



CHANGING THE MAINSTREAM  
NEW WAYS OF WORKING  
ACTION PLAN - PHASE II



# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## MISSION STATEMENT

“Working together we can reduce inequalities to create a healthier, more prosperous and socially inclusive North & West Belfast.”



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## FOREWORD

When plans to establish Health Action Zones here were first developed it was believed that they could provide local responses to specific local needs. I am delighted that the concept and work of Health Action Zones has evolved yet further here, and especially delighted that those local needs and priorities have formed so much of the action undertaken in North and West Belfast.

This Phase II Action Plan “Changing the Mainstream – New Ways of Working” is a reflection of the planned work for the next three years of the North and West Belfast Health Action Zone and is based on an agenda developed through asking communities and those that represent them for their views on local priorities.

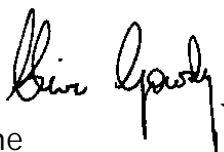
The first years of North and West Belfast Health Action Zone have been a challenging period. North and West Belfast has also had unique challenges with the ongoing tension and violence experienced sharply by local communities. The Health Action Zone has sought to respond to those needs while also delivering an ambitious programme of action. The contents of this Action Plan show that the many people involved have set themselves a further challenging set of objectives and sought to develop coherence among the range of policies and priorities.

Health Action Zones represent one of the best examples of an effective multi-sectoral approach to tackling health inequalities, and as such were trailblazers of this way of working, and this approach is now being built upon through the implementation of *Investing for Health*.

I particularly welcome the cross-cutting themes contained in this Action Plan which reflects the importance government departments place on this way of working. Health Action Zone practice to date has provided very valuable lessons from which we can all learn and I hope this approach will be further developed in the next three-year period.

Local communities, local departments and most of all local people have built the foundations in the first phase of development. I wish all involved well in moving forward to achieving the objectives set in this second phase Action Plan.

Mr DC Gowdy CB  
Permanent Secretary for the  
Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety



On behalf of the Ministerial Group for Public Health and the Minister for Health, Social Services & Public Safety.

# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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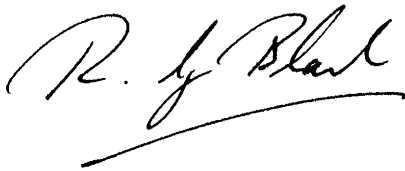
## FOREWORD

This second phase of Health Action Zone development recognises the collective efforts of many individuals and organisations working together to create a healthier, more prosperous and socially inclusive North and West Belfast. We remain committed to this goal and the second phase will build on the strong foundations that have been laid in the first phase of activity, our learning from this work, as well as the challenges and difficulties which we have faced during this period. The range of individuals and organisations that have formed the Health Action Zone are too numerous to mention, however, it is their vision, their commitment, and their energy which has created a learning community, the Health Action Zone.

This document is a living plan, it has been shaped by the views and priorities of local communities and those organisations working to address needs in North and West Belfast. A flexible approach and an ability to respond to locally determined needs will continue to be important in this second phase of development.

We will have an increased focus on 'Development Pathways', that is, a way of ensuring co-ordinated action is taken to address specific areas of inequality and social exclusion. We know that this means we must do more to overcome organisational barriers and that this commitment needs to be matched by work with local communities, in a way which enables and empowers their participation in the process.

It is clear that we have achieved much in the first phase of Health Action Zone development, but it is equally clear that this remains 'work in progress'. We remain committed to working together to achieve our common goals.



Richard Black  
Chairperson North & West Belfast Health Action Zone  
Chief Executive  
North & West Belfast Health & Social Services Trust

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# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

The North and West Belfast Health Action Zone Phase II Action Plan represents the next stage of development in the learning and activity for the Health Action Zone. It re-emphasises the strategic focus and reinforces our mission statement:

“Working together we can reduce inequalities to create a healthier, more prosperous and socially inclusive North & West Belfast”.

The strategic focus of the Health Action Zone is to:

1. Develop effective practice;
2. Impact on mainstream service development and delivery; and
3. Create links between practice and the influence on government policy.

The Action Plan for Phase II of the Health Action Zone has been developed in consultation with statutory agencies, community and voluntary organisations, private sector organisations and partnership boards.

The Plan has evolved as a result of continuous evaluation of programmes and activity, a review of partner organisations' strategic priorities, discussions within Health Action Zone Council, consultation meetings with a broad range of interest groups and communities, and a review and analysis of the first phase Action Plan.

The theme of learning has underpinned the first years of Health Action Zone activity, ensuring a flexible approach to meeting the Health Action Zone's priorities. A Review of Learning, entitled Pathways to Progress, has been published to accompany this document.

The Health Action Zone Phase II Action Plan reinforces Health Action Zone principles, which together with our aim and strategic focus, form the framework for all programme plans.

As part of the Health Action Zone Phase II activity there will be an increased focus on Development Pathways. Pathways have been designed as ways to ensure maximum collaboration and to add value to existing efforts to tackle key areas of social exclusion and health inequality. A Development Pathway can be defined as a collection of activities or individual projects that can be taken together to promote added value in a setting, geographical area or community of interest.



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Seven Development Pathways are included in this Action Plan and are currently at different stages of maturity.

The Action Plan also contains a number of time-limited initiatives, which will be reviewed in light of their potential to contribute to Development Pathways, as well as achievements in their own right.

The Action Plan further reinforces the unique and evolving ways of working that have been developed in the first phase of the North and West Belfast Health Action Zone. Central to this development has been the participation of communities; their views and perspectives have shaped programmes and this will continue to be strengthened in the next phase of activity. As with all partnership working, communication is of paramount importance and Phase II will see a re-emphasis on communication.

All aspects of the Action Plan Phase II will be subject to the same rigorous evaluation and monitoring as has been undertaken for the first period of development. This will further enhance the effectiveness of the work programme.

This Action Plan is not a static document, rather it will continue to be informed and shaped as a direct result of the process of partnership working, it is a living document and carries within it the shared responsibility of all our partners to deliver on the Health Action Zone Mission Statement.

## 2.0 Introduction

In North and West Belfast Health Action Zone statutory, community, voluntary and private sector organisations are committed to working together to tackle inequalities in health within a broad framework of social regeneration (see Appendix I). It is a process of working in partnership to create a better quality of life - a way of working that includes those who are often marginalised, and that focuses on the need to build stability at local level.

The strategic focus of the Health Action Zone is to:

1. Develop effective practice;
2. Impact on mainstream service development and delivery; and
3. Create links between practice and the influence on government policy.

2.1 The designation in 1999 of North and West Belfast as a Health Action Zone recognised the persistent difficult issues faced by local communities: the long experience of extreme levels of economic deprivation, ill health, poverty, lower levels of educational achievement and the impact of the conflict over the past thirty years, which added a further layer of disadvantage. The on-going community tension in interface areas, and the actual level of violence in North and West Belfast, created a further sense of marginalisation within already disadvantaged communities. Set against these serious social and economic factors is the recognition of a rich, vibrant and hard working community sector, which is working together in new ways with a committed statutory sector to achieve common goals. It is this partnership that lies at the heart of the Health Action Zone, that directs work towards addressing social exclusion and poverty, and which has tested new ways of working over the past four year period.

