

THE SUMMER OF 2002

An evaluation of the impact of diversionary funding for work with young people in Belfast interfaces during the summer of 2002

Commissioned by the Department of Education and the Belfast Education and Library
Board (Youth Service)

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“It was clear from listening to young people that they needed to get away from the community as most we spoke to experienced a sense of being trapped or hemmed in due to the serious street disturbances”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

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Finally, the CYW Team hope that this evaluation will assist those key players in interface work to develop strategic responses to interface violence and help improve the quality of life, in general.

The Community Youth Work Team.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main issues arising from this evaluation is that diversionary activities can reduce sectarian violence at interfaces and that increased funding would greatly enhance summerscheme programme in future years.

However, diversionary activities will only be effective in the long term if they are embedded within a policy context that has the reduction of sectarianism and improved community relations at the heart of this policy. For maximum impact these diversionary activities should also be embraced by a multi-agency partnership which should put an end to the unconnected approach taken by the confusing array of agencies and funders who work directly or indirectly with young people at Belfast interfaces. Strong leadership is required to bring together those key agencies and funders to design a collaborative strategy for these interfaces.

The reactionary response of ‘firefighting’ also must end and sustainable development and strategic planning should be the order of the day if the summers of 2003 and beyond are to provide more favourable news reports than those of 2002.

1.1 Main Findings

- A high percentage of respondents (88%) stated that the additional diversionary funding has made a difference towards easing apparent conflict and rioting.
- An overwhelming majority of projects declared ‘day trips’ as the single most popular activity and a significant number (44%) participated in residentials. Young people obviously like the experience of getting away from their local community, which would presumably offer an opportunity to escape from the tensions which are a part of everyday life in Belfast.

- A significant number of workers endorse the findings that an earlier decision on funding allocation would result in cost effectiveness and increased efficiency.
- The lack of coordination, among summerscheme providers or interface funding bodies, would appear to be a major problem. If a recognised forum of policy makers, funders, youth workers and young people is established the major problems of interface violence might be addressed more strategically.
- The additional funding has also assisted in reducing ‘normal’ anti-social behaviours within communities. The impact of diversionary activities is not dissimilar to the impact of the SPLASH schemes in England, Scotland and Wales.
- A number of respondents indicate that a broader range of development activities such as personal development programmes and citizenship education and more prolonged community relations activity is what is required for longer term development and more effectiveness in undermining sectarianism, intolerance and prejudice.
- A number of respondents are working long hours and sometimes in high risk ‘street’ situations which ultimately takes its toll manifesting itself in work overload and stress. The health and safety needs and rights of youth workers must be protected to help alleviate the stress of working at interfaces.
- The responsibility of ensuring quality standards of practice requires the drawing up of action plans with a clearly described set of aims and objectives and demonstrating anticipated outcomes.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 *BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE*

Despite the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and the repeated commitments to a lasting peace process by politicians, religious leaders and community activists, a culture of recreational rioting and sectarian violence has become the norm in interfaces throughout Belfast. Successive media reports (see Appendix) have demonstrated that these violent activities have had a tendency to escalate during the summer months. While young people have not always been responsible for instigating riots and violence they have nonetheless been involved in many of these activities.

Local community, voluntary and statutory responses to this violence have included a need to divert young people away from violent situations. The Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) requested the Department of Education (DE) to provide additional funding for diversionary activities for the summer period of 2002. The DE released £60,000 during June 2002 and this additional money would include evaluation costs and the earmarking of £5,000 for interface work which bordered the NEELB/BELB area of Whitewell Road.

This evaluation was considered desirable by the DE and the BELB to determine the impact of diversionary funding in local interfaces and they were also eager to identify future strategic responses to young people becoming involved in rioting and sectarian violence. At the request of the DE and the BELB the Community Youth Work (CYW) Team, at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown was commissioned to carry out the evaluation and to present recommendations for consideration by the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

2.2 EVALUATION PROPOSAL

2.2.1 AIM

To evaluate the impact of ‘additional diversionary funding’ which was made available to interface projects and was administered by the Belfast Education and Library Board (Youth Service).

2.2.2 OBJECTIVES

- To document the ‘added value’ of this funding.
- To assess the impact the scheme had on young people, youth workers and communities.
- To determine the strengths and weaknesses of diversionary programmes.
- To identify key issues associated with diversionary work in interface areas.
- To make recommendations on future strategic responses to working with young people in interface areas.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation proposal has been outlined and the CYW Team identified a number of methods of data collection. These are as follows:

3.1 Desk Research and Literature Review which would include an analysis of contemporary reports on diversionary activities.

3.2 A Postal Survey with 64 project recipients of diversionary funding. These projects included full time and part time voluntary and statutory based centres, area based strategies and a number of community and church based initiatives.

3.3 Interviews with youth workers and young people from 5 projects. These projects were chosen using a statutory, voluntary, geographic, religious and gender representative mix. An interview with 2 BELB officers was also carried out.

3.4 Recordings and reflections from 5 youth workers using similar representations as above. These workers were asked to keep diaries of feelings, thoughts and ideas on 5 days of their choice during the summer of 2002.

3.5 Participant observation of 2 projects.

3.6 Chronicle of news events occurring in Belfast during July and August 2002 (Source – Belfast Telegraph and Irish News).

4.0 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The questionnaire was designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on 64 summer schemes that were registered with the Belfast Education & Library Board who received additional diversionary funding. Twenty seven respondents (42%) from a total of 64 participating schemes responded.

4.1 Duration of Schemes

The following table depicts the number of schemes and duration.

Duration in Wks	No of projects
1 w'end	1
2 w'ends	1
2	4
3	7
4	6
5	2
6	3
7	0
8	2
9	1

One project did not respond to this question and two stated they provided weekend residential/s as their summer programme.

Twenty-one projects provided a scheme that lasted at least three weeks. Those projects who reported having a 5, 6, 8 or 9week duration programme have also stated this decision was heavily influenced by demands from their local community to provide alternative programmes in the area.

Those projects that provided longer than the average programmes have a high voluntary staff complement.

4.2 Opening Times

All schemes operated on a daily basis Monday –Thursday. Of the total number of schemes reported, 18 opened between 2 & 3 evenings, 10 schemes recorded their ‘centre’ as open on every Friday evening for the duration of their scheme, 2 opened on Saturday afternoons and 1 opened on a Sunday afternoon.

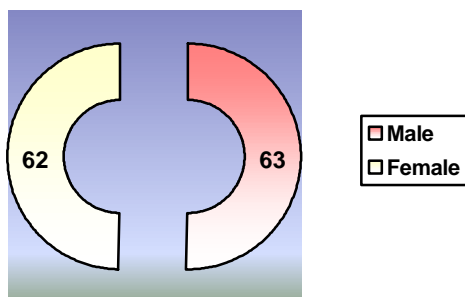
Two schemes provided residential only programmes. 10 schemes included one residential in their programme. One scheme provided two and one scheme provided 3 residential weekends as an integral part of their scheme. Most projects did not open at weekends.

4.3 Staffing

389 staff was involved in all the schemes as outlined in the table:

Response	Staff	Male	Female	Total
19	Full-Time	27	26	53
19	Part-Time	53	54	107
22	Voluntary	78	151	229
		158	231	389

Staff under 25 yrs old



The total number of volunteers under 25yrs is recorded as 112, 63 male (50%) and 62 female (50%) representing 33% of total staff.

4.4 Programme Activities

The questionnaire asked respondents to tick from the following listed programme activities that they included in their summer scheme. The table depicts the most popular by rank order as a % of the overall responses:

Programme Activity	% of total respondents
Day Trips	100%
Games	77%
Sports Activities Outdoor	77%
Arts & Crafts	65%
Sports Activities Indoor	62%
Residential	38%
Drama	35%
Music	23%

Table 1 below lists the other Day trip venues that have proved popular with young people during the summer schemes:

Portrush	Belfast Zoo	Bangor Aquarium
Scotland	Boating	Lady Dixon Park
Belfast Adventure Playground	Armagh Planetarium	Loundon Castle Scotland
Ozone	Tain Village	Newcastle
Odessey	Carnfunnock Park	Ice-Skating
Banna boat	Horse-riding	Quazer
Swimming	Barbeque	Bowling
Theatre	Indianaland	Streamvale Farm
Orienteering	family day	Cinema

Other activities that played an integral part in summer schemes are reported as follows:

Talent show	Beauty Therapy	Dance
Cooking	Discussion Groups	Academic support
Fun day	Competitions	Puppet show
Disco	Gladiators	Boxing
Magic show	Football	Tournament
Pool & Snooker Tournaments	Cultural Awareness Projects	Fashion Design
Community Festival	Photography	

4.5 Age Range of Young People

Respondents were asked to give details of the membership age of young people according to age range during one week of their scheme. The results were as follows:

Age range of young people	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
5-7	226	180	406	16%
8-11	461	402	863	34%
12-14	466	364	830	32%
15-17	226	154	380	14%
18+	54	36	90	4%
Total	1433	1136	2569	

Workers reported that the additional funding made a positive difference

“Although our funding was limited it allowed us to provide events such as horseriding etc which would not normally be available to the youth of the area.”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“We have been able to provide expensive activities which the older young people require e.g. Go-karting, beauty therapy sessions, outdoor pursuits. These activities have increased the usage of the centre by this age group over the summer months.”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“It has enable us to provide attractive activities and to open longer hours, hence work with more young people.”

