

GOOD RELATIONS AND VOLUNTEERING TOOLKIT

Volunteering and Belonging Together

www.volunteernow.co.uk

VOLUNTEER NOW
connect · build · change



We hope this Toolkit will not just help them (our volunteers) develop knowledge and skills but also add to their enjoyment of their volunteering experience.

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FOREWORD

We are delighted to produce this good relations Toolkit with support from The Executive Office.

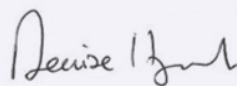
If the Toolkit is your starting point for encouraging volunteers to think about good relations and diversity, we hope it will provide you with material to explore the issues and enhance your practice; to have useful, challenging and enjoyable sessions; and that it also provides sufficient further information for future work with volunteers.

Making a difference to peoples' lives is what motivates all of us within the voluntary and community sector but we cannot ignore the changing nature of local communities and the evolution of this place we all call home. As our local communities change so must we, as we seek to further embed good relations within the fabric of our organisations.

It is, of course, also about giving back to our volunteers – and we hope this Toolkit will not just help them develop knowledge and skills but also add to their enjoyment of their volunteering experience.

Thanks for taking an interest in the Toolkit – especially thank you if you use it to further stimulate the interest and passion of your volunteers as you, and they, continue to deliver the priceless work you do for and with local communities.

We hope the Toolkit helps you and complements the work of your organisation; and supports The Executive Office as it continues to deliver the regional strategy, Together: Building a United Community.



Denise Hayward
VOLUNTEER NOW





We hope the Toolkit helps you and complements the work of your organisation; and supports The Executive Office as it continues to deliver the regional strategy, Together: Building a United Community.

Volunteer Now



We wish Volunteer Now every success in making the Toolkit available and thank them sincerely for the work they lead, making a difference to the lives of others regardless of community or ethnic background.

Ministers

MESSAGE FROM MINISTERS

People matter, and volunteers in community and voluntary organisations put people first by giving their time to make a difference to the lives of others.

What volunteers contribute to local communities cannot be measured in currency and statistics – the work of volunteers is priceless to people and communities in need.

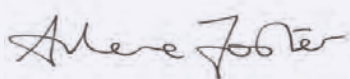
We are delighted that The Executive Office has supported the development of this Volunteering and Belonging Together Toolkit, not just as a resource that may further develop the knowledge and skills of volunteers. We are delighted because the Volunteering and Belonging Together Toolkit further acknowledges the contribution volunteers make and how, sometimes without even knowing it, they are contributing to the improvement of community relations.

People are not defined by whatever boundaries exist where we live, but by our behaviour in improving the communities within which we live. There are no boundaries when people are in

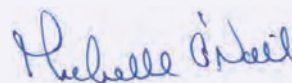
need and no boundaries to how each of us individually can contribute to a better, more cohesive, welcoming home where everyone belongs regardless of background.

People are not defined by hatreds but by our common humanity. We hope this Toolkit further embeds the principles of good relations within organisations and helps in the continued development of those community heroes who volunteer their time.

We wish Volunteer Now every success in making the Toolkit available and thank them sincerely for the work they lead, making a difference to the lives of others regardless of community or ethnic background.



THE RT HON ARLENE FOSTER MLA
FIRST MINISTER



MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA
DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

WHAT IS GOOD RELATIONS?

In Northern Ireland good relations is defined in Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998, that followed the conclusion of the Good Friday Belfast Agreement. It highlights...

...the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group

In other words, it is to do with preventing racism and sectarianism by developing relationship and understanding between people from different backgrounds.

Good relations is about understanding the importance and benefits of diversity and committing to the principle that diversity enriches everyone, that everyone belongs equally in this place that we call home.

There are three core values when working on good relations – equity, diversity and interdependence. These values provide the core basis for good relations work.



Equity

A commitment at all levels within society to ensuring equality of access to resources, structures and decision-making processes and to the adoption of actions to further support and pro-actively facilitate those that do not have equal access.



Diversity

Seen in the ever-changing variety of community and individuals' experiences. Respect for diversity affirms the value which can be derived from the existence, recognition, understanding and support of difference.



Interdependence

Recognition by different interest or identity groupings of their obligations and commitments to others and of the inter-connectedness of individual/community experiences and ambitions leading to the development of a society which is at once cohesive and diverse.

These values are not about diluting, interfering in, or forcing change in anyone's own core beliefs and values. Quite the opposite – good relations embraces peoples' differences as important parts of a diverse community.

One of the most significant ways the three values can be expressed was during the “I Have a Dream” speech by Martin Luther King in Washington DC at the rally for freedom and jobs in August 1963 – he was talking about relations between white and black people in the USA but could have been referencing any area, region or country where division existed. Martin Luther King said:

To those that are divided that think in “them” and “us” ways remember...“that their destiny is tied up with our destiny... that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. **We cannot walk alone.**”



In Northern Ireland, to build a more cohesive community, we cannot walk alone in resolving our differences regardless of political, religious or ethnic background.

