



# **BALLYBEEN IMPROVEMENT GROUP**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2016 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

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## Background:

Ballybeen is located on the outskirts of East Belfast in Castlereagh Borough Council and is part of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area and the East Belfast Constituency. In 2015, as part of the Reform of Public Administration Ballybeen became part of the newly formed Lisburn City and Castlereagh District Council. Ballybeen lies within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; the South Eastern Education and Library Board; within the PEACE III cluster of Lisburn; and the East Belfast Community Development Agency is the local Community Development Network.

Ballybeen has a population of 7,259 people and comprises 3,205 households. It was identified by DSD in 2007 as an Area At Risk.

Ballybeen Improvement Group has been active in its current form since 2006 and consists of an amalgam of statutory, voluntary and church organisations from the area.

BIG's mission is: ***“To create and sustain a vision and identity for Ballybeen as a self-sufficient progressive community and place to live.”***

BIG's membership includes representatives from: Lisburn/Castlereagh Borough Council, PSNI, Brooklands Primary School, Dundonald High School, Brooklands Youth Centre, NIHE, Health Trust, Dundonald Methodist Church, Christ Church, St Mary's Church, Ballybeen Women's Centre, Salvation Army, Ballybeen Action Group Initiative Trust, Ballybeen Men's Health and Motivation Group, Dungoyne FC, 43<sup>rd</sup> Old Boys, UUP, Dundonald Bowling Club & the Jubilee Allotments.

## Funding:

Ballybeen Improvement Group is funded by the Department for Social Development under the 'Areas at Risk' programme.

The Areas at Risk Pilot programme was established in 2006 to intervene in areas at risk of slipping into a spiral of decline.

Ballybeen was identified as an Area at Risk under Phase 2 announced by Minister Margaret Ritchie in 2007. The programme's key objectives are to:

- reduce the level, frequency and impact of interface violence within the community;
- increase levels of economic activity within the targeted areas;
- stabilise targeted areas to the point that the area is either no longer considered as an 'area at risk', or that the risk of the area slipping into decline is prevented;
- increase community cohesion and capacity;
- strengthen community infrastructure in those areas where it is weak; and
- achieve a more sustainable approach to community participation and development.

**Context:**

Working class communities experience some of the worst multiple deprivations anywhere in Northern Ireland. Many of the estates languish in wards that are in the top ten percent of the most deprived in Northern Ireland, with others lying in the next eleven to twenty percent. The level of deprivation across working class communities is further complicated due to the fact that some smaller pockets of deprivation are 'hidden' amongst the top ten percent of the most affluent wards in Northern Ireland.

Ballybeen is an area experiencing high levels of deprivation, that tends to become masked by its more affluent surrounding areas, but recognised as a designated 'area at risk' of slipping into decline, Ballybeen continues to experience a lot of the following features.

- Weak community infrastructure and fragmentation
- A lack of community cohesion and little sense of community collaboration
- Low self-esteem and a lack of confidence
- Low levels of educational achievement
- Mental ill-health (including stress, anxiety and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and other problems associated with poor health
- The need for Essential Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- A range of community safety issues
- Poor health and a reliance on prescription drugs; in particular there may be a prevalence of mental health problems (depression, stress-related, self-harm and suicides)
- Drug and alcohol abuse and misuse
- Low levels of community leadership and a need for capacity building
- A lack of mixed tenure housing and a need for additional social housing (particularly for young people wishing to leave the parental home and older people seeking either a smaller home or accommodation on one level)
- Poor relations with the local Police service
- Barriers to seeking and gaining employment
- Poor physical environment, due for example to litter, dumping, or stray dogs
- Inadequate service delivery to meet need; in part due to a lack of knowledge about those services that are available and how to access them
- A lack of facilities – for example a need for sports facilities, opportunities for young people, and local shops.

This list is by no means exhaustive; but indicates the wide range of issues that need to be taken into account by projects such as BIG.

## **APPROACH TO THE REPORT**

The requirements of this report, as outlined by BIG are to:

- Record activities undertaken by BIG over the past 10 months
- Gain feedback from organisations/stakeholders/members with who BIG has worked to identify the impact of interventions, programmes and activities.
- Present and analyse the extent to which the original objectives have been met.
- Make recommendations for the future direction of BIG, and the medium to long-term future.