Youth Worker – North Belfast

“The summer programme usually lasts four weeks, this year we were able to run for six weeks.”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“There is no doubt in my mind extra funding is needed throughout the year but especially June – September to encourage young people to participate in planning and organising programmes to meet their need.”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

Young people also indicated the impact of diversionary work on rioting

“This keeps us off the streets – there is nothing around here.....except rioting.”

Two 17 year old males – West Belfast

“If I didn’t come here, I’d be rioting”

15 year old – East Belfast

The timing of the release of additional monies led to the following comments by workers

“The funding arrived so quickly I didn’t have enough time to plan a coherent programme. I am very grateful for the money, without it we would be lost, but I get worried by the attitude, “Oh, it’s North Belfast, an interface, let’s throw money at it.” The Youth Service should have a strategy and funding, even emergency funding, should reflect this.”

Youth Worker – North Belfast

“The BELB leave it too late to give money out. It is like putting a sticking plaster on a wound. Surely we should be better prepared”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

“We found out about the money in June. Had we known in May, we could have planned better”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“The money came at the last minute and had to be spent by the end of August. I would have liked more time to plan”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“We were lucky to be able to book events at short notice, usually everything is booked up by the end of May each year”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

It was also felt that the quality of work would be enhanced by spending on staff and training

“The funding should also be used in a more flexible manner e.g., for volunteer expenses, especially for meals, transport costs, childminding etc”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“Finances for additional training of volunteers would prove helpful”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“I wish they would give us money for more staff”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“We couldn’t stand over the quality of some work. Some projects found it difficult on trips away to deal with the behaviours and attitudes of some young people. There should be training as well as providing the money”

Youth Officer - BELB

This late release appears to have caused administrative and communication difficulties

“On speaking with colleagues it appears that funding has been allocated in a hurry to the select few who were aware of it. I know nothing of this funding until I made enquiries after receiving this questionnaire”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“The criteria for the additional funding was not explained to workers”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“I feel that the funding was not distributed equally among all disadvantaged areas of Belfast and this needs to be looked at next year”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

Some workers were looking beyond this summer

“I am clear that if the Department of Education gave diversionary funding well in advance we could have specialist teams within local areas to work with young people during all school holidays”

Youth Officer – BELB

“We need to carry out programmes throughout the year especially at Halloween, Christmas, Easter as well as the summer months – after all the interfaces are there all the year round”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

“Our after school club is under threat of closure. We need to build on the work we have done (over the summer) or suffer the consequences”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

Indeed some workers described the opportunities for improved co-ordination

“The BELB should keep an audit of local groups in each community”

Youth Worker – North Belfast

“A co-ordinated programme by various agencies should lead to programmes of activities for young people throughout the summer period. Funding should be co-ordinated and planned for effectiveness”

“It (the funding) should be provided to those who can maximise its potential and with specific outcomes attached to it”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“Let’s stop firefighting and have a co-ordinated strategy”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

Workers also described the connection between diversionary activity and streetwork

“We have to try and work with these young people and, it’s hard. I call one group ‘The Entry Boys’ because they are always hiding in the entries from the police”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“Without trying to gloss over the size and seriousness of our task we found that an enormous effort was required to re-establish and develop relationships with young peoples, as part of our outreach/detached programme”

Youth Worker – East Belfast

“This additional funding enabled us to engage 15-25 year olds who would normally be involved in street violence (in general) and drinking on street corners. They seem to clean up their act or they wouldn’t be allowed to participate”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

This was also an indication of the strain of the challenge involved

“I recognise that we operated too many sessions and all the staff have reached burnout stage. We very much need a 3 week break”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“Youth workers are employed with terms and conditions and we need to balance the needs of young people with the needs and rights of staff to help prevent burnout”

Youth Officer – BELB

Workers also emphasised the importance of connecting diversionary work in the summer months into a more structured response that links to educational themes

“The good citizenship training has helped prevent street violence in what was once a ‘flare-up’ area. The 12 young people on this weekend are being prepared for further community relations training and a link up with young people of a different denomination”

Youth Worker – West Belfast

“I think more community relations work with Primary age children is essential as they are more accepting than older young people”

Youth Worker – North West Belfast

5.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent times, Belfast has been characterised by persistent low-level sectarian violence. This violence has been a recurring feature, especially in North Belfast where such intercommunal conflict ranges from abusive banter, escalating to stone throwing and full scale rioting.¹ The involvement of young people in this violence has been prominent. Statistics from the police indicate a high level of continuous offending. In the four-year period from 1996-99, there have been 1,444 recorded cases of criminal damage, 409 cases of assault and 316 cases of riot.² This amounts to 2,169 incidents in seven small interface areas across the north of the city of Belfast alone.

This literature review provides an analysis of contemporary reports on interface violence. It raises many issues and tensions which face the statutory and voluntary sectors, funders, communities, youthworkers and young people. It also describes some of the responses and recommended responses to this violence by way of diversionary activities designed purely to divert young people away from anti-social activities and those which operate in a wider context, to take account of the root causes of this violence.

5.2 *Background to the conflict in Belfast*

Jarman (2002) probes the context in which the violence in the area is based. Although Belfast has a distinct and atypical geographical complexity, there are a number of interlocking issues that make the situation seemingly complex and irretrievable, some of which are local and others which are related to the inherent social and political basis of Northern Irish society. Jarman (2002) identifies some issues which form an underlying basis for conflict.

¹ Jarman, N & O'Halloran, C, (2002). Peacelines or Battlefields. Institute for Conflict Research

² Jarman, N (2002), Managing Disorder: Responding to Interface Violence in North Belfast, OFMDFM.

5.2.1 *Parades*

The issue of parades is ever present. In 1996, the Tour of the North was the only contentious parade but by 2000, a range of other parades had become the subject of tension.

5.2.2 *Policing*

Policing also remains an unresolved and contentious issue for many people and have been accused of taking a heavy-handed approach to protests in the past although in recent times they have generally taken a softer approach. McVeigh (1994) suggested that over a quarter of young people in Northern Ireland between the ages of 17 and 19 felt they had been harassed in some way by the security forces. The Youthquest survey has also made the point that children have learnt to be secretive and to distrust authority having grown with routine and repeated stopping and questioning in the street under emergency legislation. Authority, including the security forces is often seen to be unfair, not even handed, and often acting against the best interests of the community and young people.³

5.2.3 *Territoriality*

In terms of territory, North Belfast is divided into a number of geographically distinct working class communities which are highly segregated in terms of religious identification. Demographically, Catholic areas tend to be growing communities with high numbers of young people whereas Protestant areas are in decline, creating a suspicion among the Protestant community that they are being “squeezed out”.

5.2.4 *Segregation*

There is also a high degree of separateness. Nationalists and unionists live segregated and separated lives with education, worship, residence and social activities are carried out among one’s own community. As a result of this lack of interaction, understanding and sympathy for the ‘other’ community has been seriously undermined. A keynote speech by Olara Otunnu at a conference in Belfast in June 2000⁴, claimed this segregation of the

³ Youthquest Survey 2000

⁴ Building the Future: Young People and the Troubles, Belfast (June 2000)

communities and the schooling system resulted in the polarisation of society, with indoctrination from one side about the other and the subjecting of young people to the prejudice of adults.

5.2.5 Violence

To these issues we add the history and legacy of violence. As Jarman (2002) writes

*Among many sections of both communities, the history of violence is widely commemorated and even celebrated, and all too readily is held up as something to be emulated. This further serves to help legitimise the use of violence to defend one's own community against perceived challenges from the other*⁵

Interface areas in particular experience high levels of violence. Research in Ardoyne and Upper Ardoyne (Shirow 1999, cited in Managing Disorder) that one third of residents had experienced physical and verbal violence in their areas. Most people of both communities would not venture into the territory of the “other”, especially at night. Barriers have been erected along interfaces but this has had only limited success as either the violence has been directed elsewhere or it has served to attract people to the interface because of the clear visual identification of the other community for violence. Thus, set alongside a popular culture that celebrates the use of violence it is hard to quantify the scale of the damage and brutalisation that has occurred to children and young people.