GOOD RELATIONS IS ALSO ABOUT THE HEAD, HEART AND HAND



Head

Knowing the facts and being able to challenge racism and sectarianism when it occurs.



Heart

Helping people communicate our common humanity, that most people and faiths want other people treated how we ourselves want to be treated whether on smaller, practical matters or larger areas of inclusion.



Hand

Asking people to embark, hand in hand, on a journey that will enrich themselves and enrich the communities within which they volunteer to improve relationships and go beyond tolerance by...

Volunteering and Belonging Together.

In Northern Ireland we define good relations as racism and sectarianism. What are they?

Racism...

Is someone behaving in a way that may lead to prejudice, discrimination or antagonism toward other people because of different characteristics such as the colour of their skin or cultural beliefs. However, racism can be a deeper problem than that – it can be structural or systemic. This means it has been happening for so long that behaviours and attitudes have become “normalised”. It may also, therefore affect how big organisations and even public agencies do their business.

Sectarianism...

Is someone so strongly supporting one political or religious group that it may lead to prejudice, discrimination or antagonism toward another political or religious group. Sectarianism isn't just confined to Northern Ireland. It can happen all over the world. Sectarianism is often regarded as a sub-set of racism and, like racism, can become structural or systemic where it has been happening for so long that behaviours become “normalised”.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This Toolkit will help you introduce diversity amongst volunteers. Learning about and from others enriches everyone.

Everyone grows by better understanding the unique attributes we all have and what everyone brings to the area in which we live, and to which we all belong.

You may already have a volunteer policy that covers issues such as diversity and inclusion and sets out how you will engage with volunteers and help them in their journey of development as well as contributing to their community. While we cannot expect too much of our volunteers, it is helpful for them to understand why good relations is important; to understand the core beliefs of people from other backgrounds; and to understand the importance of local communities embracing difference. Volunteers choose to give their time freely so any additional ask of them needs to be both rewarding and enjoyable.

We have been told by voluntary and community organisations consulted in producing this Toolkit they wanted it to include short activities and be light touch.

The pack does not provide all of the answers, but it does help, in a fun and interactive way, to explore issues around our differences whether religious or political, or those shaped by our ethnic and racial backgrounds and heritage.

In the pack you will find:

- Advice and guidance about holding good relations and intercultural events and activities;
- Information about the main faiths in an ever-evolving Northern Ireland;
- Information about discussing good relations and intercultural issues;
- Some fun activities and exercises to introduce good relations to volunteers in an inter-active way;
- Myth busting challenges;
- Worksheets to help you facilitate discussion as a result of the activities;
- Case studies of community organisations already engaged in good relations work with their volunteers;
- Advice on where to go for help and further support.

Dip in and out of the Toolkit as relevant to your organisation whether with volunteer sessions or in organising more inclusive events, and monitoring your organisation for its diversity.

So, the Toolkit is for you and your organisation to use to:

- Develop a better understanding of good relations by staff and volunteers;
- Start or further develop a journey of relationship development with people from other backgrounds within your organisation or as volunteers.

If you want to embrace longer and more challenging good relations work, or if volunteers wish to have a longer personal development experience, there are contacts provided at the end of the Toolkit.

The Toolkit ultimately encourages everyone in your organisation to move beyond tolerance. Good relations is more than tolerating. Everybody belongs, all of us together, equally. That is why the Toolkit is called Volunteering and Belonging Together.

It places a responsibility on all of us. It is a responsibility to reach out to our volunteers, neighbours and co-workers to ensure they feel an equal sense of belonging; that their history, their culture, their traditions and who they are, are valued equally.

The behaviour of belonging should become a habit that we demand of ourselves and expect of others. Not just about traditional cultures and overcoming those community divisions from the past but also for and with newcomers, refugees, minority communities, minority communities including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and others that enrich our communities.

The Toolkit has been produced with funding from The Executive Office.



MONITORING FOR DIVERSITY?

This region is becoming ever more diverse, enriching us all as people make it their home, not just from all over Ireland and the United Kingdom but from all over the world.

This is a changing region where all people regardless of their background, faith, sexual orientation, gender, whether with or without a disability, from whatever racial and ethnic background, live equal and inter-dependent lives.

So, as organisations working within those communities, we want to make sure we are as inclusive as possible, properly reflecting the people that we seek to serve and support.

Collecting monitoring information is not just a paper exercise that funders make us do.

There are real benefits to organisations if it is done right.

For Example:

- How do we know that our organisation is inclusive if we do not know who attends?
- How do we know that our outreach and promotion is being accessed by everyone if we do not ask?
- How do we know whether people who drop out are not put off by something relevant to their community background, if we do not know who drops out or why?
- How do we know where to improve if we do not ask people?
- How do we know we are making a difference if we do not ask everyone?