In evaluating we will make use of the following documentation:

- The original application for funding for BIG and the subsequent action plan.
- The BIG development plan published in June 2013
- Staff Progress to DSD.
- Intervention records
- Minutes of Board/Staff meetings.
- Minutes of relevant sub-groups 1) Sport, Health & Wellbeing 2) Youth, Education & Employment
- Feedback from key stakeholders
- 'Think Big' community magazines
- Governance documentation produced by BIG
- AGM minutes/reports



## Community Development & Community Engagement

All of the work of Ballybeen Improvement Group (BIG) is founded on community development principals. Because BIG is an umbrella organisation comprised of community/voluntary & statutory sector membership, it is seen as having a pivotal role in developing improved community cohesion, directing increased community engagement & supporting community regeneration and community planning.

*"BIG's name was put forward for the Lisburn & Castlereagh Mayors Awards 2016-2017 under the 'bringing communities together' category; on the basis that BIG are a pivotal asset towards creating a more informed, engaged & cohesive community infrastructure."*

*LCCC Representative*

BIG has worked with over 24 community groups in the Ballybeen area. Workers involvement and intervention has depended very much on the needs of the community. They have also worked supporting inexperienced community groups, for example helping them to develop a constitution, looking at the role of the management committee, or supporting groups writing applications for funding. Intervention records have shown that the development worker has spent in excess of 100 hours assisting individual member groups on a range of tasks from administrative, governance, advocacy, advice and community development needs.

*"The development worker has come into our committee on an advisory capacity and has helped in professionalising our approach, with practical help, advice and assistance within easy reach, giving a lot of time towards our group's development, we are undoubtedly in a strengthened position due to BIG's intervention & support"*

*Ballybeen Men's Motivational Group*

BIG has worked with communities to develop, build and sustain networks with other community organisations, and with the voluntary, public and statutory sectors. Through engaging people from the community committees and the existing sub-groups, which also have representation from these sectors, communication is taking place. The weak infrastructure is being challenged through increasing community cohesion and collaborative working.

This has included much developmental work on ASB Clinics with both the PSNI/NIHE engaged in these, as well as weekly Advice & Assistance Clinics for the public/local residents so we can advocate on their behalf, with initial discussions on-going around the creation of a 'housing providers forum' to create protocols across a platform of providers to deal with ASB on a more collective and constructive manner.

Our development worker has also been accepted onto the Lisburn & Castlereagh Peace 4 Partnership as a social partner and plans to keep local groups informed & engaged on the opportunities this presents.

*"The BIG team fed into the consultation process for LCCC Peace IV Action Plan and attended open consultation as well as co-design meetings. BIG's Development Worker is a Social Partner on the Peace IV Partnership representing the elements of the 3 themes under Peace IV; Children & Young People, Shared Space and Services and Building Positive Relations. Funding under the Peace programme has been earmarked for projects in Ballybeen under these 3 themes including youth leadership, Women, Reimaging areas, Shared space, Faith-based, Sport, Art, key Institutions etc."*

*Niamh O'Carolan  
Peace Programme Manager*

This community development/community engagement approach is best highlighted by the following:

On the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016, our Sport, Health & Wellbeing sub-group, in partnership with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Otium Sport & Leisure Consultancy; held a community consultation evening at Brookland Youth Club, in relation to our plans for a 3g pitch & facilities to regenerate the football pitches at the centre of the Estate.

This event was attended by over 100 local residents who contributed to the design of the facility & the proposed management and usage of the facility. A Sports Development Plan & Business Case is now well advanced.

Other consultations & advocacy continue around the Ballyoran & Dungoyne Parks to create improved local play spaces.



Community consultation on Brooklands pitch re-development



Work beginning on the Ballyoran Play Park

*"The BIG team, with its Sport, Health & Wellbeing sub-group taking a lead role, and supported by its Board of Directors, contributed to the community consultation process that occurred, assisting us with gaining access to and maximising participation amongst; local residents, community groups, potential user groups & other key stakeholders"*

## Highlighted Projects & Interventions:

### Volunteering Development Initiative

The need to engage and support more volunteers was identified by BIG as a key factor to support the development, regeneration, and sustainability of communities and an action plan developed from this recognition, which placed volunteer appreciation as the oil that sustains voluntary action

BIG recognised the challenges placed on volunteers, the need to avoid placing excessive demands on volunteers, and the appreciation deficit (i.e lack of recognition given to volunteers). A baseline audit of volunteers across the Ballybeen area was undertaken, providing a database of volunteers across the 20 groups comprising BIG. Volunteers were invited to the volunteer awards event & net-working dinner, and were asked to bring someone with them who might be interested in volunteering, as a built in recruitment mechanism.

The work of volunteers directly feeds into the delivery mechanism of the BIG; and people are adamant that volunteering has a professional and important role to play. Having identified the volunteers training needs, we have agreed a programme of training.