5.3 Young people and violence

Young people are often seen as one of the most prominent and visible elements in the persistence of low-level sectarian violence that plagues interface areas. Many are marginalized with little money or employment opportunities. Rioting is one of the “attractions” of interface areas where trouble frequently starts as abusive banter and escalates into more serious inter-communal hostilities. This violence is given the term “recreational rioting” because it largely emanates from “the boredom of hanging around

⁵ Managing Disorder (p.17)

and is treated as little more than a routine bit of fun and excitement”.⁶ It designates a form of violence, with no political basis, which is undertaken by those young people who are marginalized within the wider society and are often alienated from structures of adult authority (such as parents, schools and police) in their local communities.⁷

5.3.1 Economic and social problems

Many areas of inner city Belfast suffer economic and social deprivation, especially interface areas separating the two communities. Apart from the appearance of physical dereliction, interface areas suffer from high levels of social and economic disadvantage such as long-term unemployment, low educational achievement, poor health, low levels of car ownership and mobility. Research has shown (Murtagh 1994; Roe & Cairns 1998; Shirlow 1999)⁸ that interface areas have restricted access to shops and jobs. These restrictions affect young males the most. The North Belfast Community Action Project (NBCAP) highlight the problem of low educational attainment as many pupils leave school at 16 with virtually no qualifications.

5.4 Attempts to divert young people from violence

Jarman (2002) describe some initiatives which focus on attempts to divert young people from congregating on interfaces, however acknowledges that a more substantial programme of redevelopment, training, economic rejuvenation and employment opportunities are needed to address the root causes of recreational rioting.

- There are a number of detached youth projects attempting to work with young people to address their concerns on their own terms.
- Several restorative justice programmes have been established in Belfast in response to the problems of anti-social behaviour.

⁶ Ibid, p.29

⁷ Id.

⁸ cited in Jarman (2002)

- On a wider level, the *North Belfast Youth Work in Schools* is an initiative to enhance school support structures for vulnerable young people and contribute to the rebuilding of relationships between the schools and the local catchment community.⁹

In 2001 Youth Action Northern Ireland carried out a major piece of research into young men's experiences as victims and perpetrators of violence. The study revealed that violence was perceived as a normal and acceptable part of their 'everyday life' and was one of the most significant features defining male youth culture in Northern Ireland. Violence such as fighting and rioting was perceived as an exciting activity that gave many young men 'a buzz.'

Despite the fact that the majority of young men referred to living with the fear and expectation of violence much of the time, they reported never having the opportunity to discuss violence and violence related issues. Recommendations from the research concluded that:

- Youth work agencies should proactively address violence issues for young men
- It is important to create an appropriate atmosphere in order to effectively work on issues of violence
- The skills of the workers are key to the potential of the work
- Programmes should include: an exploration of masculinity, group discussion of issues, training in skills useful for avoiding violence, anger control, interactive exercises and games, knowledge of alternatives to violence, confidence building and individual reflection.

⁹ NBCAP

5.4.1. *Summer schemes*

The Belfast Education and Library Board, Belfast City Council and the Belfast Regeneration Office have offered summer interface programmes every year since 1997. A number of other agencies either directly provide summer activities for young people or assist local interface groups with funding. Many groups use this money each year to take children and young people out of the area to places of safety or for diversionary purposes over times of anticipated tension and conflict. Activities include trips to the coast, camps or other leisure pursuits. Although the majority of these schemes are very short term (lasting only a few weeks), if they are organised at key times they can be useful in providing activities which divert young people from interface areas and violent activities.¹⁰

5.4.2 *The connection to cross-community work*

Most of these summer schemes are necessarily small scale and localised. An extension of this work will embrace cross-community contact in order to undermine the sectarianism that lies at the heart of the inter-communal conflict and make the programmes of diversion from rioting more sustainable (Jarman 2002; Greer 2001). For example, groups in the Little America and Westland area have used the opportunity to develop an imaginative cross-community programme in order to defuse local tensions while each side was celebrating their own culture and anniversaries. To do this, they organised a joint summer scheme for two weeks in July to bring together children from both communities for a range of outings, street events, and sporting activities.¹¹ This has led to not only a quieter interface but also plans for cross-community residential programmes and a twelve-week Community Leadership training programme.

¹⁰ Jarman (2002)

¹¹ Ibid.

5.4.3 *The contribution of the Youth Service to conflict resolution*

The lack of preparation children and young people receive and the lack of adult role models, means that they grow up without positive models of inclusiveness outside their families. Thus, their full capacity for citizenship is not developed.¹² (Youthquest Survey). The personal and social education offered by Youth Service programmes make underlying reference to developing qualities in young people which will discourage them from anti-social behaviour. Effective youth work offers learning opportunities which support and promote the personal and social development of young people. It brings breadth and balance in meeting the diverse developmental needs of young people.¹³ Regardless of the setting, The Department for Education stipulates that effective youth work ought to

- help young people to recognise, understand and respect difference
- manage feelings and conflict
- understand the systems and conditions which shape their lives and how to cope effectively with them and
- be involved in the community.¹⁴

As with the case in North Belfast, *Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice* states:

*Many young people are seen to be marginalized. They feel they have no voice and are regarded as a threat to their local and wider communities. Youth work aims to challenge this view of young people by helping them to shape and develop their own experiences and to participate in decision-making on matters which affect them. . . . Programmes should challenge inequality, prejudice and racism and promote an understanding that all forms of harassment and discrimination are unacceptable.*¹⁵

¹² Youthquest Survey 2000

¹³ Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice, DENI

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid. (pp.9-10)

The type of activities suggested by *Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice* for community relations will take the form of inter-club visits, sporting events and quizzes. Other activities which will promote mutual understanding and undermine sectarianism will engage young people in local history projects, discussions about divisions in society and about conflict and aggression in sport and team games.

5.5 Factors impeding planning and development of projects

In addition to a lack of a partnership approach, both Jarman (2002) and The North Belfast Community Action Project (NBCAP) have identified further issues that impede the strategic planning of projects:

- The uncertainty of financial support which makes longer term planning and development of projects difficult (not least because decisions over funding availability are often left to the last minute).
- Local summer schemes rely on local goodwill and volunteers in order to function.
- Sustainability is rarely built through specifically focussed support and training.

Recently, however, O'Halloran has identified the unpredictability and short term nature of funding for community development initiatives within the PEACE II funding programme as a major source of concern. He writes:

Thus, in order to bring stability to interface areas, interface communities need holistic programmes of long-term investment and interagency attention that will address the needs of children and young people and promote mutual understanding between the communities in addition to the promotion of economic and environmental regeneration and improving levels of access to facilities and services.¹⁶

¹⁶ O'Halloran, C (2002). "Interface areas need long-term investment", CRC News, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, July 2002, Issue no. 39.

5.5.1 Lack of coordinated summer scheme provision in Belfast

The lack of coordinated, strategic and systematic provision of summer schemes in Belfast is illustrated by the provision of a diverse, confusing array of unconnected summer scheme and interface programmes. Separate funding programmes are in place from Belfast City Council, Belfast Regeneration Office and the Belfast Education and Library Board etc. Indeed, BCC has included an amount in the region of £100,000 in revenue estimates for the financial year 2002/02 in respect of expenditure on Summer Play Schemes in the community sector. Further funding was identified on an ad hoc basis from various Trusts such as the Prince's Trust, and the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust.¹⁷ Indeed, the emerging theme from Jarman's study is a lack of an integrated structure to address anti-social and sectarian behaviour. He writes,

*There is no overarching strategy either to deal with specific problems such as the persistent and recurrent sectarian interface violence or to address the problems of the area. There is no formal or structured link between the planning of the various summer schemes, no forum for developing the range of activities and no overall evaluation of whether such projects are the most appropriate or effective responses to the threat of summer disorder*¹⁸

5.6 Measures proposed to administer summer scheme provision

A number of recommendations (in addition to those mentioned already) have been put forward by a series of reports and evaluations in order to ensure coherence and consistency in the administration of summer schemes and diversionary activities and to add strategic direction. They range from a partnership approach between all the agencies involved, to the implementation of a common grant awarding body to common standards of monitoring and evaluation.