2.2 The Health Action Zone takes a broad social, economic, physical and cultural view of health and wellbeing, one which recognises the importance of the determinants of health. In order to tackle these determinants, or root causes, a holistic, co-ordinated approach is required. Complex problems demand different kinds of solutions - new ways of working. Throughout the first phase of the Health Action Zone the theme of learning has been fundamental, the Health Action Zone having been identified as a "learning community". This principle has been important, as it indicates a willingness to be open about the difficulties as well as the achievements, and highlights the need to explore new approaches,



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in order to develop models of effective working. Learning has been both conceptual and practical in nature and this is what makes the Health Action Zone so exciting - it must go beyond delivering key objectives (as set out in the Action Plan). It is charged with pushing the boundaries of our knowledge and experience in order that we can genuinely contribute to the understanding of complex problems and how they can be addressed effectively.

2.3 This Action Plan draws on the first years of experience and sets out a direction for the next three year period. It is recognised that this is a dynamic process; it is a living plan, influenced and directed by local events, and includes learning which occurs through action. Health Action Zone partners acknowledged from the outset that achieving its goals requires a long-term commitment; it is not simply a plan for the next three years. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's announcement of a second three-year period for the Health Action Zone, further underlined by the Northern Ireland Executive cross-departmental Investing for Health Strategy, recognises this longer timeframe. Indeed, the Health Action Zone itself has been built on the foundation of many years of community development and interagency working in the city for example Belfast Healthy Cities, Quartiers en Crise, local partnerships, and the rich stream of community based initiatives. The policy climate has now shifted significantly in support of this way of working and the Health Action Zone will continue to build on this experience and the creation of a Learning Community over the coming years.

2.4 The Health Action Zone was established with core funding of £150,000 per annum from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The modest scale of funding met only core costs of the Health Action Zone team, in stark contrast to Health Action Zones in England resourced with significant dedicated budgets. While this level of funding has presented practical difficulties for supporting work on the ground, it is also true that from the outset Health Action Zone Council sought to make better use of existing resources which drove closer working relationships. Funding for the Health Action Zone programmes has come from partner organisations, Government departments, independent and european sources. It is significant that the spread of funding has increased dramatically during the first phase of the Health Action Zone; evidence of increased ownership from partners. It has, however, also presented difficulties for the partnership in directly addressing community based needs and real differences in funding

## North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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time scales (see Pathways to Progress for further detail). Ultimately this ability to access and lever mainstream funds offers increased opportunity for sustainability, and has forced attention on influencing mainstream services. Core funding will continue at a level of £165,000 per annum from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for the coming period.



## 3.0 Shaping The Plan

3.1 In 1997 North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust began discussing, with a range of partners, the possibility of North and West Belfast being designated as a Health Action Zone. As a result of wide consultation with statutory agencies, community and voluntary organisations, private sector bodies, and partnership boards, a number of common themes were identified in the first phase Action Plan. A series of meetings and consultation seminars were held to explore the expectations of all interested partners and a number of working groups were established to take forward the development of proposals for the first phase Action Plan. An on-going process of consultation, including a number of large public meetings and a stakeholders' conference, helped make sure the final shape of the first phase Action Plan met with widespread agreement as to the key areas that should be addressed. Since that time there has been on-going discussion and debate within the Health Action Zone about the overall development and the growth in partnership working at all levels. This, together with progress of individual programmes, has helped to ensure the influence of all interested parties in shaping the Health Action Zone. This has been an important inclusive process, set alongside the actual delivery of the first phase 1999-2002 Action Plan.

3.2 The shaping of the content of the current Action Plan has built on this on-going consultation. In addition, a number of specific steps helped prepare the Health Action Zone for the next phase of development:

- an evaluation of the process of partnership working;
- a review and analysis of partner organisations' strategic priorities;
- development of discussion papers for Health Action Zone Council;
- a series of consultation meetings with a wide range of local and community network organisations;
- a review and analysis of the first phase Action Plan; and
- a full consultation on the final draft Action Plan.

3.3 It is clear that the environment of North and West Belfast is constantly changing at a political, social, and organisational level. Change is also rapid within and among partner organisations, including local communities. All organisations have struggled at times to deal with the turbulent political situation within North and



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West Belfast. In particular, short term funding pressures cast a shadow on community organisations and their ability to contribute to long term initiatives such as the Health Action Zone. Against this backdrop the Health Action Zone has endeavoured to create cohesion and a consistent approach.

- 3.4 There have also been important changes taking place within Government policy and the broader political agenda, with the current suspension of devolved local political structures. The Northern Ireland Executive served to highlight issues of social justice, human rights and equality, as well as promote interdepartmental working in order to produce an integrated Programme for Government. The current consultation paper on improving relations in Northern Ireland 'A Shared Future' will be of great importance in establishing a vision for our society in the future and in how we collectively address our divisions.
- 3.5 Specific policies have had particular relevance for the Health Action Zone, indeed the Health Action Zone has been directly involved in their development, such as Promoting Social Inclusion, New TSN and Investing for Health. A more recent development is the link with the Eastern Health and Social Services Board's Health Improvement Plans (part of the cross-cutting Investing for Health Strategy), which seeks to enhance the contribution from a wide range of partners towards improving health and wellbeing throughout the Board's area. Making links between local structures which will deliver the Investing for Health agenda has been important, as well as articulating the contribution of various stakeholders including the developing Healthy Living Centres and the Local Health and Social Care Group. A key role for the Health Action Zone in this environment has been to seek linkages and develop synergy between action at policy, organisational and practice levels. In addition, the Health Action Zone has had ongoing dialogue with a range of other initiatives such as the Belfast Local Strategy Partnership.

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## 4.0 Achievements And Learning Of The First Phase Health Action Zone Plan

4.1 There is much to commend in the first phase of Health Action Zone development. A review of learning from the first phase of Health Action Zone activity in North and West Belfast has recently been published ("Pathways to Progress" 2003). It outlines briefly what the Health Action Zone set out to do, and provides examples of activity and the learning that emerged as a result of these processes. This theme of learning is fundamental, if models of effective working are to be advanced.

4.2 The need to develop integrated, holistic solutions led to the search for a more strategic approach resulting in the concept of Development Pathways, an idea which can genuinely be attributed to the maturing partnership in the Health Action Zone. A development pathway is a series of co-ordinated interventions by different partners all working together, where need is most acute, where change is most feasible, and where opportunities for multi-agency co-operation are greatest. This concept makes clear the "added value" of the Health Action Zone i.e. that the Health Action Zone is more than the sum of its individual parts. It is not focused on isolated projects; rather, it ensures that successful work impacts on mainstream service development, delivery and policy. The experience of the Health Action Zone to date has focused learning on specific pathways as settings for development, schools, geographical areas, and communities of interest. Progress has been made across a range of issues, for example:

- the development of a co-ordinated approach to addressing the needs of Travellers;
- addressing educational underachievement using schools as a resource within local communities;
- addressing the needs of long term unemployed people and their households;
- developing an effective response post-feud in the Greater Shankill community; and
- sharing this learning in relation to ongoing problems in North Belfast.