"BIG is aware of the value of volunteers, and recognises that volunteers are vital to rebuilding communities. They have looked at the necessary structures and support needed; and identified innovative ways to recruit more volunteers & reinvigorate how people look at volunteering."

*Local Volunteer*



## Building statutory relationships

There was a distinct lack of resident engagement with the PSNI across Ballybeen, indeed this was highlighted in the 2013 development plan where residents identified the need for more visible patrols and PSNI ASB surgeries to deal with what was identified as a high perception of crime/ASB, but with low actual crime/ASB. Residents had minimal respect or trust with regard to the work and role of the PSNI. BIG have been developing contacts and networks with the PSNI and entering into dialogue with the community. Monthly ASB clinics with the PSNI/NIHE have been held in the BIG offices, and a 'third party reporting' approach has been developed; whereby residents will report burglaries and criminal incidents to BIG who in turn will inform the Police. The Police then report back on how this has been dealt with and any outcome. The community Police Officers are welcome in the community. Further engagement has taken place between the PSNI/PCSP/Local community groups on the location of the drugs bin with a view to re-locating this to a more suitable location where usage can be maximised.



This ASB Clinics, though poorly attended due to what is regarded as a community 'trust deficit', have since morphed into an idea for a 'housing providers' forum' with discussions on-going. The idea is that the platform of housing providers across the area can come together and develop joint working protocols for dealing with ASB alongside the Community & Statutory sector. This is being led by NIHE, and was an idea that emerged from the ASB Clinics as a next step. The PSNI have been supportive of this concept.

*"BIG continue to support the work of the Housing Executive. Issues raised by residents are continuously signposted on to ourselves, and we have developed relationships that are becoming more strategically relevant."*

*NIHE Representative*

*"I have found my work with the Development Worker at Ballybeen Improvement Group invaluable. With the projects that are currently being taken forward by the group it is important to have a capable and passionate member of staff. Dealing with statutory agencies as John has, has ensured the group have a voice."*

Councillor Sharon Skillen

"As the Neighbourhood Sergeant for Lisburn and Castlereagh City I would like to draw attention to the current excellent partnership relationship that the PSNI enjoy with Ballybeen Improvement Group (BIG).

The Local Neighbourhood Policing Team have been working in partnership with Community Worker, and the other committee members of 'BIG' on various projects, designed to improve local peoples quality of lives, and keeping people safe. We have found 'BIG' to be a very effective group through which to engage with the local communities within the wider Ballybeen/Dundonald area. This working in partnership is extremely valuable in tackling crime and the prevention of crime within the Ballybeen/Dundonald area, as can be evidenced in the reduction of incidents of recorded ASB and crime within Ballybeen between 2016-2017. We would hope to maintain and enhance this relationship throughout 2017-2018."

Sgt John Hanna  
PSNI NPT

## **Inter-community Football**

On the basis that areas like Ballybeen, even though geographically are far away from the Lower Newtownards Road interfaces, this area can all too readily be viewed as part of an 'interface corridor' that too readily feeds into the interface problem, and with anecdotal evidence suggesting that many young people come from outside of the initial interface area to contribute to the problem, the BIG Development Worker, in partnership with Dungoyne FC, were to organise an August cross-community football tournament.

Having accessed funding of £1,500 through the PCSP/DOJ Priority Youth Interventions, a tournament was held during the entire month of August.

This tournament was attended by 34 teams in total, with 9 of these teams having a cross-community or mixed religion profile, and altogether 396 young people directly engaged during the project.

### Teams in attendance

Coleraine (mixed religion)  
Portadown (mixed - + numerous teams/ages)  
Holywood (mixed religion)  
Rosario (South Belfast - mixed religion)  
Carryduff (mixed religion - + numerous teams/ages)  
Ards Academy  
Clonduff (east belfast community club)  
Dungoyne (Ballybeen club + numerous teams/ages)  
Larne  
Doyle (short strand – exclusively Catholic religion)  
St Oliver Plunkett (west belfast – exclusively Catholic religion - numerous teams/ages)  
Newtownabbey  
Abbey Villa (North Down/Millisle - numerous teams)

Carrick  
Portavogie (North Down)  
Ridgeway (East Belfast)  
Barn (Carrickfergus)  
Immaculata (Catholic religion – West Belfast)  
Sydenham (East Belfast) Glendowan (West Belfast)