¹⁷ Minutes of Belfast City Council meeting of Leisure and Community Services Sub-Committee

¹⁸ Jarman (2002) (p.54)

5.6.1 Partnerships

Partnerships are recommended by Jarman (2002) as providing the most appropriate route to develop more effective and efficient means of addressing social problems. NBCAP has stated a need for a cooperative partnership between training organisations, primary and secondary schools and Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education in order to guide the education and training of those young people at risk of dropout or failure to achieve formal qualifications.

At a meeting of the Community and Leisure Services of Belfast City Council it was mentioned that there was a need for key funders to look strategically at summer scheme provision and that Making Belfast Work (now Belfast Regeneration Office) identify a partner in order to delegate the allocation of funds, quality control and monitoring.

In an evaluation of interface funding provided by the Belfast European Partnership Board of the 2002 Summer Youth Intervention Interface Programmes, a key recommendation was a possible collaborative structure that identifies those activities most effective for conflict resolution in interface areas. To this end, the evaluation recommended that Local Strategy Partnerships across Belfast not only to promote a collaborative approach between the range of stakeholders but also the pursuit of a Youth Development Programme which promotes social and economic regeneration in interface areas. A further recommendation in support of this aim was that success in applying for funding should be conditional on the demonstration of cooperation within communities and encourage cooperation between communities. The interface programmes could then be integrated into a wider programme of social, economic and human resource development.¹⁹ Indeed, a ‘whole community’ approach was considered necessary for the wider development of interface communities as this affects the structure of relationships within and between communities, (often the conditions for interface violence) and all-year developmental work with young people should be fundable.

¹⁹ Interface Funding strategic Evaluation, Belfast Local Strategy Partnership

This evaluation also states that funding should allow for events such as taking young people out of their communities during periods of high tension only where there are additional personal and community development (including community relations).

5.6.2 Ensuring consistency and common standards for summer scheme provision

In an evaluation carried out by Greer (1997), standards of practice were subject to enormous variation in quality. The evaluation recommended that each body currently funding summer scheme provision should take on a support, resource and training role and a consistent approach and set of standards across all teams. In order to address the issue of providing consistent and quality Summer Scheme Programmes for all children in all areas of Belfast, a “Joint Summer Provision Strategy Group” involving all key players with a responsibility and interest in children and young people should be brought together. In addition to this, summer scheme funding should be mainstreamed and BELB resources (school buildings, teachers and youth workers) mobilised during the summer. This was proposed by George Mackey to Belfast City Council in February 2001, stating that “an evaluation model be introduced to inform future decisions regarding the potential of mainstreaming this provision”.²⁰ Significantly, Greer also commented that the Belfast Regeneration Office could act as a ‘one-stop-shop’, a conduit for allocating and administering funding. This initiative is designed to streamline and standardise the process applying for funding, so that community groups “having to apply to several funding bodies and then having to go through the repertoire of hoops required by each body”²¹ would no longer be necessary.

5.7 The use of short-term projects to ensure participation in mutual understanding

This theme has been expanded by Greer (2001), in an evaluation of the Short Term Opportunities Programme (STOP) with respect to “peace-building”. She found that changes in behaviour and attitudes could only occur through building up trust and young

²⁰ Cited in Minutes of BCC Leisure and Community Services meeting, April 2001.

people from both communities addressing fears and myths about each other. Typically, a range of activities included physical or creative activities, interspersed with social or cultural diversity. In attracting young people because of other interests, the projects used the young people's motivation to play football or participate in arts activities as an incentive to ensure their participation in mutual understanding issues. For example, the Knocknagoney Community Centre Unemployed Project addressed "peace building" through skills training, on the basis that young people with the confidence, skills and stability of a job would be less likely to get involved in sectarian violence.

Roe and Cairns (1998) have pointed out that there has been little empirical research into the success of summer schemes in Northern Ireland and that more systematic, longitudinal research is needed. Most research suggests they are of limited value in improving cross-community relations primarily because of the limited duration of the contact.²²

Greer (2001) has however described ways in which projects can be evaluated. Although there was a wide range of timescales and intensity of these Peace building projects (outlined above), Greer (2001) made suggestions as to how these projects might be evaluated (and thus contribute to enhancing sustainability). Although changes in attitude may not be visible within a 6-month period, the basis for Greer's evaluation was the young peoples' own version of what they had achieved, supplemented by the workers' ongoing observations.

²¹ Greer, N (1997), MBW Funding of Summerschemes in 1997: Evaluation Report.

²² Roe, M & Cairns, E. (1998). "Adolescents and political violence", in Nurmi, Jari-Erik, "Adolescents, Cultures and Conflicts: Growing Up in Contemporary Europe". Garland Publishing.

An example of quantitative outcome measures was a project that trained 14 young people as peer educators who devised a Peer Education Resource Pack as a model for community relations' work with peers within the community. The young people would then move on to other areas of work within the youth sector as peer educators. Among those projects with qualitative outcome measures, was the Donegall Pass Community Group Project, which had a series of workshops on issues such as identity, politics, religion and para-militarism. This success relied on the feedback of the participants and organisers. A further key outcome was the formation of partnerships with other community organisations (two of them Catholic) in order to set up a cross-community youth forum.²³

She specified the common characteristics of successful projects which lend themselves to more effective evaluation are:

- having clearly described aims and objectives,
- skilled and experienced workers,
- a repertoire of exercises,
- appropriate devices for resolving or transforming conflict, and
- a positive relationship between the workers and young people.

She also recommends that funding bodies are consistent and clear about their expectations without imposing a disproportionately high amount of paperwork.

5.8 *Diversionary activities provided for young people in Great Britain*

A range of programmes have been implemented in Great Britain in order to combat youth crime. They target those young people living in areas of high deprivation and delivering interventions in order to divert them from anti-social activities. Many of these programmes are implemented using a partnership approach between the Youth Service,

²³ For further reading, please refer to Greer (2001), pp21-27.

police and educational establishments in order to reflect the range of inputs necessary to change behaviour.

5.8.1 *SPLASH schemes*

The SPLASH diversionary activities are part of a broader programme entitled the Youth Inclusion Programme and funded by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and the Home office Crime Reduction Programme. During the summers and Easters of 2000 and 2002, the YJB has managed a programme of SPLASH holiday activity schemes which sought to include young people at the most risk (from deprived estates and prone to anti-social activity).²⁴ The key to a successful SPLASH programme is the ability to quickly engage the young people and keep them engaged for more activities and attracting the right age group, 13-17 year olds.

5.8.2 *The contribution of SPLASH to crime reduction*

These schemes are widely acknowledged to have made dramatic reductions in crime, with an 18% reduction in car theft and a 36% reduction in house burglaries.²⁵ In an evaluation of the SPLASH programme, motor crime was reduced by 13%, juvenile nuisance by 22% and drug offences by 24%. For motor crime alone, this amounted to saving over £2.5 million through crime reduction.²⁶ Skill centres provide excluded young people with training and qualifications, mentoring, sports and leisure, environmental work (such a clean-up projects) and support services for parents and carers. The success of the programme is evaluated through targets of achieving reductions in the numbers of youth arrests and cautions and reductions in car crime, and vandalism. Therefore, SPLASH is integrated into an overall strategy with tangible outcomes. Also, SPLASH appeared to be well received by police, local communities and the young people. The report states,

²⁴ Youth Inclusion Programme (Youth Justice Board), <http://www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk/policy/prevention.html>

²⁵ BBC News website, 24th August 2001

²⁶ Splash 2001 Final Report, Splash National Support Team

'SPLASH seems to be seen as a welcome relief during the holiday times where many young people are often wandering around the estates. In this respect, SPLASH seems to be playing an important role in decreasing 'fear of crime' within the communities where it takes place'.²⁷

Splash offers a wide range of activities for young people.

Sports is the most popular activity (football, volleyball, abseiling and tennis). Participants also went Ten Pin bowling and go-karting. Graffiti art sessions were also held. These activities were combined with away days and residentials like camping, or trips to the Lake District and to other countries in Europe were carried out. These activities were combined with skills development such as cookery, first aid, sexual health and drugs awareness.

5.8.3 Monitoring arrangements

Each scheme was required to produce an action plan to show a list of activities, staff and delivery partners, numbers of young people involved and a costs breakdown. In addition each scheme was also required to provide crime data, final reports and monitoring data (range of activities and attendances).

5.8.4 Activity planning and support

Planning activities is often done in consultation with young people, asking them for a 'wish list' and all young people were asked to abide by a code of conduct. A report of each scheme is required and in Plymouth, a staff workshop was held to discuss positive and negative aspects of the scheme. The National Supporter (a private company) developed models of scheme design, a SPLASH helpline and monitoring and reporting materials.