Funders, of course, will also want to have evidence that the public funding they award is making a difference to peoples' lives.

In good relations, monitoring and evaluation does not facilitate attitudinal change – that is for those delivering activities and projects. Monitoring provides a snapshot which can be used at once to improve what organisations deliver or help organisations make sure they are inclusive of the community around them.

We have included some examples of community background monitoring questions you might ask – but it is up to you whether you do and how you do it.

WHY IS INFORMATION BEING COLLECTED?

Many community organisations do not ask questions about the background of volunteers and members. There are different reasons why they do not, which may be legitimate.

Sometimes people say we do not ask these questions because we are open to everyone... we don't want to ask people in case they are offended...people say Northern Ireland has moved on; this just harps back to the past.

Sometimes these comments are true. Sometimes, though, people say these things because they are happy to continue to work with people who are largely from a particular community or who are not ethnically diverse. Sometimes, the people who say these things are worried or frightened to ask the questions. Sometimes, people are just comfortable as they are.

Some people will genuinely believe their organisation is open to everyone but because they do not ask questions about the background of volunteers or users, the community organisation may not be aware that there is something about what they are doing that puts people off participating. The only way to find out if your organisation is diverse and reflective of your local community is to ask these questions.

Usually people are not offended and, if it is explained why the questions are being asked, they will be content to answer a few questions in confidence.

You should explain that details such as community background, ethnicity, and even things like age or sexual orientation may be asked not because you are interested in their personal information but so that the organisation can see if:

- There is any particular grouping not attending;
- If people that drop out are more from one background than another;

- If different types of activity are better supported by one group or another.

Ultimately the questions asked are trying to improve the way an organisation works, for everyone.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

If you are asking these monitoring questions, volunteers should have a clear explanation given of why they are being asked and what use will be made of the information; and they should be given the option of:

- Not filling out any question they do not wish to answer;
- Answering questions in private and in confidence.

QUESTIONS ON POLITICAL BACKGROUND, RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

The core elements of good relations section 75(2) are peoples' religious, political and racial or ethnic background.

Generally, a person's political background or belief is not asked and is less relevant to the work they may do as a volunteer.

The Executive Office (TEO) which is the government department responsible for policy on good relations, also asks these questions in their monitoring and evaluation processes when they fund good relations projects. They remind projects that this information is gathered to ensure a project is having a meaningful impact on people of all religions and ethnicities. The information will

never be used to identify anyone personally but to better design and improve projects for the future.

Of course, the core information about religious background, given our still predominantly Christian population, may mainly ask whether a person is from a Protestant or Catholic background, and describe those from a non-Christian background as “other”. However, this has two particular drawbacks:

1. Many people do not now identify themselves in such terms although almost everyone who was brought up in Northern Ireland was brought up in one or other of those two religious backgrounds;
2. In good relations terms, it is not good to “other” anyone, including people from those faiths who are increasingly making their home in Northern Ireland – especially if you have a target of increasing representation within your volunteer pool from BAME communities.

Therefore, you may consider phrasing such a question in the following ways:

In what faith were you brought up?

- Catholic
- Protestant
- Other Christian
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Sikh
- Buddhist
- Other (please outline):

Ethnic background:

Regarding ethnic background, most volunteers given the nature of the local population, will be from a White (British, Irish or Northern Irish) ethnicity. However, again we do not want to “other” non-White ethnicities. Instead, it may be reasonable to ask:

In what ethnicity were you brought up?

- White (British, Irish or Northern Irish)
- White (Irish Traveller)
- White (Eastern European)
- White (Other)
- Asian (Indian)
- Asian (Chinese)
- Asian (Other)
- Black (African)
- Black (Caribbean)
- Latin American
- Mixed Race
- Other

QUESTIONS SUCH AS AGE AND GENDER

While not part of the section 75(2) definition of good relations, these are important elements of diversity within your volunteer make-up that you may want to address ensuring balance and equity of access to opportunities.

Age:

If you find asking age-related questions relevant to making sure the organisation has an age balance, or wants to know if there is an age imbalance:

What is your age range?

- Under 18
- 18 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 65
- Over 65

Or whatever age ranges that are most useful to your organisation.

Gender:

It is important to recognise gender other than male or female when asking a gender-related demographic question.

It may include:

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Non-binary

Other section 75 categories include sexual orientation (Straight/Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian/Homosexual, Bi-sexual), dependents, and marital status.

It is important your organisation is open and welcoming of people from all backgrounds even where the categories are not core to section 75(2). While they may not be part of monitoring information it is recommended that your organisation regularly reviews how inclusive it is of people from all age, gender, disability or sexual orientation backgrounds.

