



# Health Action Zone

North & West Belfast

[www.haz-nw-belfast.org.uk](http://www.haz-nw-belfast.org.uk)



## The Five Challenges:

- Aspiration
- Poverty
- Achievement
- Safety
- Good Relations

# HAZ news

# HAZ moving forward...

**Proposals for the new Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Wellbeing were debated in the Assembly on 1 December 2008. Health Minister, Michael McGimpsey said, "Tackling health inequalities in Northern Ireland is a major challenge and it is essential that everyone in Northern Ireland has the same opportunity to a healthy life.... The establishment of a Regional Agency will allow us to become more pro-active in relation to the health and social well being of people in Northern Ireland." This is an important development for the public health of people in Northern Ireland. The Minister has recently announced that Mary McMahon will be Chair of the new organisation. Mary is well known for her commitment to Human Rights and in particular her work with Travellers. Mary has been a long-standing member of the HAZ Travellers' Action Group.**

Detailed plans for the new Regional Agency are taking shape through the efforts of a number of working groups and HAZ has contributed to these discussions. The HAZ team are set to move into the new Regional Agency on 1 April 2009 from the current hosting arrangements with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

At the same time, the HAZ team are developing a workplan which will reflect the responses to the HAZ Programme for Change consultation and which will reach across Belfast. Further discussion over the coming period will refine the final content.

Three interlinked priority areas have been identified for the Third Stage Action plan.

## **A** Integration

In developing a model for integrated community development and action it is anticipated that up to five locality pilots will be generated which will draw together relevant strategies at a local level and aim to develop models of community engagement, local planning, collective governance and integrated service delivery.

## **B** An Alliance for Health and Education

Building on current work, HAZ will continue to promote close working between education and health and social care to improve outcomes for children and young people. A series of individual programmes that take into account Investing for Health, Achieving Belfast, Extended Schools and the Full Service Schools broader educational agenda as well as the development of Integrated Services for Children and Young People will move forward.

## **C** Extension of Key themes

HAZ will continue to support the development of partnership based working on Sexual Health and Well-being and Employability. In addition, we will extend from our current work on suicide prevention in response to the clear message from the consultation, into the wider mental health field. The emphasis here will be to avoid replicating the work done by others, but instead embracing issues where the nature of the problems is pressing and citywide.

A new area of work has been identified in relation to ethnic minorities and migrant populations. We will begin by trying to identify what information is already available on the particular needs of ethnic groups and how these might be addressed in any future work plan.

The full detail of the workplan will evolve between now and April and the HAZ Council Strategic Review meeting in February will be an important part of this process. Reaching across all the areas of work will be the need to address strategic communications for the Third Stage Action Plan.

Coming soon -

## the Integrated Services Brand

The Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme (Integrated Services) is currently recruiting staff in both Shankill and West Belfast. The Programme will carry the Integrated Services brand at Programme and local levels represented by the logos below. The Integrated Services Programme is led by the Belfast Education and Library Board on behalf of the Health Action Zone. The Programme will be delivered through the West Belfast Partnership and Greater Shankill Partnership with funding secured as a result of the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Forces.

To find out more see the Article on p4 of this edition of HAZnews or go to

[www.haz-nwbelfast.org.uk/Integrated\\_Services](http://www.haz-nwbelfast.org.uk/Integrated_Services)



# Major progress in implementing HAZ Sexual Health Strategy

The development and implementation of the HAZ Strategy to Promote the Sexual Health and Wellbeing of Young People was given a major boost with recurrent funding from the Eastern Health and Social Services Board for the post of a Sexual Health Improvement Specialist in the Health Improvement Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. Until recently, funding for the HAZ Coordinator was time-limited and this development represents a major advance in mainstreaming the issue. Beth Gilhooly (former HAZ Coordinator)

has been appointed to the new post as Health Improvement Specialist as part of Bryan Nelson's team within the Trust. The development of a new action plan across Belfast, whilst at the same time continuing to deliver on existing commitments, is now a priority. The recent publication of the DHSSPS Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2008-2013 now provides an important policy context for this work. A planning workshop will be held in January 2009 and Beth can be contacted on 028 9032 0840 for further details.



# Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm Implementation Group

The Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm Implementation Group held a workshop to review progress on the implementation of their plans on 12 November 2008. The review was part of a systematic approach to the important work of preventing suicide and self-harm. The HAZ Task Group began work in 2005, developing an inclusive and comprehensive approach to the prevention of suicide and self-harm in North and West Belfast, publishing their report in June 2006. Following discussion with the Health Action Zone Council and all of the partners, an Implementation group was established and began work in October of the same year. An implementation plan was

developed to take forward key areas of action which reflected the recommendations of the report. These areas of work have progressed under the chairmanship of a range of community, voluntary and statutory partners in order to ensure that progress is made against critical areas known to be important in the prevention of suicide.