²⁷ SPLASH Final Report (p24)

5.8.5 Diversionary activities in the context of personal development

These diversionary activities are included in Behaviour Improvement Programmes managed by the Department for Education and Skills (DES) to tackle street crime in 34 local authority areas across England, targeted at 8 to 19 year olds at the greatest risk of involvement in crime so that they are engaged for the whole summer.²⁸ In addition to the activities (including volunteering, residentials and outdoor activities, sports and arts), DES stipulated that these programmes should also:

- Tackle issues such as anger management,
- Provide a managed return to education, work or training so that the learning from the summer is built on.

5.8.6 SPLASH programmes in the context of crime reduction strategies

Police authorities across Great Britain run SPLASH schemes of their own, often forming part of overall strategies aimed at reducing crime and disorder. For example, the Manchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002-2005, under Aim 2 (Preventing Young People from becoming criminals) includes diversionary programmes which includes mentoring, and work appreciation schemes. This is intended as a collaborative exercise between the Youth Offending Team, the Youth services and Education authorities.

5.8.7 Diversionary activities aimed at promoting police/young people relations

Diversionary activities have been used by the West Yorkshire Police in a bid to forge links with police and young people. The focus has been broadened into helping disadvantaged young people into employment and promote social and personal development (using sailing, climbing and orienteering activities as a diversion). In this way, a distrust of the police has been overcome. Residential weekends are provided for those young people who demonstrate they are good community role models. A local

²⁸ Behaviour Improvement Programmes, Youth Policy Update (June 2002)

councillor remarked ‘ . . .the development of holiday activities has helped to combat a lot of the frustration felt by local youths. They are now provided with diversionary activities and have something to do’.²⁹ Other activities included

- Duke of Edinburgh Awards
- Driver training
- Five-a-side football tournaments
- Encouraging rewarding and positive behaviour and community involvement with the “personal Award for Excellence”
- Team building exercises

Peer education programmes were also used as a diversion from crime. The Pentagon Project in Lanarkshire in Scotland uses a peer education methodology in which young people are developing training materials for other groups in community education. Some programmes, such as the Rushmoor Crime and Disorder Strategy specifies parenting skills as an essential diversion from anti-social activity.

5.9 The potential for SPLASH to be effective in Belfast

Although it is difficult to make direct comparisons between anti-social behaviour by young people in England and the overtly inter-communal nature of the disturbances in Northern Ireland, it is clear that the provision of well-timed diversionary activities alone is effective in reducing levels of crime among young people in the relevant areas. For these schemes to be truly effective in Northern Ireland, an effective collaboration will be required within a partnership of all the agencies involved in delivering these programmes. The emphasis on providing socially excluded young people who are at risk of offending with training, education and employment is also an important part of the provision of an on-going and sustainable programme (after the diversionary activities have ceased). In

²⁹ West Yorkshire Police webpage, <http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/news/kidsoutoftrouble.htm>

Northern Ireland this holds true as much as anywhere else in the UK but the persistent problem of interface violence will require further emphasis on community relations.

5.10 SUMMARY

The various initiatives outlined in this report may be effective in diverting young people from criminal and anti-social activity but it is clear that for maximum impact and sustainability they should be set within a policy context. The main issues arising from this review of the literature is that although summer schemes do reduce crime figures as a matter of observable fact, they will only be effective in the long term when combined with programmes that offer a broader range of developmental activity such as personal development, citizenship education and training which leads to employment. In Northern Ireland, although these objectives are important, the most effective intervention will be to redress the sectarianism that fuels the intense and widespread inter-communal violence in the interface areas of Belfast. In addition to the social and economic regeneration of these areas, a programme of community relations initiatives is essential in order to promote respect and tolerance and therefore lessen the desire on the part of young people to carry out violent retribution against the other community. Summer schemes or diversionary activities will not bring this about on their own but set in a context of the long term development of young people and the communities in which they live, will be more effective in undermining sectarianism and intolerance. In doing so, the successful example of the SPLASH programmes run by the Youth Justice Board in England and Wales show that they should also embrace a multi-agency partnership approach. If diversionary activities are to penetrate the target population with maximum effect, it is essential that there is a coherent strategy involving all agencies so that when violence flares, groups are not left “firefighting”, responding reactively to each renewed crisis but rather providing programmes which proactively seek to undermine the basis of the conflict.

6.0 ANALYSIS AND IMPACT

This evaluation sought to examine the added value of the diversionary funding. This involved an exploration of the impact of the funding on the duration of the summer schemes, opening times, staffing levels, programme content and the age range of young people. Respondents were asked key questions on the helpfulness of the funding, the difference it made and whether the timing of the funding was effective or not. The results have been summarised and presented and will now be discussed under three main headings:

- Practice
- Funding
- Policy

6.1 PRACTICE

Survey respondents and interviewees indicate that the additional funding has had a very significant impact in work with young people in interface areas. A high percentage of respondents (88%) stated that the additional diversionary funding has made a difference in their areas. It enhanced their summer programmes that contributed to an easing of tension, possibly reduced conflict and was an alternative to rioting. The term “recreational rioting” has been added to our vocabulary in recent years and this term is used to describe activities that young people often engage in at times and places when there is nothing else to do. Anything that can help ease tensions and acts, as a diversion to activities that are not acceptable to the majority of people living in these communities should be encouraged. This diversionary funding falls into that category. It is worth considering ways that could improve it. There is widespread consensus, from BELB youth officers, youth workers and young people that *the scope of youth work has been increased.*

The importance of having the necessary resources to sustain lengthy programmes was impressed upon the evaluation team. The data reveals those projects that provided longer than the average programmes had a high voluntary staff complement. The programme of events, supplied by some respondents, reveals ***strong links with their local community*** with activities ranging from family days, fun-days, competitions, all age activity days, talent shows, local theme parades and linking into local community festivals. The schemes were embedded in those communities, received support through the participation of volunteers and the young people. What we heard the workers describe was a community-led scheme that was adding to an existing calendar of activities in some cases and in others it was the only event ongoing at that time of the year. The relevance of the programme to the needs of the community was apparent and important. It was a key ingredient in its success.

The statistics would also suggest that ***most youth projects did not open on weekends***, although some residential programmes may have been taking place. But we should not be overly critical of programmes that “took a break” at this time. It should be acknowledged that such programmes make high demands on paid staff and volunteers. Programmes of this nature are very labour intensive. A heavy duty Monday to Friday programme is very demanding given the context of where these programmes are being run and the potential volatile situation of living and working in many of these communities. To expect a seven-day a week programme could damage the morale and energy of the people that run them in the first place. On the other hand there is an argument to be considered that such programmes should be available to young people at times when they are most vulnerable or tempted to engage in activities that are labelled anti social. The theory that if they are fed well earlier in the week then this will sustain them over a weekend is questionable. A balance needs to be struck between offering programmes that interest and engage young people at times in the week when they are most needed and offering programmes that takes into account the energy and capacity of those that run them.

It is very significant to note that a considerable number of voluntary staff, (229) give their time to these summer schemes. ***The importance of volunteer staff cannot be underestimated.*** They play an important and integral role in summer schemes not least

with regard to the valuable skills and knowledge they share with young people. They provide that vital commodity of positive and sustainable link with the local community. Statistics illustrate a ratio of staff to young people as 1:6. This is based on the average attendance. It is remarkable, if not alarming, to note that if volunteers were not included, the statistics would dramatically change to a staff ratio of 1:16 thus putting the very existence and quality of the work of summer schemes in jeopardy. It would also raise the health and safety risks to participants. It is important to acknowledge the work of the volunteers and to remind us not to take them for granted. Volunteering is an act of active citizenship. It is a positive statement that they care and are willing to play their part to make the community a safer and more enjoyable place for the young people who also live there. This is the foundation for future work and an ingredient that cannot be left out.

The total number of volunteers under 25 (i.e. 112 and 49% of the overall total of volunteers) indisputably exemplifies the effective practice of *youth workers who have obviously nurtured and encouraged the active involvement of young people* to progress from members of their youth club into leadership roles. It demonstrates too that the youth service has relevance to the very people that it purports to serve.

It is a fact that a high number of projects relied on the goodwill and hard work of volunteers. The quantitative data linked to the qualitative data presented by workers would affirm this. *Supporting the volunteer and developing their potential and enhancing their practice is vital*. It is one thing to recruit volunteers but it is another to develop the practice and skills of those volunteers before, during and after the programmes. By offering volunteers expenses might assist recruitment and retention but alongside this should be an imaginative training package. The importance of training linked to summer scheme work cannot be underestimated. The evaluators were made aware and observed areas of practice that could be improved. The BELB management team is also aware of the need to provide ongoing training for some projects where there is a lack of expertise.