New approaches have also been developed in relation to specific issues, for example the development of an over-arching and integrated strategy to promote the sexual health and wellbeing of young people, the development and delivery of a young people's health initiative (HYPE),



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the first research in Northern Ireland and Great Britain to examine the impact of fuel poverty on health and wellbeing, and the establishment of pilot programmes, such as the Fresh Fruit in Primary Schools scheme. The Health Action Zone has put in place a range of means to promote good practice and communication, for example, the Child Safety Forum, Information Exchange Meetings, and more recently the Healthy Living Centres Network. All of this work has been premised on joint ownership and joint working between agencies and local communities. The role of the Health Action Zone in brokering and facilitating such sharing is valued by participants. Building links and connecting individuals and organisations has accelerated progress and is recognised as an important component of social capital.

Adopting a community development approach is central to Health Action Zone work as it recognises that the community is at the heart of what we do. A process of community engagement was developed with the community sector, including the establishment of a community engagement group, during the first phase and this will be strengthened during this second phase, exploring new methods and in particular building on the decision to strengthen capacity in partnership boards to support community development approaches to health, alongside the expansion of the Women's Information Group Health Information Workers programme - who are all volunteers - throughout North and West Belfast. A large number of community organisations are involved in the Health Action Zone with an estimated over one hundred actively engaged in programme development.

Evaluation has also been a strong component of the first phase, reinforcing the notion of a learning community. From the outset evaluation plans were developed with programmes which emphasised the action research aspect of the Health Action Zone, rather than as something 'done to' groups. It has been important that there has been the widest examination of learning and knowledge within the Health Action Zone and a number of independent evaluation reports have been undertaken of Health Action Zone programmes and processes of working (see Appendix 2). In addition, an evaluation of the overall impact so far of the Health Action Zone is scheduled for completion in September 2003.

4.3 An analysis of the first phase of the Action Plan also identified a number of characteristics for all Health Action Zone activity. This is now advanced as part of our learning:

Characteristics of Zone working include:

- achieving measurable outputs;
- link to partners' strategic goals;
- avoiding "projectitis" i.e. focusing on project-working in isolation;
- aiming to obtain significant shifts in mainstream partner budgets;
- encouraging shifts in organisational boundaries;
- focusing on the potential for professional flexibility;
- making sure that, wherever possible, front line staff have enhanced delegated powers;
- encouraging community involvement and ownership; and
- maintaining shared accountability.

In addition it is agreed that our work should:

- aim to innovate and aspire towards the leading edge;
- be speedy - obtain results quickly;
- be opportunistic - take advantage of real opportunities to work together;
- be owned jointly by the partnership with clear lead responsibility;
- have a clear image and identity;
- include evaluation, research and analysis from the outset;
- ensure that communication is timely and effective; and
- ensure that shared, collective and individual agendas form the basis of such work.

Such characteristics seek to ensure the link between practice, organisational change, and policy development, influencing the mainstream and clearly articulating the "added value" of the Health Action Zone.

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## CASE STUDY

### Travellers Development Pathway

An important development pathway has focused on addressing the accommodation and health improvements of Travellers through the Travellers Action Group. The multi-agency group includes representatives from statutory, community and voluntary organisations as well as Travellers. The Action Group has focused work on the strategic aims of community development, capital projects (accommodation), health improvements, employability, and prejudice reduction. Progress on these issues has been taken forward and a great deal learned about the value and challenges of working in partnership. For example, while accommodation needs are paramount for the Traveller community, practical delivery on the ground will not take place until later in 2003. However, progress has been made in making sure that Travellers participate in shaping the proposed accommodation, and in positive consultation with the local settled community. The Action Group have worked together for just over three years and made real progress against a range of indicators.

#### Member Organisations:

- Barnardos;
- Belfast City Council;
- Belfast Education and Library Board;
- Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education;
- Belfast Travellers Education and Development Group;
- Belfast Travellers Support Group;
- Clanmil Housing Association;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Department for Employment and Learning;
- LEDU/Invest Northern Ireland;
- North and West Belfast Health Action Zone Team;
- North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust;
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
- Royal Group of Hospitals; and
- West Belfast Partnership Board.

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## Achievements (in brief):

### Education

- Belfast Education and Library Board developed baseline information against which to gauge improvement;
- Increased numbers of young Travellers staying in education (extra support provided for transfer and attendance);
- Development of Alternative Education programme;
- Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education developed family learning and literacy programmes with dedicated resources; and
- Enhanced support for After School programmes.

### Accommodation

- Extensive consultation process with Travellers regarding development of accommodation (due to start autumn 2003);
- Process of consultation with settled community led to successful planning applications;
- Extensive lobbying resulted in improvements to physical condition of existing sites; and
- Comprehensive Accommodation Needs Research Report launched by Northern Ireland Housing Executive that is, current and future accommodation needs.

### Health & Wellbeing

- Multi-disciplinary health and social services team in place;
- Development of innovative Community Health Care programme by Belfast Travellers Education and Development Group based on capacity building of local Traveller women funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety;
- Tailored education programme developed on accident prevention and safety;
- Awareness programme developed which linked Royal Victoria Hospital services and playworkers, young Travellers, and Traveller Support Groups. This will be enhanced with a new outreach programme funded through the Department for Social Development;
- Development and delivery of a tailored New Deal programme that ran for eleven weeks. While ultimately unsuccessful, the learning has been applied to programmes aimed at earlier intervention (evaluation completed);



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- Local Labour Clause included in the development of accommodation, to facilitate the employment of Travellers;
  - Employment of play and childcare workers; and
  - Links developed with West Belfast Economic Strategy.

### Community Development

- Increased support for the work of Traveller Support Groups;
- Informed and shaped Belfast City Council policy on Community Development and Travellers;
- Community development needs for Belfast Travellers identified in 'Combating Exclusion Promoting Inclusion', a report published through the European research project;
- Research underway into sustainable funding for Traveller Support Groups; and
- Save the Children, Traveller Support Groups, and NIPPA Toybox initiative.

### Prejudice Reduction / Communication

- Stage I Mediation training completed by Travellers and settled people;
- Belfast Education and Library Board started promotion of educational materials on cultural awareness issues to primary schools as part of an ongoing plan;
- North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust started awareness raising training for staff in conjunction with Traveller support groups;
- Awareness raising seminar held for members and policy makers of the Citizen Traveller public awareness programme Republic of Ireland;
- Regular provision of information and articles to various media outlets, including airtime on Féile FM, West Belfast community radio; and
- Addressing negative media reporting on a regular basis.