**Assessment from PSNI:**

*“Overall ASB levels over the summer months certainly appear to have been low/very low in the Ballybeen area with an average of 1 incident per 3.5 days. This against the background of an expected spike in ASB during the summer holidays. August had the lowest number of ASB incidents over the summer with a 37% reduction over July.”*

*Constable Michael Gibson PSNI Neighbourhood Officer*

*“I fully supported BIG’s youth football tournament over the summer months. I knew this would have a positive impact on ASB across the Ballybeen/Dundonald area and allow young people the opportunity to build positive relations with the PSNI, engage in positive activity and enable them to play an active role in their community. This project also had immeasurable impacts on a wider basis given the range of cross-community teams involved.”*

*Sharon Skillen Scott*

*Local Councillor*



**‘BIG HELP’ – advice & assistance clinic**

Following requests from residents who had been calling into the BIG office to see if we could help with issues/problems they were experiencing, our development worker was encouraged to open a ‘BIG HELP’ clinic every Tuesday from 10am-1pm.

There have been 22 clients that have passed through our offices with a variety of issues, some of these we have signposted onto other agencies and others we were able to deal with by enlisting advocacy partners, with many of these now resolved and only 4 cases on-going and awaiting resolution. There have been approximately 5 hrs spent on issues raised relating

to each client, giving a total of 100 hours of residents focussed interventions.

The typical issues have included: weeds on public footpaths causing a safety issue for elderly residents, bin collections late, housing allocation issues etc.

Due to confidentiality & data protection issues we cannot provide a comprehensive breakdown of the intervention records, but we will highlight 2 key successes of these clinics.

### Case Story 1

A resident, who was living with his elderly Mother in a house that was unsuitable for their needs, was trying to get housing locally for nearly 2 years but due to having low points had been unable to get an offer that suited their needs. This situation was now causing undue stress for the elderly Mother concerned.

BIG was approached and enlisted the help of local Cllr Sharon Skillen to advocate on this resident's behalf.

After contact with the NIHE reps, this person was re-assessed and duly re-appointed with increased housing points awarded and they received an offer of a local house within a period of 2 weeks, which was accepted.

### Case Story 2

BIG was approached by a neighbour in relation to a 77yr old elderly resident who had been living with no central heating/hot water for almost 2 weeks due to a broken boiler, with only a blow heater during what was a weather cold-snap.

BIG reps and local Cllr Skillen contacted the NIHE about this issue, with the NIHE sending a contractor out the next day to install a new boiler.

"I approached the BIG worker about several issues, and have found them eager to advocate on my behalf, offering a professional approach and following up on any complaints & concerns I have raised."

*Local Resident*



## **Youth Education & Employment sub-group**

There have been 5 bi-monthly meetings of this sub-group during the last year, with approx. 14 members attending from various agencies, including: Inspire Business Centre, Ballybeen Women's Centre, Gems NI, Include Youth, The Princes Trust, NIHE, Dundonald High School, Charter NI & People 1<sup>st</sup>.

Membership continues to grow with new member groups such as the Hollywood Rd Jobs & Benefits Office Employer Liaison Officer for East Belfast recently becoming involved and an invite issued to the NIHE's new community relations Officer.

Here's what our members say:

*"Taking part in the Ballybeen Improvement Group bi-monthly meetings has been extremely beneficial in terms of promoting The Prince's Trust upcoming programmes for 16-24 year olds in addition to our Exploring Enterprise programme for 18-30 year olds. It has also been informative for discovering the various programmes available through other agencies attending these meetings. I have made links with outreach workers from other agencies and have been able to refer young people to these programmes."*

*Bernie Diver  
Princes Trust*

*"The existence of Ballybeen Improvement Group has enhanced awareness of and access to services for the community"*

*Hazel Legge  
UUP Cllr*

### **a. Sport, Health & Well-being sub-group**

There have been 12 meetings of this sub-group in the last year, attended by member groups from Brooklands Primary School, Ballybeen Action Group Initiative Trust, The Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, with several representatives attending from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. This sub-group were successful in getting the proposed 3g pitch & facilities included the Peace 4 action plan, guiding its development through the LCCC Leisure Committee, and receiving full Council approval for the regeneration plans in June 2016. The sub-group are currently engaged with Otium Sports & Leisure Consultancy on developing a business plan/sports development plan, following a community consultation evening.