There is no doubt that the *additional money enables projects to offer more attractive and exciting programmes*, which presents young people with an alternative to rioting. A

number of projects highlight the need for extra funding to engage older teenagers and this occurred by offering activities such as go-karting, quad-biking, paintballing, horseriding, etc. Survey respondents also note that their projects are able to stay open for longer periods as a result of the additional funding. In June 2000 the Department of Education launched the document '*A Youth service for the Millennium*' which represented the findings of a Review Group. The Review Group had been tasked to suggest a framework for the development of the Youth Service and prepare an action agenda for strengthening its contribution to the needs of children and young people. One of the key components of the Youth Service was listed as the "*inclusion of young people between the ages of 4 – 25*". This extended range for youth work (4-25) has now three divisions within this:

- services to children under the age of 10
- services for young people between the ages of 10 – 16
- services to young adults over 16

With such a broad range of ages and with limited budgets it is remarkable that some of the schemes were so successful in devising interesting and engaging programmes for the older age group. Pressures for workers to come up with summer schemes that concentrate on satisfying the recreational needs of the younger age bracket is natural in communities. At this time of the year it is the *children* who are more visible on the streets and parents who are in need of a break from them. It is a very different focus of practice to devise a programme with and for the older teenager than it is for those under 10. There are demands on the workers to adopt a more empowering practice with this older age group to promote participation and partnership in the design, delivery and evaluation of a programme. There are particular skills required to follow this model and a level of experience and confidence in workers to take it on. This is not to say devising a programme for under 10's with a heavy recreational bias is easier, but it is different. Working with the older teenager is a ***considered practice*** that is built up over a period of time. It is not a one off summer activity programme.

One aspect of this considered practice is to take young people out of their communities and divert them from potential riot situations. This appears to be a strategy of youth workers who work along interfaces. This diversion comes through short 'trips out' of the

community, but also by an increased number of sustained residential experiences that enhances relationships between workers and young people and presents opportunities for young people to put something back into their communities on return. An overwhelming majority of schemes ***declared day trips as the single most popular activity*** and a significant number (44%) participated in residential. It can be deduced from this data that young people like the experience of getting away from their local community, which would presumably offer an opportunity to escape from the tensions that are part of everyday life in Belfast. It also offers workers an opportunity to develop relationships and observe young people in different surroundings and facing different challenges.

Youth work principles of ***consultation and the active inclusion of young people*** in planning programmes and being involved at the delivery end as well is seen to be ***successful ingredients to effective diversionary work***. Youth workers strongly advocate active listening and key facilitation skills with young people as primary skills that are needed in this work. Being young and living in inner city Belfast and/or near an interface area can mean you perceive it to be difficult to move in and out of your area safely. You may live in a state of fear of being attacked or at least vulnerable outside the safety of the community you know. On their own these young people may not have the confidence or will to go beyond where they know but through the application of these principles and skills this can assist young people to move beyond the confines of their own community.

A number of survey respondents are working long hours and sometimes in high risk situations which ultimately takes its toll manifesting itself in work overload and stress. Some workers believe that the best way to work in interface situations is ‘on the streets’ and therefore operate as ‘street-workers’. For one worker in East Belfast (s)he had been trying to extract young people from a very difficult riot situation when (s)he was injured in the process. The health and safety risks for street-workers are generally high, but in interface situations where workers feel the pressure to meet local needs the risks can be even higher. There is a definite need for employers to have in place procedures to protect workers who are willing to engage in this type of work and a support mechanism that will enhance and develop the practice. Street work is one part (a vital part) of the broad

portfolio of youth work and has its part to play in providing young people with the support and service they require and need.

It is obvious that the commitment to being an effective youth worker requires *skills and endless amounts of energy*. At times, expending the required energy of these ‘*unsung heroes*’ can impact on their own personal and social lives. The BELB management team acknowledges that there may be extra pressure on workers to manage their projects effectively and to open longer hours but a balanced approach is necessary.

It would appear that survey respondents are prepared to commit themselves fully to the demands of interface diversionary work. Additional funding may assist in running more effective programmes but due attention needs to be paid to the *stresses and strains* that this type of work brings on workers. Working conditions, health and safety and the use of volunteers are issues that survey respondents` view as extremely important in interface work. Mentoring, non-managerial supervision, training and the flexibility of paying volunteers expenses are options worth considering to help alleviate the tensions and pressures in this work.

6.2 FUNDING

The evaluators note that the diversionary funding was made available to the BELB for distribution in the last week of June 2002. BELB officers were then tasked with the hurried allocation of the funding bearing in mind that the majority of school age young people were about to begin their summer holidays on 1 July. A cynical commentator may view this last minute contribution as *too little too late*. It is not as if people living in these communities and those who are charged with governing the state don’t know that there are times of the year and places in Northern Ireland that can be volatile and susceptible to unacceptable levels of violence and disruption. The practice of *grant aid following riots* (or anticipating them) has not shown to be a solution to the situation. The timing of additional funding is an important aspect in the planning process for use of that funding.

An injection of funding so late in the day does not pay respect to those volunteers, workers and young people it is meant to assist.

In this case this last minute allocation leaves BELB officers with the difficult task of distributing the funding very quickly. However, this also creates major difficulties for anyone involved in planning and organising events at short notice.

Several workers also highlighted the ***lack of adequate communication networks***, which means that projects could miss out on available funding. One worker is concerned that the information about the funding came to light almost by accident. (S)he found out about the money informally via a youth service colleague and suggests that because their project is community based this may have placed it outside the usual networks. It would appear that because of the need to distribute the funding in a hasty fashion workers are sometimes unaware of its existence or how to apply for it. If we look at this situation from both sides we can see that, on the one hand, there were some groups who perceive themselves to be *outside the loop*. The implication is because they are not within the traditional youth sector (i.e. they are from the community sector) they are disadvantaged. Some would even state discriminated against, but in this instance it is hard to see the evidence for this. On the other side the BELB as distributors of the funding naturally used their known networks and demonstrated a willingness to go beyond this whenever others approached them. The Youth Work review (June 2000) refers to *"implementing (policies and) programmes in a way that is flexible and responsive to young people and local communities"*. If both the spirit and the intent of this aspiration is to be respected and effective then it is beholding on all parties to ensure that information is freely and widely available and acted upon with appropriate expediency.

A number of survey participants are eager to put forward suggestions to alleviate these problems. A more fuller audit of youth work activity may need to be carried out by the Education and Library Board in order to create an up to date and relevant database. This is worthy of consideration.

6.3 POLICY

While all projects surveyed are involved in diversionary work the survey respondents are at pains to make it clear the *diversionary work is only apart of each project's overall strategy*. It is acknowledged that the summer months and the 'marching season' creates specific problems but there is concern about a purely reactive response to this difficulty.

The significance of placing extra resources into local interface areas cannot be over-estimated. Youth workers and young people are very keen to demonstrate the impact of this *additional funding that ultimately has a knock on effect of reducing rioting and sectarian violence*. There are some concerns about reactionary responses that do not nurture a culture of sustainability and strategic planning. For projects at the interface there is an obvious need for funding throughout the year which is strategically organised and with more input from local groups.

The *lack of co-ordination* among summer scheme providers or interface funding bodies, in general, *would also appear to be a major problem*. As indicated earlier a number of agencies either directly provide summer activities for young people or assist local interface groups with funding. These include the Belfast Education and Library Board (Youth service), Belfast City Council, Belfast Regeneration Office, Belfast Local Strategy Partnership, North Belfast Community Action Unit and the Health Trusts also assist local groups. Anecdotal evidence would also suggest that a number of other statutory and voluntary agencies also work with young people during the summer months. Perhaps the time has come to ask the question in a city with a population of approximately 500,000 who will provide leadership, direction and co-ordination of these activities for young people during summer months?

In the Youth Work Review (June 2000) there is reference under a list of key components of the Youth Service to:

“an emphasis on the partnership approaches across sectors and agencies in the interest of young people”

and

“ a willingness to implement policies (and programmes) in a way that is flexible and responsive to the needs of young people”

Therefore it is not the lack of a policy context that is the problem, but it may take time for long established practices of agencies of government and agencies in the voluntary sector to work more closely in co-ordinating funding and activities with regard to summer schemes. *A partnership of equals* is to be encouraged.