### A wide range of other developments have been noted

- Improved working relationships among groups previously 'poles' apart and now working to a common agenda;
- Two evaluations of the process of partnership working;

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- Regular contributions to consultations on Travellers needs, in particular a comprehensive and jointly agreed response to the final report of the Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group on Travellers;
- Creative and more efficient use of existing facilities, for example Belfast City Council's Glen Road Community Centre facility being used for Barnardos pre-school services;
- Contributions to various research programmes, for example The Institute of Public Health's research on Travellers' health; and
- The framework supports measured risk-taking and problem solving, assisting organisations and individuals drive change forward.

It is clear that the collective efforts of many organisations have been 'pooled' to address a common need creating new and integrated approaches, which build synergy between the various elements.



## 5.0 Health Action Zone Principles

The Health Action Zone is committed to:

- addressing inequalities in health and social exclusion through a partnership of statutory agencies, community, voluntary and private sector organisations within a broad framework of social regeneration;
- facilitating and supporting community participation in all aspects of work;
- ensuring links between practice, local organisations and government policy in order to influence mainstream services and increase the effectiveness of existing policy;
- testing new kinds of local and targeted approaches alongside strategic development;
- transparency and open learning throughout the Health Action Zone Programmes;
- the provision of accurate information and information-sharing amongst all partners;
- building on the work of others and acknowledging their contribution;
- building a learning community within North and West Belfast;
- advancing action based on the best evidence of effective practice;
- promoting social justice and tackling discrimination and prejudice; and
- clear and transparent communication at all levels.

We will seek to articulate our principles via communications standards (see Appendix 3). Those standards will inform the development of communications in implementing all action arising from this plan. Significantly, communication will remain a high priority within and between partner organisations and with a wide range of different public audiences.





## 6.0 Programme Plans

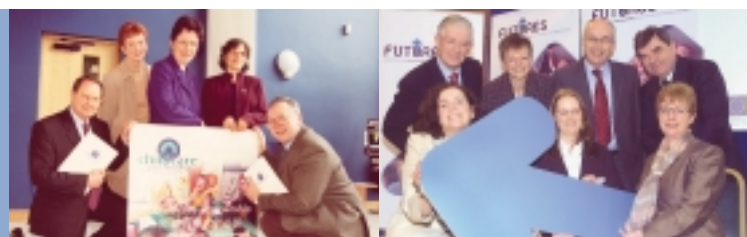
The first phase of the Health Action Zone reinforced the value of Development Pathways as a means of ensuring maximum collaboration, and of adding value to existing effort. A Development Pathway is a collection of activities, or individual projects, that can be taken together to promote added value in a setting, geographical area or community of interest. The second phase will seek to increase linkage between pathways.

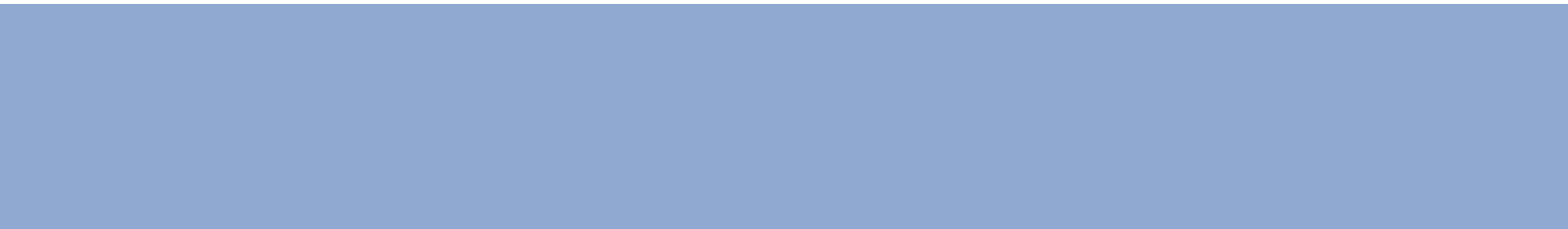
Future activity of the Health Action Zone will concentrate effort on:

- i. Development Pathways, both existing and new, which involve a range of organisations working together with communities in an integrated way, ensuring maximum effectiveness and collaboration;
- ii. Projects, there will remain opportunity for project development, but, it is suggested that this will be time-limited and reviewed in light of the potential to contribute to development pathways; and
- iii. the development of sustainable processes to support the long-term future of Health Action Zone Programmes.

A review and analysis of the first phase plan activity has identified three broad categories: workstreams that should be developed; workstreams that should be dropped; and workstreams that should be moved forward by single agencies, rather than as part of an integrated Health Action Zone programme.

Each area of work is driven by an implementation group, with representatives from a wide range of partners, including local community organisations. In addition, a lead organisation is identified, charged with ensuring delivery of the programme. A detailed implementation plan will be developed, with an individual identified as responsible for leading the initiative and reporting to Health Action Zone Council. Long term anticipated outcomes are identified in the plan but it is recognised that the implementation plan will also progress against a range of intermediate indicators.





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## 7.0 Aim And Strategic Priorities

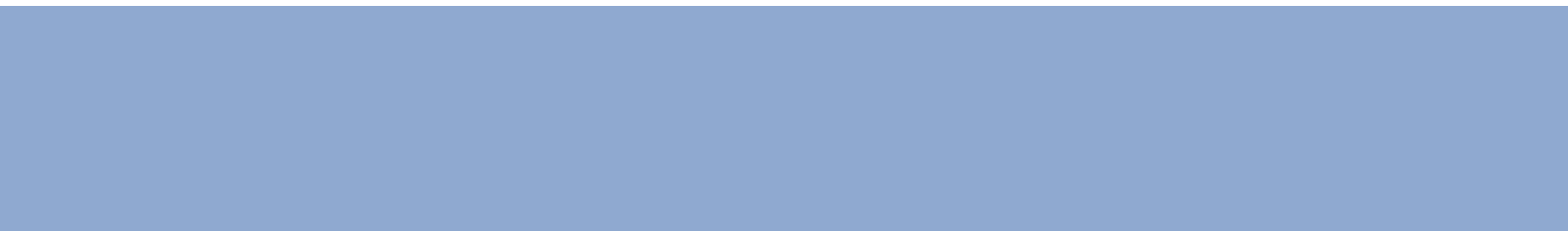
Aim - to reduce inequalities and promote the health, wellbeing and safety of the population of North and West Belfast, through a number of inter-linked strategic priorities:

- Tackling social exclusion, targeting social need, promoting equality and building sustainable communities;
- Supporting early years development;
- Increasing educational opportunities and the quality of educational experiences;
- Increasing the independence and potential of, and improving services for young people; and
- Addressing barriers to employment, promoting opportunities, and strengthening employment skills.

The essential focus of Health Action Zones strategic priorities will be to:

- i. Develop effective practice;
- ii. Impact on mainstream service development and delivery; and
- iii. Create links between practice and the influence on government policy.