*"It has been a great pleasure to be included in the BIG Group this year in my new role as Principal of Brooklands Primary School. I have received the very warmest of welcomes from everyone involved and look forward to working with the group during the coming months and years."*

*Alan Boucher  
Principal of Brooklands*



*“The Council are very happy to support BIG in the work they are doing in the local area. The group are forward thinking and progressive and are striving towards a common goal, which will be to the benefit of those living in the Ballybeen area. Health and Wellbeing are high on the agenda and this will work towards making Ballybeen a healthier, happier place for people to live in”*

*Gail McKechnie*

*Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council*



### **Regeneration best practice visit**

15 people went to Ballymun in Dublin for a regeneration best-practice study visit, to bring the learning back into our own regeneration plans.

### **St Patricks Day Event**

Approximately 2000 residents attended our St Patricks Day cultural family fun day. This was supported by the Dept of Foreign Affairs & the NIHE.

## IMPACT AND MEETING OBJECTIVES

### Impact

Throughout this Report consideration has been given to the sensitive and confidential nature of much of the work undertaken by BIG. As such, some of the intervention and negotiation roles that they have undertaken have not explicitly been presented in this document. However, the Report does offer an overview of the work delivered by BIG since June 2016; the case studies provide an insight into the dialogue and engagement that takes place on a daily basis within communities; and the quotes from stakeholders provide greater understanding about the impact.

Following BIG intervention community statistics have also demonstrated reduced anti-social behaviour and a reduction in crime, most notably around the Summer youth football tournament. Conversely, through the ASB Clinics there have also been examples of increases in reported crime, where previously justice issues would not have been brought to the police. This increase in reported crime has come about due to relationships being built across the community with the PSNI, and previously unreported crimes now being brought to the attention of the police.

The success of the community development approach has been highlighted throughout the Audit / Evaluation Report. Community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing these groups with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. Those working within the broad spectrum of community development must understand both how to work with individuals and how to affect communities' positions within the wider context.

### Objectives

The way in which the four core objectives governing the work of BIG have been met has been demonstrated throughout the Audit / Evaluation Report. The case studies present the way in which the work of the BIG Team has directly contributed to the objectives; and the feedback from stakeholders has confirmed the ways in which BIG has had an impact.

The table below presents the five core objectives, and provides a brief overview about the way in which these have been achieved.

**It must be noted that most of the progress made in the 10 month period between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016-31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, was done so with a part time staff compliment, and involved a significant voluntary input from Directors, sub-group members, and volunteers. The vast majority of core targets were met and in many cases exceeded, however, one target in particular fell short, in delivering a Staff/Board training programme, and will need to be revisited under any continuation.**

Core Objective	Comment
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**im 1: Develop the role of BIG to create local representative lobbying and delivery structures**

Community and Statutory reps on BIG working collectively

Utilise and promote potential of BIG office

Employ part-time Community Development Officer

Identify statutory plans for work in the area

Develop contact across the political spectrum

.Improve information sharing

- Regular Directors updates by email are sent out to keep the Board fully informed of progress and strengthen internal communication.
- 2 x issues of 'think big' community magazines (3000 copies distributed. This magazine has been also distributed as an online e-magazine version.
- 7 meetings with political reps incl: Gavin Robinson MP, Cllr Tim Morrow (Alliance), Cllr Davy Drysdale (DUP) & Cllr Sharon Skillen (DUP) as part of political engagement process. Further contact with Joanne Bunting MLA, Sammy Douglas MLA, Andy Allen MLA, Cllr Hazel Legge. A meeting held with Minister for the Dept of Communities Paul Givan.
- Have met with various PSNI reps Con Alan McTier, Constable Michael Gibson (3 ASB Clinics held in BIG office), also 2 meetings with Sgt John Hanna ref; rapid drugs bin.
- The BIG development worker has become a community contact for the East Belfast Suicide Response network.
- The BIG development worker has become a member of the Brookland Youth Centre advisory body.
- The development worker has been accepted onto the interim peace 4 partnership and has attended 1 meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov, as well as had a site visit from peace 4 officers where he took them to see the current Brooklands pitch location & brought them around local groups such as the Brookland Youth Centre & the Mens Motivational Group to familiarise with Ballybeen and develop stronger working relations.
- The BIG Help clinic is occurring on a weekly basis in BIG offices, to date there have been 26 clients with a range of issues that BIG are assisting with.
- The development worker has met with NIHE's cohesion unit's new community relations officer, and has had 2 meetings with NIHE, Helm & Choice reference setting up and supporting a 'housing providers forum'

**Aim 2: Create and sustain a vision and identity for Ballybeen as a self-sufficient progressive community and place to live.**