One of the areas which has demanded attention has been the support for the programmes within the local community and which are now funded under the Protect Life funding stream. A range of programmes have been put in place to provide counselling, complimentary therapies, befriending schemes, as well as information, support, mentoring

and training for a wide range of staff. It was therefore timely that the HAZ Implementation group took time out to consider progress and chart a direction for the future development of this important work. The full meeting considered critically what had been achieved and significantly what could be done better in the future.

Progress has been made on all key areas – schools, prevention of self-harm, development of support services, training, communications, as well as a new area led by Belfast City Council to develop a community response plan, was reported to the group. A wide range of achievements were noted by members as well as the need to continue to be

critical of what was needed in the changing environment.

The group concluded its deliberations with a clear set of actions both in terms of the partnership itself, and of the need to evaluate the impact of the work thus far. The structure of the working groups is also likely to change given the progress that has been made in some key areas, as well as the relationship between the local process and the regional Protect Life strategy. The group have also recently appointed Irene Sherry, Ashton Centre as joint Chair alongside John McGeown, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and they affirmed their commitment to lead forward the next phase of development.



## Integrated Services Getting Ready to Deliver

The Integrated Services for Children and Young People (Integrated Services) programme of work is about to become operational both in Greater Shankill and West Belfast with both Area Partnership Boards entering into Service Level Agreements with the Belfast Education and Library Board to deliver agreed activities. A new logo has been developed with versions which reflect the Shankill and West Belfast locations respectively. Communications planning has been a high priority with web pages now set up on the HAZ website and the West

Belfast Partnership Website. A dedicated website has also been set up to support the Greater Shankill Integrated Services activities.

Ultimately the purpose of the Integrated Services Programme will be to change how services are developed and delivered in order to improve outcomes for children with an overarching emphasis on intervening at an early stage. A central goal of this initiative is that the aspirations of children, young people and their parents, must be significantly raised.

Meeting this goal requires a comprehensive and integrated

focus on all aspects of the lives of children and young people, including those, inside and outside their families, who influence them. The focus of activity will be on schools and communities, including family and service settings. Integrated services are a main driver of this initiative providing a series of co-ordinated interventions by different partners all working together where need is most acute, change is feasible and opportunities for multi-agency co-operation are greatest. At the heart of all of this work is the need of the children and their families.

The Integrated Services

Programme secured funding from the Integrated Development Fund (IDF) with the Department of Education acting as the funding body. This will enable the development of a new approach to address the very complex needs of children and young people in Greater Shankill and West Belfast. It offers a new model of partnership working at local level in which all the relevant local agencies and local people play an integral role in delivering this programme. Local Implementation Action Groups (LIAGs) have designed and will deliver the

work programme in Greater Shankill and West Belfast. Each LIAG will be able to use the funding available to build its own platform of support services to focus on the greatest social and educational needs they have identified in their area. Services will be delivered that will demonstrate direct benefits and obtain real, measurable results.

It is important to understand that the process of developing this work has been based on partnership, rather than developing "bids". The LIAGs have shaped and defined their programme activities and are now at the stage of rolling out their programme design. The LIAGs have had to take account of need, including current and planned service provision across other sectors. The programmes of work designed will provide a holistic and sustainable long term approach founded on partnership working, real engagement, and involvement in the capacity building of local communities.

The programmes of work which are about to be implemented provide an emphasis on clear, long term targets. Both Greater Shankill and West Belfast LIAG Programmes recognise

the need to support schools and their communities in addressing this complex agenda, with an acceptance of the central and wider role that a school can play in its wider community. Both communities and schools will drive this work.

The key principles which underpin the entire work programme are:

- Integration – working together
- Achievability – getting realistic results
- Sustainability – maintaining progress
- Innovation – plus added value – doing new things or old things in a new way that make a difference
- Prevention – ensuring that the patterns of the past are not repeated

To date, much of the focus has been on managing the processes in place to ultimately deliver integrated services to children and young people. A huge amount of time and energy has been invested in maintaining focus on the key principles under which funding was secured and in ensuring that the outcomes are informed

**Photos courtesy of B.E.L.B.**



by experience and best practice. External evaluators Quaesitum have been appointed to evaluate the programme and an interim evaluation report has recently been completed.

The LIAGs have now submitted their proposals to Project Board and are about to embark on an implemented roll-out of their programmes related to the following platforms of work: Early Years, Parent Support, Health and Well-Being and Learner Support.

