neighbourhood Renewal (DfC). A comprehensive building condition survey of the previous building – a 1970’s prefabricated structure known locally as the 4 Block - recommended demolition & construction of a new building.

The resultant new build has provided the Club with a modern, state of the art facility in line with current boxing standards (comprising Main Hall / Arena, Training Gym, 4 Changing Rooms, Toilets, Physio Room, Kitchen, Storage, Meeting Room) - creating a vibrant, all-inclusive hub with welcoming facilities & broad range of boxing-related training opportunities / events; a base from which outreach can take place and from where the Club can promote and enable participation in boxing as a healthy fitness activity.

For more info contact Sandra Duffy:- sandraduffy1976@gmail.com

Advanced Diploma in Civic Leadership & Community Planning

This Diploma course is an innovative leadership development programme being offered by the Ulster University Business School.

The first of its kind in N.I., it has been developed to meet the need for a practical, accredited programme for key players involved in developing and implementing community planning.

The programme provides participants with knowledge & understanding of the principles and practices of community planning and effective leadership to enable them to make a strategic contribution to attaining organisational objectives and improved performance.

For more information contact :-
Steve Pollard, Programme Director, Room 2D24A, U.U. Business School, Shore Road, Newtownabbey.
Tel: 07710 717161 or 9036 6572
Email: sf.pollard@ulster.ac.uk
The Leafair Men’s Shed Social Enterprise involves local men showcasing the skills they have developed over many years of work - they put these skills to practical use by training others and creating items to sell and reinvest in the enterprise.

The men are producing benches, tables, bird boxes, picture frames and at the moment Christmas decorations - all of the items are available to buy from Unit 41 at NW Business Complex (Skeoge) or contact Leafair Community Association on Tel. 7135 3735

This social enterprise, which developed from Leafair Men’s Health Group, received a £20,000 funding boost from the NIHE’s Social Housing Enterprise Investment scheme to purchase equipment to further their plans – helping to address issues of employability, the environment and building inward investments locally.

Thanks to a Social Housing Enterprise Award of £20k, Teamworks aims to further develop its home maintenance service and services to clean up neighbourhoods throughout the city and district.

Teamworks offers a number of services in the local community including; joinery, painting & decorating, removing graffiti, clearing overgrown pathways and repairing fences. Teamworks also offers home security services such as fitting door locks – Tel: 7128 0250

The award has meant that Teamworks can employ an assistant manager to look after administration and increase the capacity to take on even more work. It’s also supported the purchase of a reliable van and the provision of more training opportunities for people in the area.
**CULMORE DISTRICT PARK**

The newly opened riverfront Culmore District Park offers a valuable new publicly owned space for local people and visitors to the Culmore and Greater Shantallow area.

The park opened to the public earlier this month following a £7m restoration project at the former landfill site, off Coney Road. It boasts over 3kms of pathways with stunning views out over Lough Foyle as far as Moville and Binevenagh on a clear day. The entire site is 40 hectares, which include 13 hectares of tidal lagoons and 27 hectares of parkland, the equivalent of almost 40 full size football pitches. The restoration has created habitats for internationally important over-wintering birds and an important location for biodiversity with wading birds feeding on the mudflats.

The 3m wide pathways are designed for walking, running & cycling - extremely safe for children & families. There’s dedicated carparking to accommodate in excess of 50 vehicles. One of the innovative features on site is the gas conversion facility, collecting landfill gas which is burned off to power the building on site and feed into the national grid.

Further public engagement is planned for the new year - to receive feedback and to plan for further development which may include a playpark, playing pitches and community buildings.

The Culmore District Park is open to the public **Monday to Sunday** from **8am to dusk**.

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**CONCERNS over the Reclassification of Housing Associations**

On 29th Sept the Office for National Statistics decided that Housing Associations in NI, Scotland & Wales were no longer independent social enterprises and are instead public bodies. The NI Assembly subsequently debated the issue, realising that reclassification will have a significant impact on NI's 22 housing associations and their ability to provide new social and shared ownership homes.

Main concerns centre on the effect on plans to build 8,000 new social houses over the next 4 years, the effect on potential borrowing across Government following the transfer of £1bn debt - seriously impacting on the Executive’s ability to borrow money for other initiatives across Executive Departments), while the decision will also have implications for the co-ownership scheme.

The Ministers for ‘Communities’ and ‘Finance’ have been tasked with taking the steps needed to reverse this decision & ensure that housing associations remain classified as independent social businesses.

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For further information about Neighbourhood Renewal activities in the Outer North area :-

Contact Darren Kirby (Manager), Outer North Neighbourhood Partnership, Northside Village Centre, Glengalliagh Rd, Derry, BT48 8NN  T. (028) 7135 8787  E. darren@shantallow.net