## 8.0 Development Pathways

### 8.1 Travellers Development Pathway

Objective - to ensure a multi-agency approach to address the needs of the Travelling community.

#### Proposed Action

- to extend the existing multi-agency Action Plan based on five themes, taking into account the evaluation findings and annual review process.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved living conditions;
- improved health and wellbeing;
- improved educational standards with increased access to employment opportunities;
- improved employability and increased opportunities for income generation;
- improved relations with the settled community;
- sustainability of support organisations; and
- improved service provision across range of agencies.

Lead Organisation: Northern Ireland Housing Executive, together with Travellers, local Traveller support groups and partners in community, voluntary, private and statutory sectors.

### 8.2 Schools Development Pathway

Objective - to address the needs of pupils, parents and communities through the Communities in Schools programme.

#### Proposed Action

- extend and expand the current programme with increased attention given to community participation;
- extend the Breakfast Club initiative and develop a plan for long term development;
- examine models of parental participation operating elsewhere within the Health Action Zone as a potential model for Communities in Schools, building on the model in St Joseph's Primary School;
- develop a model to meet the specific needs of children in primary schools in North Belfast; and



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- progress a pathway linking developments in further and higher education aimed at life long learning, using the Springvale Project as a mechanism.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved attendance rates;
- reduced suspensions/exclusions;
- reduction in number of pupils leaving school with no qualifications;
- improved access to services;
- improved health and wellbeing of pupils; and
- improved relations between schools and local communities.

Lead Organisations: Belfast Education and Library Board, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education together with partners in the community, voluntary, private, statutory sectors, parents and local communities.

### 8.3 Neighbourhood Development Pathway

8.3.1 Objective 1 - to co-ordinate the activity of a range of organisations to address areas of inequality on a geographical/neighbourhood basis.

#### Proposed Action

- continue to develop Greater Shankill 21 and link with the broader Shankill Convention aimed at the regeneration of the Shankill area;
- develop area-based work with other neighbourhoods, linking closely with the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy of the Department for Social Development, Belfast Regeneration Office, the work of the North Belfast Community Action Unit, and the Creating Common Ground Initiative;
- make sure Healthy Living Centres integrate with geographical/neighbourhood-focused activity; and
- make sure links are created between local communities and the development of North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust's new Health and Wellbeing Centres, which aim to place the citizen at the centre of service development and create new kinds of service exchange with social and economic opportunities for communities.

## Anticipated Outcomes

- development of co-ordinated approaches to meet need;
- improved health and wellbeing of communities;
- increased stability within communities;
- increased access to services;
- integrated development with Healthy Living Centres; and
- integrated development with Health and Wellbeing Centres.

Lead Organisations: Belfast Regeneration Office, North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Belfast City Council, and local community organisations.

8.3.2 Objective 2 - to ensure the development of a co-ordinated approach to health and wellbeing in North Belfast.

## Proposed Action

- establish an interagency partnership, which will lead a joint programme to complement the Healthy Living Centre and address outstanding issues identified in the Health Perceptions Study.

## Anticipated Outcome

- greater shared practice;
- improved decision making;
- improved networking;
- improved health and wellbeing; and
- development of model of good practice.

Lead Organisation: North Belfast Partnership Board, together with partners in community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

## 8.4 Long Term Unemployed People Development Pathway

Objective - to explore new ways of addressing the needs of long term unemployed people and their families.

## Proposed Action

- develop the Futures programme, a European Community Initiative (EQUAL), and ensure that lessons from practice influence policy;
- explore the barriers experienced by long term unemployed people and test-bed new approaches;

- 
- explore learning with local networks including the Belfast Local Strategy Partnership, in particular regarding flexible labour markets; and
  - share learning with European partners and disseminate locally.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved understanding about the nature of long term unemployment;
- increased access to employment opportunities for long term unemployed people;
- increased employability;
- improved health and wellbeing; and
- enhanced understanding about the health and social value of employment.

Lead Organisations: North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Department for Employment and Learning, together with partners in the community, voluntary, statutory and private sector organisations.

## 8.5 Integrated Development For Young People Pathway

8.5.1 Objective 1 - to create new ways of meeting the needs of young people and delivering services.

### Proposed Action

- to develop a model of closer integrated service delivery in order to address persistent areas of inequality and disadvantage, in the first instance amongst vulnerable young people; and
- to develop links with Belfast City Council plans for engaging young people.

Lead Organisation: to be agreed by Health Action Zone Council, currently a broad based consortium of voluntary, community, and statutory sectors.

8.5.2 Objective 2 - to co-ordinate the various programmes of activity which aim to promote the sexual health and wellbeing of young people in North and West Belfast, notably, the Strategy to Promote the Sexual Health and Wellbeing of Young People, the Sexual Health Forum, and the HYPE Project.

## Proposed Action

- ensure that the findings of the HYPE Project are used to extend practice and influence mainstream service delivery;
- support the development of the Door Project to address the needs of young people using the city centre;
- identify a clear plan for mainstreaming peer education within the Health Action Zone;
- develop a clear implementation plan for the sexual health strategy; and
- develop a forward plan for the Sexual Health Forum.

## Anticipated Outcomes

- improved health and wellbeing of young people;
- new models of service delivery developed and tested;
- reduction in risk-taking behaviour among young people using the city centre;
- reduction in teenage pregnancy; and
- establishment of a baseline for sexually transmitted infections.

Lead Organisations: North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board, together with partners in community, voluntary and church based organisations.

## 8.6 Early Years Development Pathway

Objective - to ensure better provision of early years support to children in North and West Belfast and highlight the crucial role of early years in child development.

## Proposed Action

- develop a model of intervention and support for early years which builds on the work already being carried out by various organisations and makes more explicit the connections among them. (linked closely to development pathway 8.5).

## Anticipated Outcomes

- improved educational performance of children;
- improved health and wellbeing;
- improved linkage between various service providers; and
- reduction in problem behaviour.

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Lead Organisations: North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board together with a broad range of partners from community, voluntary, statutory sectors and parents.

## 8.7 Mental Health And Wellbeing Development Pathway

8.7.1 Objective - to explore how the mental health and wellbeing needs of Health Action Zone residents can be identified and addressed as part of a community-building process which includes the needs of victims, survivors and ex-combatants.

### Proposed Action

- scope existing and planned programmes in North and West Belfast and make recommendations for future action, including programmes to promote the emotional and psychological wellbeing of young people (suicide and self-harm reduction); and
- identify how mental health and wellbeing can be integrated fully into all other development pathways.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved health and wellbeing;
- improved co-ordination of existing services; and
- development of new service arrangements.

Lead Organisation: to be determined.

## 8.7.2 A Community-Based Strategy For Tackling Drug Misuse

### Proposed Action

- to explore the development of a co-ordinated approach to drugs and alcohol across the Health Action Zone area.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- shared models of good practice across North and West Belfast;
- improved co-ordination of existing services;
- improved linkage with other areas of service development; and
- improved health and wellbeing.