Greater Shankill will deliver their programme thematically under the following areas: Youth Support; Early Years and Family Support; Educational

Aspiration and Integrated Services Team. All proposals have been agreed by Project Board and we are happy to announce that a range of posts has been advertised to take forward the programme delivery in this area.

West Belfast have also presented their programme implementation plan to Project Board and although working to the same platforms as Greater Shankill they propose to deliver their programmes through three Full Service Community settings –Upper Springfield, Greater Falls, and Outer Falls. The Programmes will develop an integrated service linking the following themes - Becoming Education Ready, Enhanced Family Support, Community-based Mental Health Services and Youth Support. As with Greater Shankill a range of posts has been advertised to support this work.

Useful links are:

[www.haz-nwbelfast.org.uk/Integrated Services](http://www.haz-nwbelfast.org.uk/Integrated%20Services)

[www.westbelfast-partnership.com](http://www.westbelfast-partnership.com)

[www.integratedservices-greatershankill.org.uk](http://www.integratedservices-greatershankill.org.uk)



# The Future Together Initiative

**Future Together is a partnership of inter-community, statutory and business organisations focused on increasing the prosperity and quality of life of people living in North Belfast.**

The Future Together partnership acts as an “enabler” of different sectors working together, as well as driving the development of concepts and models of practice. Members include Ashton Centre, Capita, Health Action Zone, Intercomm, Mount Vernon Community Development Forum, North Belfast Developing Leadership Initiative, Price Waterhouse Coopers and the Strategic Investment Board Northern Ireland. Future Together is committed to dialogue and exploration as a vehicle to challenge prejudice and build confidence in the new political dispensation.

Future Together held a conference in March 2008 with contributions from a wide range of community activists, statutory organisations, the private sector and politicians to explore how the prospect for economic development, and in particular investment, could be advanced to ensure a social inclusion agenda with those communities that have been most disadvantaged in the past. The conference served as an important platform to ensure attention to these issues at the major US Investment Conference held in May.

Since then, activity has focused on 3 key areas of work:

**1.** Community Action – creating dialogue and debate on a range of important issues. Recent events have included the impact of the cost of living in local communities. Future Together also contributed to the Top Management programme of The Kings Fund for senior Health Services Managers from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to learn about approaches to dealing with conflict. The workshop was hosted by the Intercomm’s Developing Leadership CEP and was held in the Crumlin Road jail – serving to focus minds wonderfully! An education debate held on 29 October 2008 included all political parties together with key



**Participants in the education debate.**

speakers Sir Ken Bloomfield, Professor Tony Gallagher, and with the debate chaired by the political commentator Jude Collins. A full turnout, including MLAs and Junior Minister Gerry Kelly, ensured for a lively debate. In spite of differences about the impact of post primary selection, there was common agreement about the need to focus on educational underachievement and the impact that this has on many other issues including health and well-being. November 14 also saw the Principals of the post-primary schools in North Belfast meet with business leaders to consider how to work more effectively together. It is recognised that there are already a number of initiatives which bring schools and the business

community together; however, the meeting hosted by Bro MeFerran, Managing Director of Allstate NI, went further in exploring a model which will build on the existing experience of schools, local communities and business working together; in particular, in relation to Information Technology. In spite of the economic downturn, business leaders were keen to stress the current opportunities, with Northern Ireland having a key role to play in the knowledge economy. From a Health Action Zone point of view, it is a further step in building coherence and a development pathway between early years, primary schools, post-primary schools and the world of work, with a particular focus on disadvantaged communities. The focus on a knowledge-based industry stresses the importance of developing skills and the connection between schools, community, voluntary and private sector is therefore critical.

**2.** The second area of activity is a focus on physical and environmental regeneration, for example, affordable housing. Future Together is currently developing a first model of what is termed affordable



**Carol Ni Chuilin MLA and Paul Roberts, Director Ashton Centre, listen to the debate on the future of post-primary education.**

housing in N. Ireland. This work is being led by the Strategic Investment Board with partners from the community and voluntary sector and Filor Housing Association. As Leo McKenna, Strategic Investment Board and Chair of Future Together commented, "this proposal will make an important contribution to our understanding of how affordable housing might be developed, a key asset for health and wellbeing as well as regeneration".

**3.** The third area of activity is support for small and medium sized businesses and social enterprise. Current activity has focused on the important role of public procurement,

exploring a means of providing support to small business and developing opportunities for the social economy. The potential of social enterprise is acknowledged and there are many excellent examples of practice.

This proposal seeks to examine what more could be done to develop sustainable approaches to development.

Future Together is also focused on political engagement and on building relationships locally and beyond. It is recognised that North Belfast has some of the sharpest areas of division in the city and it is this willingness to work together which has been so important in the current work.