Review existing strategies and priorities for the area

Develop a community development strategy for Ballybeen

Secure additional funding and resources for BIG

Host a series of meetings with elected representatives

Contribute to and support regeneration initiatives within the community

Host consultation events with local community

- Met with key community groups and representatives within the community. EDCDA/East Belfast Partnership.
- A 'volunteer development plan' has been agreed by the Board that meets a cross-section of objectives on the Ballybeen Development plan.
- **Total funding received:**  
PCSP- £1,500 youth football tournament  
NIHE - £2,500 ballybeen in bloom  
NIHE - £500 St Pats Day event  
PSNI - £100 St Pats Day Event  
DOC - £960  
DFA - £3,394.54  
£9504.54
- **Other contributions**  
Choice - £30,000 towards Dungoyne Park  
Peace 4 - £500,000 towards Sports Hub  
Charter - £500 for training courses
- We continue to lobby with LCCC/ Choice Housing over the Ballybeen Square Play Park.
- Consultation held with community to develop a business plan/sport development plan ref: the 3g pitch & facilities.
- The development worker has taken an advisory role on the BMMG committee and is assisting closely with supporting their development following successful funding from the BIG Lottery.

**Aim 3: Enhance delivery of youth provision in Ballybeen.**

Continue to facilitate and support the Youth, Education and Employment sub group of BIG

- 5 x meetings of the YEE sub-group in this period.
- 4 x new members become involved in the YEE sub-group expanding its membership.
- A rep from the Hollywood road job & benefit office has become a new attendee at meetings, as well as an include youth rep & the new Tullycarnet Regeneration Officer. The new NIHE community cohesion worker has also attended meetings.
- Attended the Inspire Business Centres 'Academy Awards' event, around re-skilling people for business opportunities that ultimately lead to job creation.

<p><b>im 4: Improve the health of local people and reduce isolation.</b></p> <p>Establish a health and wellbeing sub group ensuring representation from statutory and voluntary agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 meetings of the sub-group during this period.</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing sub group has continued to meet and were successful in gaining £1 million of financial support from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council for the development of a sports facility within the estate</li> <li>• New plans have been produced for the 3g pitch &amp; Facilities regeneration for Brooklands Pitch, following community consultation and the appointment of a consultancy agency, and this has also been incorporated into peace 4 plans regards financial support.</li> <li>• New Brookland Primary School Principal Alan Boucher invited to attend the sub-group. An initial meeting with Gail McCaughey (LCCC) sees her invited onto the health &amp; wellbeing sub-group to support its development.</li> <li>• Sport, Health &amp; Wellbeing sub-group had a meeting with Choice Housing, NIHE &amp; LCCC who have confirmed that the Play Park is to remain at the current location where phase 1 housing is under construction. Choice Housing have agreed to make a contribution cost to the development of the Brookland Play Park and meetings continue to progress this.</li> <li>• The Public Health Agency were invited to give a presentation on their 'Active Communities Travel Programme' to see how we could potentially support this development on a local level.</li> <li>• Sub-group reps met with NI Water, alongside Cllr Skillen &amp; MP Robinson, following issues in several streets with sewage overflows due to the heavy rainfall. Information on how to report issues are to be distributed around households &amp; sewage drain checks are to be scheduled. Issues around illegal dumping at Brooklands Pitches addressed with LCCC environmental health unit.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim 5: Governance</b></p> <p>Establishment of policies and procedures for BIG</p> <p>Ensure Annual General Meeting and appointment of Board of Directors and</p>	<p>A focussed interim 'policy sub-group' is created to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) progress all policy documentation</li> <li>2) develop a staff/Board training programme based on the governance requirements</li> <li>3) review policies when required</li> </ol>



<p>Office Bearers</p> <p>Financial management systems established and operational</p> <p>Monthly Board meetings</p> <p>Training and development programme for Staff and Board</p>	<p>The following policies have received Board approval in the BIG <u>policy manual</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; safety policy</li> <li>• Vulnerable adults safeguarding policy</li> <li>• Child protection policy</li> <li>• Financial procedures policy</li> <li>• Data protection policy</li> <li>• Document retention policy</li> <li>• Environmental policy</li> <li>• Equal opportunities policy</li> <li>• Redundancy policy</li> <li>• Risk assessment policy</li> <li>• Lone worker policy</li> <li>• Media and communications policy</li> <li>• Volunteer policy &amp; application pack</li> </ul> <p>A <u>staff handbook</u> has been approved by Board after recommendation by the interim policy sub-group.</p> <p>Board meetings took place on:</p> <p>14 June 2016</p> <p>9<sup>th</sup> Aug 2016</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016</p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> October 2016</p> <p>8<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> December 2016</p> <p>10<sup>th</sup> January 2017</p> <p>14<sup>th</sup> February 2017</p> <p>14<sup>th</sup> March 2017</p> <p>AGM took place on 18 August 2016 (4 new member groups)</p> <p>Have developed a fire safety log and risk assessments pro-formas for the BIG office and this is being adhered to.</p> <p>In partnership with Social Economy/Enterprise funding via NIHE. Helping Hands (Autism Support Group) have held the following training events, at Ballybeen Improvement Group Offices.</p> <p>Cheque requisition forms are introduced as part of the financial policy review.</p> <p>A sign in visitor's book is operational.</p> <p>Employer Liability insurance renewed on a month by month basis and subject to further funding to continue.</p> <p>Annual accounts have been returned to Companies house.</p>
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Whilst it is highly evident that the work of BIG has directly contributed to the five core objectives, it should be emphasised that this is an on-going process. There is a need to continue to build on and support the sustainability of Ballybeen going forward.