Lead Organisation: to be determined, a broad-based community driven consortium is currently in place.

## 9.0 Projects - Time Limited Initiatives

### 9.1 Fresh Fruit In Primary Schools Programme

Objective - to improve nutrition, dental health, social skills and behaviour of children in P1 and P2 classes in 20 pilot primary schools.

#### Proposed Action

- review findings of evaluation at the end of year one. Possible extension and roll out of programme.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- increased consumption of fruit by children in primary schools;
- improved dental health;
- improved nutrition;
- improved co-ordination of health promotion within primary school curriculum; and
- improved social and educational skills in children participating in programme.

Lead Organisations: North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board, together with partners in schools, communities, parents and local business.

### 9.2 Active Living Project

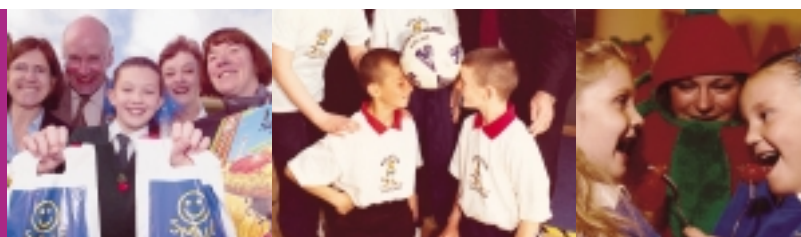
Objective - to promote physical activity with a range of different priority groups in North and West Belfast.

#### Proposed Action

- programme to be developed and delivered through increasing ownership from partner organisations. Long term plans dependent on review and findings of evaluation; and
- develop close links with Belfast City Council plans for promoting active living.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- increased numbers participating in a range of physical activity;
- increased number of tutors from the local community trained;



- 
- increased knowledge and awareness among children of a range of health issues; and
  - increased attention to policy development, for example, smoking within informal community settings.

Lead Organisations: Consortium including Health Promotion services of North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Royal Group of Hospitals, Mater Hospital Trust, Belfast City Council, together with community organisations.

### 9.3 Childhood Asthma Project

Objective - to explore the development of a co-ordinated approach to improving the health and wellbeing of children (and their families) with asthma.

#### Proposed Action

- to design a research project which will explore and measure the impact of a holistic intervention to create “healthier homes”.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved health and wellbeing of children with asthma;
- improved quality of life for parents of children with asthma;
- reduction in smoking;
- reduction in use of medication; and
- improved household energy efficiency.

Lead Organisations: Consortium including Bryson House, Northern Ireland Electricity, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Belfast City Council, and North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust.

### 9.4 Enhancing Speech And Language Skills

Objective - to improve the communication skills of children in Key Stage I in pilot primary schools in partnership with parents. The project is named COMET - Communication and Education Together.

#### Proposed Action

- to develop a pilot programme with participating schools and share outcomes with policy makers.

## Anticipated Outcomes

- increased teacher confidence in identifying children with speech and language difficulties in the classroom;
- increased understanding of effective interventions to improve communication skills of children in Key Stage I;
- increased collaboration between teachers and speech and language therapists;
- partnership working with parents;
- development of a resource pack for teachers, classroom assistants, supporting children with speech and language difficulties; and
- improvement in literacy levels.

Lead Organisations: North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board, together with local schools, parents and community organisations.

## 9.5 Community Safety Partnerships

Objective - to improve safety among the citizens of the Health Action Zone.

### Proposed Action

- to contribute to the action plan of the recently established Community Safety Partnership for Belfast and to support local project development; and
- to explore linkage with the health and wellbeing of older people.

## Anticipated Outcomes

- improved safety and sense of security amongst residents;
- increased awareness of preventative measures;
- establishment of number of safety schemes; and
- reduction in crime levels.

Lead Organisations: Belfast City Council, together with a broad range of partners in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

## 9.6 Enhancing Parenting Support

Objective - to enhance and expand good practice in parenting support programmes.

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### Proposed Action

- build on the successful pilot programmes (St Joseph's Primary School, Surestart, Barnardos and Parenting Matters) to distill effective practice; and
- support the development of networks and other means of sharing good practice.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- increased understanding of effective practice;
- increased self esteem of parents;
- increased learning gains for children;
- improved behaviour of children; and
- improved relationships between parents and children.

Lead Organisations: Belfast Education and Library Board and North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, together with partners in the community and statutory sectors, local schools and parents.

# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## 10.0 Ways Of Working

A number of processes are central to the Health Action Zone and have been used to progress action in a range of areas. The following key processes are proposed:

### 10.1 Community Participation Process

Objective - to strengthen community participation throughout Health Action Zone work.

#### Proposed Action

- review community participation in Health Action Zone programmes;
- strengthen the role and function of the Community Engagement Group, so that it becomes embedded as a core part of Health Action Zone decision making;
- support community participation through enhancing capacity in the area Partnership Boards;
- form a support network of community development workers throughout the Health Action Zone;
- make sure that best use is made of community development resources across partners through an agreed joint plan;
- make sure community participation is an integral part of all Health Action Zone schemes;
- support the development of an extended Health Information Workers scheme (volunteers) throughout Health Action Zone (lay participation in health issues);
- develop new models of partnership at local neighbourhood level; and
- contribute to the debate on sustainable development within the community sector.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- more coherent community participation throughout Health Action Zone;
- more effective decision making;
- more effective use of resources; and
- increased stability in local communities.

Lead Organisation: Health Action Zone Team, North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, area Partnership Boards, together with support from a broad range of Health Action Zone partners.



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## 10.2 TG2 (Theme Group 2 On Young People)

Objective - to ensure the engagement of young people, and agencies working with them, in order that key issues of need are addressed within the Health Action Zone.

### Proposed Action

- clear work plan agreed including linkage with relevant Development Pathways, and Belfast City Council plans for engaging young people.
- Resources secured to support the ongoing development of this process.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved decision making;
- improved sensitivity to young people's needs; and
- models of young people's engagement developed and tested.

Lead Organisations: TG2, a broad based group made up of representatives of community, voluntary, statutory sectors and young people, and the Health Action Zone Team.

## 10.3 Child Safety Forum

Objective - to bring together all those within North and West Belfast who have a role in promoting child accident prevention and child protection.

### Proposed Action

- to implement all aspects of project plan, in particular to strengthen networking and sharing of good practice; and
- to strengthen links with Development Pathways, and the Community Safety Partnership.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved child safety;
- improved information sharing and networking;
- improved access to information; and
- model of good practice rolled forward.

Lead Organisation: Belfast City Council, together with a broad range of partners in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

## 10.4 Healthy Living Centres Network

Objective - to create a means for sharing information and learning among the eight Healthy Living Centres within the Health Action Zone and the two in other parts of the city.

### Proposed Action

- to develop a clear plan for the Network and the proposed gains for all partners.