If diversionary activities are to successfully target those young people most at risk of becoming involved in sectarian violence at interfaces then it is essential that all agencies be involved in joint strategic thinking, discussion and delivery. One way of enhancing the quality of the delivery and performance of work is for each project to provide, before funding is received, a clearly described set *of aims and objectives and an action plan demonstrating anticipated outcomes* for their schemes. Monitoring data is important to assist future planning and evaluation of the work. This would include, for instance, the range of activities, numbers of young people involved, staffing levels, delivery partners, and cost breakdown. This would be of great value to funders and Board.

The main objective of putting additional funding in place in the summer of 2002 was to help minimise the violence and rioting at sectarian interfaces. However, there would appear to be an additional spin-off whereby survey respondents noted a *reduction in ‘normal’ anti-social activity within communities*. The overt and inter-communal violence has been well documented but anti-social behaviour within communities has also been a major problem throughout Belfast. It is not a coincidence when you increase the level of youth work activity in an area that there is a corresponding benefit for both young people and other members of that community. When you are young and there is

nothing to do and nowhere to go you may soon become frustrated and agitated at the lack of choice of activities in your own community. This frustration does not necessarily lead inevitably to anti social behaviour but it may. Many of the interface communities have physical barriers that divide communities and many have psychological boundaries that have become just as difficult to cross. The opportunity at this time of year to get involved in diversionary activities can make a difference and can provide that necessary choice or alternative to someone frustrated and bored.

The impact of these diversionary activities on anti-social behaviours is not dissimilar to the impact of the *SPLASH scheme* in England, Scotland and Wales. Young people living in areas of high deprivation are targeted because they are more at risk and the key to a successful programme is the ability to quickly engage young people and keep them engaged. Attracting the older age range is also a key ingredient in reducing anti-social activities. Funders in N. Ireland should acknowledge the potential impact of a *more sustained and strategic approach* that has been demonstrated by the Youth Justice Board through its SPLASH schemes in England, Scotland and Wales. We should not be complacent with the success of this scheme and the difference the injection of funding made. We should not be fooled at the *splash* that the summer activity made in this community. When you look at it in the context of a year's activity it is only a ripple in a large pond.

Many of these SPLASH programmes are implemented using a partnership approach. Similar programmes in Belfast would provide the array of summer scheme providers and funders with the opportunity to create partnerships *with a focussed approach and a uniformity of purpose*. The emerging theme of Jarman's (2002) study 'Responding to interface violence in North Belfast' is the lack of an integrated structure to address anti-social and sectarian behaviour. If a recognised *forum of policy makers, funders, youth workers and young people* is established to look at policy funding and practice of summer schemes then major problems of interface violence and anti-social activities might be addressed more strategically.

As noted in the literature review various diversionary activities may be effective in diverting young people from criminal and sectarian violence. However, they will only be effective in the long term if they are embedded within a policy context that has the ***reduction of sectarianism and improved community relations at the heart of this policy.*** A number of survey respondents indicated that a broader range of development activities such as personal development programmes and citizenship education and more prolonged community relations activity is what is required for longer term development and will be more effective in undermining sectarianism, intolerance and prejudice.

To promote respect and tolerance and therefore lessen the desire on the part of young people to carry out violent activities at Belfast interface has to be a primary objective of all agencies that work either directly or indirectly with young people in Belfast. This report acutely highlights this issue and effective community relations' policies and initiatives are essential for the achievement of this objective.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

While the summer of 2002 has provided endless reports of sectarian interface violence, this evaluation report would suggest that the level of violence could have been much higher. Through quantitative and qualitative data presented there are robust indications that the additional diversionary funding has had a significant impact in work with young people in interface areas.

7.1 *The Impact*

64 projects received varying amounts of diversionary money from the Department of Education, through the Belfast Education and Library Board. The additional funding has enabled projects to offer more attractive and exciting programmes which presents young people with alternatives to rioting.

These programmes have contained a range of additional activities that include outdoor pursuits, camping, sports and a variety of residential experiences. Survey respondents also highlighted the need for extra funding to engage older age groups. This was achieved by offering more expensive activities not normally available during summer schemes, e.g. go-karting, quad biking, beauty therapy, paintballing and horseriding. Youth workers note the importance of 'trips out' for young people who on their own, sometimes, are unable to move beyond the confines of their own community and who express a sense of being trapped and hemmed in.

The additional funding has also assisted in reducing 'normal' anti-social behaviours within communities. A number of respondents also note that the additional monies enabled them to instigate a broader range of development activities such as citizenship education. They also indicate that more prolonged community relations' activity is what is required for longer-term development and effectiveness in undermining sectarianism.

7.2 *Timing and Distribution*

While the survey respondents are very positive about the impact of the funding a number of other key issues are raised which are worthy of notice. The last minute allocation of funding left BELB officers and workers from the 64 projects with little time to distribute the money and to plan a co-ordinated programme of activities. Several workers also highlighted the lack of communication network that might mean that projects could easily miss out on any available funding.

7.3 *Firefighting*

Survey respondents are clear that diversionary work is only a part of their overall strategy. It is acknowledged that the summer months and the ‘marching season’ creates specific problems but there are concerns about purely reactive responses to these difficulties. These reactionary responses have been described as ‘firefighting’ as they do not nurture a culture of sustainability and strategic planning. For interface projects there is an obvious need for funding throughout the year which is strategically organised and with more input from local groups.

7.4 *Lack Of Co-ordination*

The lack of co-ordination among summer scheme providers or interface funding bodies, in general, would appear to be a major problem. A myriad of statutory and voluntary agencies either directly provides summer activities for young people or assist local interface groups with funding. If diversionary activities are to successfully target those most at risk of becoming involved in interface violence then it is essential that all agencies be involved in partnerships with a focussed approach and a uniformity of purpose.

7.5 *The Stress of Interface Work*

A number of survey respondents are working long hours and sometimes in high-risk situations. These working conditions and health and safety issues can produce work overload and manifest itself in worker stress. One worker in East Belfast was injured trying to extract young people from a riot situation.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following 12 recommendations flow from the information, views and opinions gathered from these survey respondents. The recommendations have implications for the Department of Education, the Belfast Education and Library Board, other key funders and youth providers, local projects, youth workers and young people. Some recommendations will have already been made and will serve to support the views already held. Others will present a challenge to those who genuinely want the quality of life at interfaces to improve.

The evaluators strongly recommend that this report be disseminated widely within the youth service. In particular all those who participated in the evaluation and were involved in the running of the summer schemes. Distribution should also include Belfast City Council (Community Services), Belfast Regeneration Office, Belfast Local Strategy Partnership, North Belfast Community Action Unit, Health Trusts and other major voluntary agencies.

8.1 Practice

8.1.1 *Setting goals and action planning*

- To ensure quality standards of delivery at local level, projects should provide a clearly described set of aims and objectives and an action plan demonstrating anticipated outcomes. To assist future planning and evaluation monitoring data should be kept by the projects. This would include the range of activities, numbers of young people involved, staffing levels, delivery partners and cost breakdown.

8.1.2 Supporting the workers

- An *additional* layer of support is required to alleviate the stress of working at interfaces. A mentoring and/or non-managerial supervision network should be established

8.1.3 Involving and engaging young people in planning, delivery and evaluation

- The meaningful engagement and consultation of young people living in interfaces is required. Discussion on funding arrangements, design and implementation of programmes would assist funders and youth providers to deliver more successful programmes.

8.1.4 Learning from Experience

- To discuss the contents of this report and other key issues at interfaces a think tank should be established soon after the dissemination of this report to assist in open and honest debate on future strategic thinking and practice.

8.2 Funding

8.2.1 A multi agency approach to maximise funding

- ‘Firefighting’ funding must end. More sustained and strategic funding is required. The recent SPLASH schemes delivered by the Youth Justice Board in England, Scotland and Wales have made dramatic reductions in crime and anti-social activities. Similar programmes with a multi-agency approach could be implemented in Belfast.

8.2.3 Getting it out earlier

- In future years, interface funding which is specific to the summer period should be allocated and distributed at Easter to enable forward and strategic planning.

8.2.4 Working with 16+

Working with the 16+ age range is a considered practice that is built up over a period or time. To successfully engage this age range in meaningful and empowering activities a sum of money should be ring-fenced to target this age group during the summer months.

8.2.5 Effective communication

- To ensure that local projects are not left out of the funding loop it is necessary for the BELB to create more effective communication networks. This could be achieved by area projects designing and maintaining a database of all existing local groups.

8.2.6 Being flexible with the funding

- Greater flexibility in the spending of interface monies should be allowed. In particular, volunteer training, transport, food and childminding costs should be met by this funding.