It must be noted that BIG has also provided value for money through the leverage of additional resources (person-hours and funding) and financial savings to government departments. This includes:

- Input from volunteers, who have been supported by BIG
- Increasing the number of volunteers across communities
- Increasing the representation on the Sport, Health & Wellbeing / Youth, Education & Employment sub-groups (6 new members across these sub-groups as they become re-populated)
- Increasing the member groups of BIG (4 new member groups engaged) - Ballybeen Community Flute Band, Jubilee Allotments, Dundonald Bowling Club & the Ulster Unionist Party.
- Support for funding applications supporting the development of the Ballybeen community: including Priority Youth Intervention funding from PCSP/DOJ (£1,500), funding for an environmental 'ballybeen in bloom' initiative via NIHE (£2,500), & a Volunteering Appreciation Event via funding from LCDI/ Dept of Communities (£960) & NIHE £500 for St Patricks Day Cultural funday.

## **FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

Currently BIG has confirmed funding until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 (from DSD). It is commendable that, in recognising on-going need in working class communities such as Ballybeen, deemed as an 'area at risk', BIG is already entering into negotiations about funding opportunities beyond this date. Taking into account the work of BIG to date and feedback from stakeholders, the future opportunities presented below provide an analysis of the way forward for BIG in the short and medium term future.

**It is recommended that this Evaluation Report be forwarded to the Department for Social Development. The Report should also be cited & taken into account when considering the future development and funding opportunities for BIG.**

## **Priorities**

### ***Increased youth engagement –***

Taking into account good practice models and in particular the cross-community interaction during the Summer Football Tournament in partnership with Dungoyne FC. Youth engagement involves building further links with other organisations and developing a vision that will engage and build the capacity of the younger generation. It is essential that this investment is made in order to develop community leaders who will be in a position to build future communities. We should seek support/funding for a 'leadership development' programme with this aim, to allow BIG members to build the skills necessary & provide a range of opportunities for experience. This initiative can fit neatly into the existing work of the Youth, Education & Employment sub-group.

### ***Increased engagement in Community Safety & Contentious Issues –***

BIG has only touched only very delicately into the field of 'contentious issues'; engaging and negotiating with other stakeholders with regards to underlying issues of on-going paramilitarism & drugs, with little regard for many issues that raised heightened tensions during the July season, that of managing bonfires. This work needs to be sustained and built upon in the areas where it is needed in those communities which are still subject to and engaged in contentious activity. Furthermore, work in communities that has started to have an impact on trust and relationship building contributing to community safety and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour also needs continued intervention, and these issues should fall under the remit of a community safety initiative that builds upon the ASB Clinics and goes beyond the specific 'housing providers forum' being developed, becoming a multi-agency forum for the Ballybeen area where community safety & contentious issues are a thematic issue. This will be very relevant given that Peace4 have items in the action plan around re-imagining communities & flags/bonfires/inter-community tensions as contentious issues.

In relation to this we have had initial conversations with NIHE and reps from Longstone/Coronation Park bonfires to determine how they can be supported in making their cultural events more family friendly and welcoming.