### Anticipated Outcome

- shared learning and experience amongst Healthy Living Centres;
- more effective decision making and experience amongst Healthy Living Centres;
- maximising use of resources;
- increased support for Health Living Centres from public sector partners; and
- enhancing opportunities for influencing policy and practice.

Lead Organisations: Health Action Zone Team, North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, together with Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education and a broad range of community partners.

## 10.5 Communication

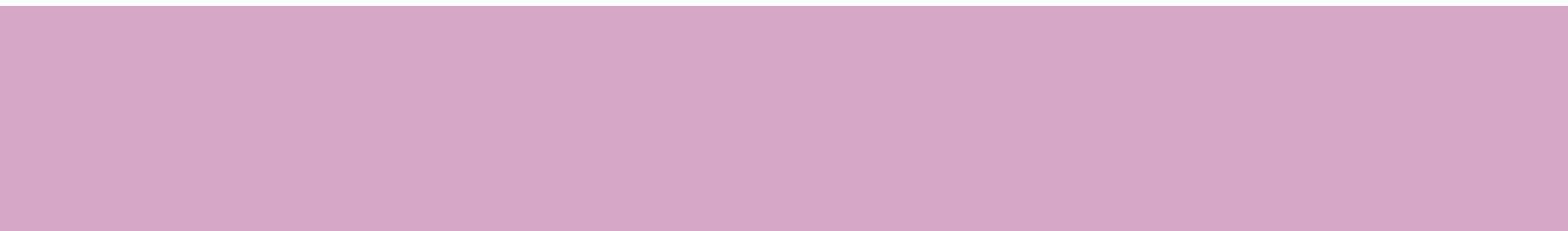
Objective - to provide clear and accurate information about the Health Action Zone, and ensure clear communication throughout all programmes, Development Pathways and initiatives.

### Proposed Action

- communication strategy rolled forward.

### Anticipated Outcomes

- improved understanding of Health Action Zone;
- increased awareness of Health Action Zone amongst the general population; and
- better use of existing resources of partners.



## 11.0 Projects Not Continued from First Phase Action Plan

### 11.1 Increasing Support For Adults Who Wish To Stop Smoking

Rationale: it has not been possible to develop any added value in the area of smoking cessation. It is proposed that smoking prevention and cessation remains a central part of other health promotion initiatives and continues as a priority for North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, in conjunction with a number of other players, in particular with general practice.

### 11.2 One Stop Shop

Rationale: This scheme aimed to adapt the one stop model to involve health and social care professionals in the exploration of training, employment and benefit options for those with disabilities and mental health problems. The expected initiative did not progress at the pace or manner originally conceived. This work will, however, be included in the Long Term Unemployed People Development Pathway.

### 11.3 Enhancing Communication Skills In Children Under 5 Years Of Age

Rationale: Project failed to progress due to recruitment difficulties. However a smaller pilot programme will be included in the next phase plan as identified under 9.4.

### 11.4 Early Years Bureau

Rationale: Failed to attract funding. Context has now changed with a central focus on Sure Start, implying that the original concept has become less important. In addition, the District Childcare Partnership has evolved to lead development in this field.



## 12.0 Evaluation and Research

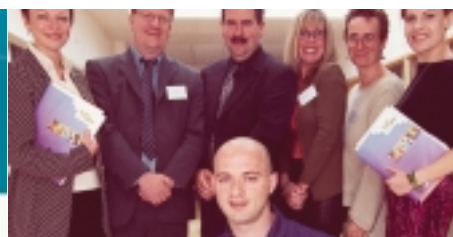
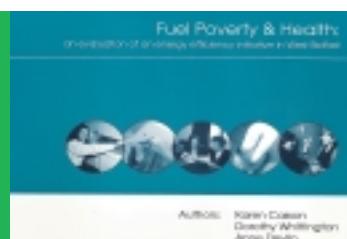
In the first phase of activity the Health Action Zone consistently encouraged research and evaluation of all programmes. This next phase will continue to build a research programme for the Health Action Zone and, in particular, ensure that the learning from evaluation studies is captured and used to influence future development. To a large degree the Health Action Programme as a whole can be considered Action Research.

### Proposed Action

- commission an evaluation of partnership working and agree a framework for the overall Health Action Zone evaluation.

In addition, a programme of research will be taken forward and is likely to include:

- impact of automatic external defibrillators (a means of emergency resuscitation);
- special support interventions with disadvantaged pregnant women (MOMENTS); and
- the impact of a range of Health Action Zone programmes.