Hosting the Kings Fund at Crumlin Road jail.

# Full Service Schools



**Belfast Model School for Girls and Belfast Boys' Model held an important review in September to examine the future direction of this exciting initiative. The Full Service School has built on the Communities in Schools work within the Health Action Zone over many years and includes a partnership approach involving many statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations. Both schools and the Belfast Education and Library Board have led the development which was independently evaluated at the end of the first two year period of funding. Members took time out to review progress made and the future direction for the initiative as a whole.**

The Full Service School aims to build relationships between the school, local communities and other partners, as well as with pupils and parents in developing a coordinated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people. It is clear that the Full Service School is having a significant impact, both in its own right locally, and also as a model that will inform and influence policy developments more widely. A whole school approach has been adopted and the evaluation examined both "soft" and "hard" outcomes. For example, attendance has improved significantly, with schools now intervening earlier when a child is identified as having problems with attendance. Parental involvement has also increased with parents engaging with many different aspects of school life. Particular attention has also been paid to the transition between primary and post-primary school and in turn the transition from post-primary school to work or further and higher education. A great deal of effort has also gone into building relationships with local primary schools and engaging them in a range of

areas that are important as children move to post-primary education. A diverse range of programmes are supported by community and voluntary partners and this development of relationships at a local level has been extremely helpful. In addition, staff from the Boys' and Girls' Models have also been key members of the local Implementation Action Group developing the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme. The Full Service School Review examined how the recommendations of the evaluation would inform the future development of the programme. As a result of the review, a new action plan will be developed for the next 3 year period, remaining critical about how the needs of the whole school population can be met collectively as well as the needs of individual children. It is clear that many of the problems which present in school demand "joined up approaches" and the current work is helping to inform how we might achieve these goals for the benefit of pupils and their parents at a local level.

## Building stronger alliances between health and social care and education

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast Education and Library Board, The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and Belfast Metropolitan College are developing a "Memo of Understanding" to strengthen joint working between all partners. For over a 10 year period through HAZ, partners in education and health and social care, together with other sectors, in particular early years and local communities have been working together to develop coordinated and integrated approaches to tackling inequalities in health and social exclusion in North and West Belfast. The HAZ approach is based on the need to address the determinants of health and social exclusion and this has led to the development of new ways of working, pushing the understanding of partnership to new levels of operation.

A key alliance has been that amongst communities, education authorities, and health and social services. In particular, a focus on the needs of children and young people has been dominant in the action plans of the Belfast Health Action Zone over this period. HAZ also highlighted, following Dr. Mike Morrissey's analysis in 2006, the significance of educational underachievement as a key feature in disadvantaged communities and of a strong link between this and health inequalities.

It is this commitment toward working together and creating better connectivity between

various elements of service design and delivery to better meet the needs of children and young people that has led to the proposal for a formal commitment from partners to this agenda through a Memo of Understanding.

The policy context is supportive and what the current proposal aims to do is "institutionalise" what has been happening on an informal and practice basis and

to strengthen this commitment into the future. The proposal will build on existing work rather than duplicate structures or processes and aims to create a strategic framework within which current activity will sit in order to build stronger connections and synergy of action. Bernie McNally, Director of Family and Childcare Services with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust identified the

need for such a strategic alliance at a workshop held in February and together with Belfast Education and Library Board and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools has led the development.

At the Health Action Zone Council meeting in October, members gave their approval for this enhanced joint working which is expected to be taken forward in the new year.

**The importance of inter-agency working in the area of children cannot be underestimated. This commitment by the key agencies involved in Health and Social Care and Education to closer working relationships will help strengthen the already strong working relationships across the sector.**

Bernie McNally, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

### Healthy Living Centres

The Health Action Zone is continuing to provide support to the Healthy Living Centres in Belfast, and more recently in the Eastern Area, through its Policy Makers' Group. This group brings together Healthy Living Centres and decision makers from Government Departments and statutory agencies and aims, amongst other things, to build effective working relationships, broker change and joint working between HLCs and commissioners and providers of services, to influence policy development, share information and learning, and promote best practice. Healthy Living Centres are community-led health and wellbeing initiatives which provide innovative solutions to local need. They focus on the underlying social and economic determinants of health, and act as a bridge between health services and disadvantaged communities. Initially funded by the Big Lottery

Fund, they now receive core funding from EHSSB through Investing for Health. The Healthy Living Centres from across Northern Ireland also come together in the Healthy Living Centre Regional Alliance. The Alliance has recently published 'A model for the delivery of neighbourhood health' which sets out the core elements underpinning the approach adopted by HLCs in tackling inequalities in health within local communities in Northern Ireland. Copies are available from the Health Promotion Agency.