## **Continuation Plan**

### **a) Sport, Health & Wellbeing sub-group**

- Continue to develop & support sport, health & wellbeing sub-group on the redevelopment of Brooklands pitch
- Assess the business plan/sports development plan & make recommendations to Board
- Introduce a training programme to assist BIG to provide the strategic management function of this site
- Develop a promotional and outreach strategy to increase the usage of this facility
- Maximise the social-clauses ensuring short-term - long-term community benefits are built in
- Community & environmental Clean-up initiatives developed and rolled out in problem areas
- Source further funding to support the re-development.
- A trim-trail highway to health around the existing pathway pursued.
- Develop a cross-community profile for this facility
- Continue to lobby in relation to the Ballybeen Square parks regeneration

### **b) Community Development sub-group**

- Revisit & renew Community consultation in Ballybeen area from the June 2013 development plan
- A physical audit will be carried out and issues identified and addressed especially areas affecting community safety.
- Support the creation & functioning of the proposed 'housing providers forum'
- Set up a multi-agency Forum for systematic local engagement with statutory agencies, with community safety a core thematic concern.
- Improving Arterial routes and addressing local issues in regards recurrent parking issues at Brookland Primary School
- Support the development of A 'welcome to ballybeen' pack that informs residents about key services/community facilities etc
- Continue to develop the 'think big' community magazine
- Create a volunteer development sub-group to support, encourage, assist volunteer development and harness volunteering opportunity in the local area, as the cradle of active citizenship. Host another volunteer appreciation event for the area as the pinnacle event on the Ballybeen community calendar.

**c) Youth, Education & Employment sub-group**

- Continue to grow and outreach the YEE 'employability forum' to include training providers community groups, schools, stats and employers from across the area and within neighbouring districts
- Good practice visit to a similar forum in West Belfast
- Organise an annual jobs fair
- Re-Establish a Youth Providers Forum for the area
- Develop a YEE sub-group page within the BIG facebook site to outreach and promote the opportunities available to residents on a regular basis in order to increase/maximise local uptake
- Develop a 'leadership development' programme across the member groups where young people can get the skills/experience in community development from project planning, project management and project implementation, thus creating a cadre of future community leaders as a key sustainability resource
- Outreach the opportunities this sub-group offers to local youth where there is still a limited uptake, by linking more with schools \& youth provision across the Ballybeen area

**d) Miscellaneous**

- Continue to engage more actively within the diverse range of BIG member groups to identify and support areas of development that will sustain involvement, support current practice and strengthen/grow the BIG structural base towards improving the community cohesion model behind BIG's existence and purpose.
- Continue to support the 'BIG HELP' advice & assistance clinic.
- Re-sume the Policy development sub-group to review all BIG's policies & procedures
- Introduce 'financial management' training for member groups
- Continue to maximise the use of BIG's office space
- Access additional funding resources for BIG
- Build on the current political engagement to date
- Continue to populate the thematic sub-groups
- Link the culture & identity sub-group with peace 4 opportunities to re-invigorate it



## **ORGANISATIONS WITH WHOM BIG HAS ENGAGED**

The Ulster Unionist Party  
The Alliance Party  
Lisburn & Castlereagh Peace 4 Partnership  
Ballybeen Women's Centre  
Brooklands Youth Centre  
Dundonald High School  
Dundonald Salvation Army  
St Marys Church  
Gems NI  
People 1<sup>st</sup>  
Otium Consultancy  
East Belfast Community Development Agency  
Frazer Kidd  
NIHE  
The Enler Complex  
Dundonald Bowling Club  
Way to Go project  
Charter NI  
Jubilee allotments  
Helping Hands (Autism Support)  
Bandanas for the Brave (Cancer Charity)  
University of Ulster (UUJ)  
Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP  
Print Library  
Ballybeen PEP (peer education project)  
Blaze FX (Mural artist)  
Ballyoran Community Arts Group  
The University of Ulster (UUJ)  
Volunteer Now  
The Dept of Environment  
The East Belfast Suicide Response Network  
Resolve (restorative practice)  
Helm Housing  
The Public Health Agency

The Democratic Unionist Party  
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council  
Ballybeen Men's Motivational Group  
Ballybeen Community Flute Band  
Brooklands Primary School  
Inspire Business Centre  
Methodist Church  
Christchurch  
The Princes Trust  
Include Youth  
Frazer Kidd  
The East Belfast Partnership  
Choice Housing  
PSNI  
43<sup>rd</sup> Old Boys FC Dundonald  
Dungoyne FC  
Dundonald FC  
Moat Park Rangers  
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust  
B/been Action Group Initiative Trust  
The Inner East Family Support Hub  
The Department of Communities  
LCDI  
Groundwork NI  
Dundonald Foodbank  
H/wood Rd Jobs & Benefits Office  
Ballyoran Social & Dance Group  
The Dept of Foreign Affairs (DFA)  
The Roads Service  
Ballymun Regeneration  
George Best City Airport  
Sustrans  
The Enler Complex  
The Princes Trust



to create & sustain a vision for Ballybeen as a self-sufficient & progressive community