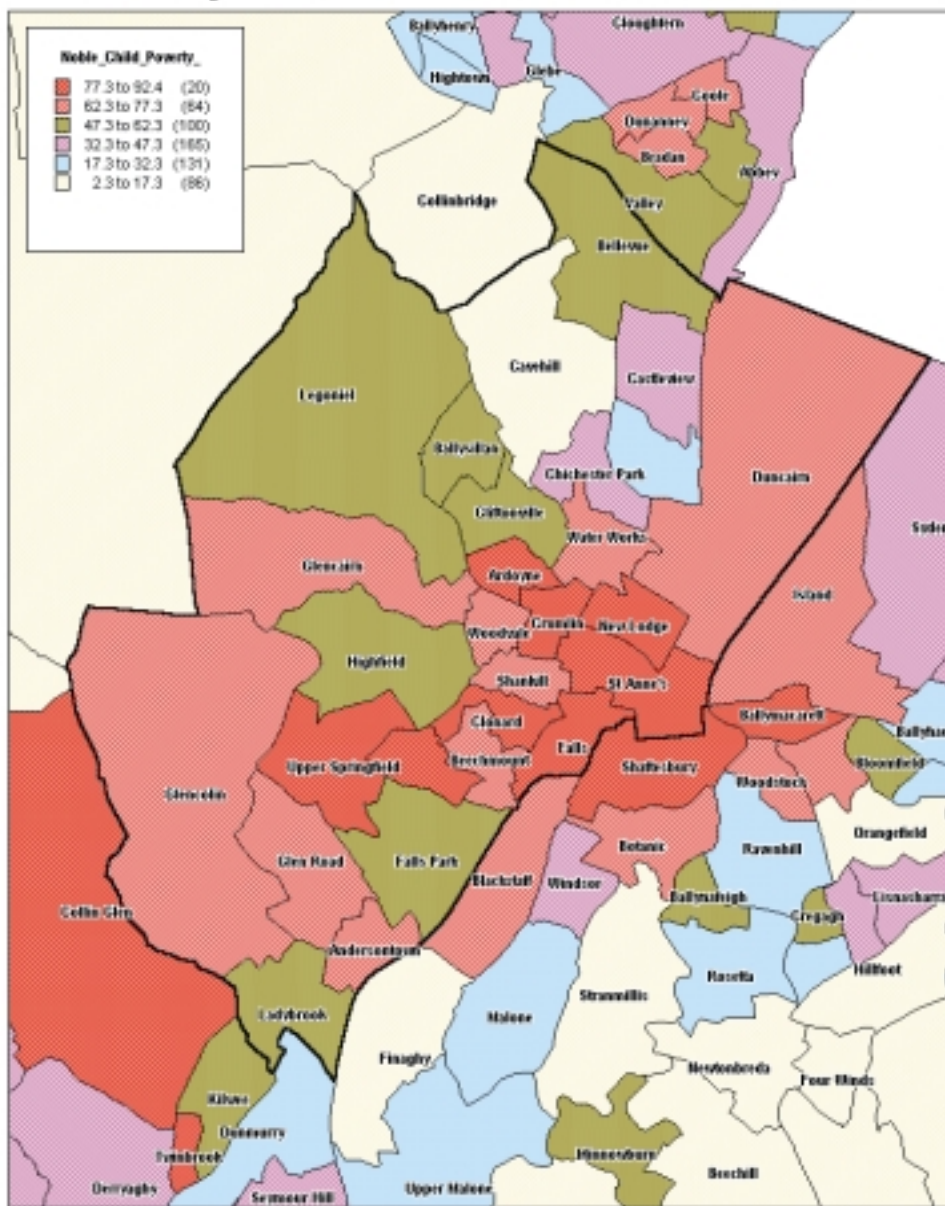


# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

## 13.0 Information Database

The Health Action Zone information database which has been established using information from partners, will be extended and used to provide information on a number of specific areas that relate to Development Pathways. Further occasional papers will be published using the database. Steps will be taken to ensure that access will be increased through use of the Health Action Zone website and other methods.

### Child Poverty\_Noble in North & West Belfast





## 14.0 Governance

The model of working in the Health Action Zone offers a new form of governance - one which is premised on active community participation, citizenship, and partnership with and between public and private sector organisations. Health Action Zone works to use its collective power to inform and influence mainstream service development and delivery.

The Health Action Zone Council is the decision making body of the Health Action Zone. It has responsibility for providing strategic direction, producing policy, identifying priorities, approving the overall Health Action Zone programme, authorising expenditure of Health Action Zone funds, and overseeing the monitoring process.

A number of sub-committees of Council are also in place to address research, evaluation, and communication, as well as an Executive Group which, together with the Health Action Zone Leader, ensures the overall implementation of the Action Plan.

An agreed lead organisation is accountable to Health Action Zone Council for the development and delivery of programmes, for leading the broad based implementation groups, with an identified individual appointed as the operational lead. Accountability is, however, also shared with government departments in order to ensure that impacts are used to influence mainstream policy. This requires an ongoing dialogue with policy makers, and this aspect will be increasingly important in the second phase of the Health Action Zone. The Health Action Zone will initiate a series of discussions with government departments in order to build a shared view of key cross-cutting activities, their implications for policy, and funding

The Health Action Zone Leader carries responsibility for the Health Action Zone team which acts to facilitate and enable progress at all levels of Health Action Zone operations - to inform policy, to support, co-ordinate and drive forward action within the Health Action Zone, as well as contribute to the continual development of new ideas. They work to support a number of implementation groups, which are led by partner organisations.



## 15.0 Conclusion

This Action Plan is not a static document, rather it will continue to be informed and shaped as a direct result of the process of partnership working - it is a living document and carries within it the shared responsibility of all our partners to deliver on the Mission Statement. It is ambitious, we will test new ideas, and in doing so we will learn how to develop integrated approaches which will change the mainstream in order to address complex needs.





# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## APPENDIX 1: List of Health Action Zone Partners

Belfast City Council  
Belfast Education & Library Board  
Belfast Institute of Further & Higher Education  
Belfast Regeneration Office  
Business in the Community  
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools  
Department for Employment & Learning  
Eastern Health & Social Services Board  
Greater Shankill Partnership  
North & West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust  
North Belfast Community Action Unit  
North Belfast Partnership  
Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
Royal Group of Hospitals / Mater Hospital Trust / Belfast City Hospital Trust  
Social Security Agency  
University of Ulster  
West Belfast Partnership Board



# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## APPENDIX 2: List of Health Action Zone Evaluations

November 2000	Baseline Evaluation of North and West Belfast Health Action Zone Partnership Proteus Training Ltd.
May 2001	Evaluation of Travellers Action Group Northern Ireland Housing Executive
August 2002	Fuel Poverty and Health: an evaluation of an energy efficiency initiative in West Belfast University of Ulster
August 2002	Communities in Schools - Interim evaluation Quaesitum  Communities in Schools - Final evaluation (June 2003)
November 2002	Evaluation of Community Drugs Strategy Research and Evaluation Services
February 2003	Evaluation of the HYPE project Community Evaluation Northern Ireland
May 2003	Fresh Fruit Pilot Scheme Evaluation 1 Regional study on overall impact of scheme Social and Market Research (Commissioned by DHSSPS)
May 2003	Fresh Fruit Pilot Scheme Evaluation 2 Regional study on qualitative aspects of scheme PricewaterhouseCoopers (Commissioned by DHSSPS)
June 2003	Evaluation of partnership working of the Travellers Action Group Institute of Public Health in Ireland
June 2003	Evaluation of Breakfast Clubs Central Survey Unit of NI Statistics and Research Agency
June 2003	Evaluation of Parenting Support Initiative St Joseph's Primary School Eamonn Keenan

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Autumn 2003    The Greater Shankill 21 Initiative  
Community Evaluation Northern Ireland

Forthcoming Evaluations:

Evaluation study of the overall impact of North and West Belfast  
Health Action Zone

A Study of Partnership Working  
Institute of Public Health in Ireland

# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

## APPENDIX 3: Health Action Zone Communications Standards

Standard	Principle	Action Required
Timely	Communications are delivered when they are needed, when they are of most use to the recipient and when they can be most effective.	Each communication method/channel (for example press release, minutes, and agenda) has an agreed time scale for issue.
Accurate	Communications carry correct, precise information.	Each corporate communication should be checked as a matter of routine by the issuer and a second member of the HAZ Central Team/Partner organisation.
Clear	Communications must be in an easily understood format.	Plain English principle of making all communications appropriate for the audience adopted - all communications to external audiences to be cleared by Communications Manager/Partner Communications Manager.
Appropriate	Communications channels/methods must be selected for the appropriate audience.	An audience - from the audience groups in this communications strategy - must be selected for each communication channel/methods or a new audience group created.
Two-way	Communications must be designed in such a way to allow interactivity with the intended audience.	Where possible a 'return' channel/method must be integrated into each communication.
Measurable	Communications must be evaluated for effectiveness.	Objectives to be set for each non-administrative communications, and used as a measurement.



# North and West Belfast Health Action Zone

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## APPENDIX 4: List of Health Action Zone team members

Mary Black	Health Action Zone Leader
Caroline Bloomfield	Community Development Worker
Lisa Cahill	Office Manager
Heather Lightbody	Personal Secretary
Elaine McCarthy	Programme Co-ordinator
Jonathan Traynor	Communications Manager (part-time)