8.3 Policy

8.3.1 Underpinned by community relations and equality

- To promote respect and tolerance and ultimately reduce sectarianism (and racism) a broader range of development activities such as citizenship education and more prolonged community relations activities should be cultivated at all levels.

8.3.2 *Co-ordination and Integration*

- A primary recommendation made in earlier evaluations on the disbursement of summer scheme funding was to move towards a more co-ordinated and integrated approach. With additional interface funding now in vogue this recommendation is now more poignant. As such, strong leadership is required to bring together those key agencies and funders to look at a strategic direction for summer provision along interfaces.

If we were to simplify recommendations and get a direct message across from the workers, volunteers and young peoples` perspective the message would be.

- *Make sure the money is on the table in plenty of time for us to plan a worthwhile scheme.*
- *Allow workers to plan these activities as part of a working year not just a `one off summer splash`*
- *Ensure that everyone has a fair chance to bid for this money and that it is distributed fairly across the areas of need.*
- *Support the youth workers and volunteers with training, mentors and effective supervision*
- *Let`s all work together to pool resources and ideas.*
- *Let`s learn from what has gone before*

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A Chronology of incidents/issues and disturbances relating to street violence and riots in Belfast reported in the Belfast Telegraph and the Irishnews occurring in Belfast during July and August 2002

JULY

Another weekend of violence took place in flashpoint areas of Belfast

A Belfast Police chief blames nationalists for fuelling the riots because they are refusing to marshal protesters of Orange Parades

A US team are to monitor interface riots. The task of the International observers is to determine who is to blame for the riots

A series of violence flared in East Belfast – two police officers and a petrol bomb has destroyed a protestant house

Two 15year old boys have been shot in the legs by paramilitaries in a punishment attack in North Belfast

A 16-year-old boy has been beaten in a sectarian attack

A Belfast Masonic hall has been destroyed in an arson attack

Paramilitaries are making £18million a year through smuggling, extortion and armed robberies

Paramilitary shootings are on the increase in Northern Ireland. Loyalists and republicans are believed to have carried out a total of 190 paramilitary shootings in the last year.

Loyalists = 124 republican = 66 there have also been 112 paramilitary beatings.

There has been a pipe bomb attack in Short Strand area of Belfast

The Alliance party have accused police of 'lack of will' to deal with paramilitary flags in South Belfast

Loyalists wearing masks have blocked roads in the lower Ormeau area of Belfast

Police issue a warning that republicans are planning major riots in Ardoyne area of Belfast and have said that a large number of youths are being bussed into the area.

Violence broke out in the Tigers Bay area as loyalist attend a bonfire party

Loyalists fired a volley of shots during an 11th night bonfire party in a 'show of strength'

Youths attack firemen as they tried to attend to a number of call outs to bonfires across the city

Rioting erupts as police clash with protestants in the Springfield road area of Belfast

Hundreds of police hemmed 300 nationalist protesters at the corner of Ardoyne and the Crumlin road.

A bomb left on the route of the Belfast city centre orange parade route was defused

A catholic teenager was stabbed in a sectarian attack in Belfast

A protestant teenager was killed as a result of a 'hit & run'

There was an attack on an orange hall in Belfast

Another person was killed as a result of a 'hit & run' the car was later found burnt out in a Nationalist area in Belfast

Police launch a scheme to tackle car crime – 2 people have been killed this year by joy riders

Loyalist target catholic homes

One catholic is injured in a brutal assault

A couple have been hurt as interface violence erupts in Belfast. Paint bombs, petrol bombs and stone throwing

A catholic man has been stabbed as a result of a sectarian attack

A protestant teenager has been shot in a punishment attack

Riots erupt in the Ardoyne area of Belfast mobs of youths stone throwing, throwing petrol bombs

A protestant man was 'left lying in the street like a dog' after being shot. Shots are believed to have been fired from across the peace-line that separates Glenbryn from nationalist Ardoyne

Pipe bombs were thrown into a nationalist area in East Belfast – several children narrowly escaped injury

A man was attacked and shot in North Belfast UFF gunmen laughed as they shot the man three times

Teenager Gerard Lawlor shot dead UFF are accused of the murder

A man who boarded a bus on the Falls road order the driver to take a device he left on the bus to the city hall in Belfast

A six-year-old catholic girl was hit on the head by a brick that was hurled over the peace-line in east Belfast

A 19-year-old man was shot in the groin in the Glenbryne estate

The PSNI have said that local communities must work in partnership with them to tackle car crime, over 800 cars were stolen in West Belfast last year and 321 arrests were made.

Calls were made for the police to protect catholics in the recent riots in Belfast

Joy riders are blamed for arson attack made on a West Belfast anti-car crime activist

The nation is scoured by street violence serious offences have increased by 20%

A 16-year-old East Belfast boy is due in court facing charges of possession of over 1000 rounds ammunition and intent to endanger lives.

There have been a number of sectarian attacks by loyalists throwing paint bombs targeting catholic homes

Seven catholic homes have been targeted in petrol bomb attacks

Two people were charged with riotous behaviour in Belfast

A riot erupted in the Sandy Row area of Belfast last evening a crowd of over 60 people confronted police. Belfast nightspots along the Golden mile of the city have been branded 'no go area'

People with severe learning disabilities are frightened to attend an Everton community services complex due to the recent riotous attacks in the area.

Following a death threat (bullet in post) on a Belfast Health worker, 900 colleagues have organised a one-day stoppage of services

Attacks on emergency services are on the increase

AUGUST

Thousands of Anit-sectarian protesters attended a rally in Belfast City Centre

A street protest in a West Belfast estate was held to demand the cessation of joy riders

Hospital staff are targeted in the lasted sectarian attacks in the greater Belfast area

A catholic student was attacked at a City centre nightspot

A 22-year-old Belfast man was shot in the legs as a result of a paramilitary punishment attack

A bomb alert in Belfast city centre a community created traffic mayhem on the streets

An SDLP councillor was attacked in his own community

Republicans attack a group of youths who were attending a bonfire in West Belfast commemorating internment – youths stated the reason for the attack was to ‘make an example of them’.

A man had a lucky escape in Belfast as he kicked a pipe bomb that did not explode

Trouble flared at flashpoint areas in Belfast Ardoyne and Short strand – shots were fired

There has been an arson attack on a catholic primary school

Police were attacked and a number of officers are believed to have been injured as trouble flared at interface areas

There has been a pipe bomb attack on a police station in North Belfast

A large number of pipe bombs were recovered in North Belfast

A 19-year-old man was shot in a paramilitary attack in East Belfast

A teenage boy remains in a critical condition as a result of a ‘hit & run’ incident in North Belfast

Catholic homes have been targeted by rioters in North Belfast one woman has stated ‘it goes on every morning afternoon and evening’

Loyalists have attacked a pensioner’s home in the Short Strand area of Belfast

Riots erupt in East Belfast shots have been fired

A family narrowly escaped injury from a bomb attack on their home during interface rioting

A petrol bomb was hurled at a car in Belfast

Fire crews are targeted in flashpoint areas in Belfast as they try to attend calls to deal with petrol bomb attacks in North Belfast

The UVF opened fire on police in East Belfast

In the last five years over 30 women have been attacked and beaten by paramilitaries

Residents in North Belfast interface area have called for a 12ft high fence to be erected to protect them from further attacks

A youth group from North Belfast are banned from Seacat for abusive threatening behaviour during a recent trip to Scotland

A catholic 18mth old baby and seven children narrowly escape injury during a missile attack on their home

A number of riot equipment, 12 crates of petrol bombs, 4 crates of bottles and container of flammable liquid were recovered during a search in a North Belfast area

Catholic workmen have been frightened of carrying out repairs to homes damages as a result of sectarian attacks in the Short Strand area of Belfast. One catholic workman who continued to carry out repairs has been threatened to stop repair works in the estate

A woman was beaten in a paramilitary attack and was forced to leave her home

A youth group in Poleglass was praised by the minister for the environment Dermott Nesbit for their contribution to the improvement of their environment as part of their long-standing project work Mr Nesbit stated that this group should be held as an example of good work to others in Northern Ireland

Army troops act as a buffer zone the IRA and UVF in Short Strand area of Belfast

The wife of a leading unionist has been attacked with an acid bomb in the interface violence in East Belfast A 15 year old was also injured by acid during this attack

There has been a bomb attempt in the area of the Grovenor road bringing traffic to a stand still across Belfast city. The continuity IRA have declared they are responsible for this attack

A Holy Cross primary school pupil is in fear after a loyalist attack on her home