You may then be able to learn from the answers given by people from those different backgrounds about how you might make your activities even more inclusive.

MAIN FAITHS EXPLAINED

In Northern Ireland there are many people from different faiths and many people of no faith.

All of those different faiths have much more in common than they have which is different.

There are common values and principles, common threads of compassion about how to treat other people.

All faiths demonstrate compassion towards each other regardless of background or belief.

All faiths, sincerely practised, promote the inclusion of others.

That is a principle of good relations and community work; just as it is of all faiths.

The summary below highlights the beliefs of the main faith traditions that are organised and practised in Northern Ireland to help you and volunteers further understand the key beliefs of the main faiths in Northern Ireland.

Christianity and the Christian Community



Christianity is one of the largest religions in the world and it is the biggest faith background in Northern Ireland. Christians believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Christians base their faith on His teaching and example. The holy book of Christians is the Bible which has an Old Testament (recording the story of the people of Israel before Jesus) and a New Testament (the story of Jesus and the early Christian church). There are many major denominations including Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, Anglican or Church of Ireland, Baptist, Free Presbyterian and several others. The various Christian denominations often cooperate in ecumenical relationships, although some Christian faiths do not endorse or practice ecumenism. Many Christian-based organisations have been involved in cross community peace building work for decades. The main day of worship is usually Sunday. Major festivals are at Easter (death and resurrection of Jesus) and Christmas (birth of Jesus). There are no dietary restrictions on most Christians, although some abstain from alcohol.



Islam and the Muslim Community

Islam is one of the largest religions in the world. There are around 10,000 Muslims in Northern Ireland. Muslims live by a religious code of values and behaviours around culture, morals, family, relationships, food and dress. Islam focuses on what unites people and Muslims may often see themselves as one nation regardless of identity. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) lived around the sixth century CE (which Christians define as AD) and is the messenger of Allah. Islam submits to Allah, which means the one and true God. The Muslim holy book is the Qur'an. It also contains the life stories of Abraham, Moses and Jesus who is recognised as a major Prophet although not regarded by Muslims as the Son of God. While the Mosque is the place of worship, any clean place can be used. The main day of worship is a Friday. The major festival is Ramadan celebrating the revelation of the Qur'an to Mohammed. During Ramadan Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Eid is also important – the festival marking the end of Ramadan. Muslims will not consume meat or by-products derived from pigs. Muslims will eat Halal food which refers to the means of slaughter of animals. Alcohol is forbidden.



Judaism and the Jewish Community

The ethos of the Jewish religion is based on the Torah. There is One Creator of the world, God, and it is Him the Jewish people worship and give thanks and praise. The Torah is the Bible, Genesis through to Deuteronomy then the books of The Prophets and The Book of Writings. In all there are 24 Books of the Bible or The Tanach as it is known in Hebrew. The life cycle for a Jewish person centres around the Shabbat (Sabbath) the seventh day of the week and the Jewish festivals such as New Year & The Day of Atonement, Sukkot (Tabernacles) & Pesach (Passover) to name a few. The Jewish people have a strict code of dietary laws that are set down in the Torah. This is called Kosher. Within these laws there needs to be a strict separation of meat foods and utensils and dairy ones. There are certain rites of passage within Judaism such as Bar-Mitzvah or Bat-Mitzvah to mark the coming of age for a boy or girl. Marriage is important as the Jewish line is continued on through the maternal line. The language of the Torah is Hebrew and is considered to be a holy language. It is also the language of the majority of Jewish prayers. Worship is from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday.



Hinduism and the Hindu Community

There is a vibrant Hindu community in Northern Ireland and there is a dedicated Indian Community Centre in Belfast. There are a number of Hindu temples. Hinduism is the oldest living religion. It is based on the Vedas scriptures and there are many philosophical schools. Hindus believe in one Supreme God but that God can be manifest in many different forms. Therefore, there are a number of deities including Lord Krishna, Lord Shiva and Lord Rama. There are a number of sacred books, the most famous of which is the Bhagavad Gita (the Song of God). Worship includes prayers, incense burning and mantra chanting. There are a number of festivals including the Holi Festival of Colours and the Diwali festival of lights. Hindus believe all living things are spiritual by nature and therefore Hindus lead a life of non-violence. Hindus do not eat meat or fish and many do not eat eggs. Vegetarian and vegan dietary requirements are therefore important. Some Hindus will eat meat but not beef. Pork is avoided. Alcohol is forbidden.



Sikhism and the Sikh Community

Sikhism is a relatively young religion, around 500 years old. Founded by Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Sikhs believe that God's truth lies within all religions. The holy book is the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs have an individual relationship with one God and believe salvation can be found through good deeds as well as God's grace. The word Sikh means a pupil or disciple. Sikhs pray many times a day and five symbols may impact on dress and appearance: hair is not cut and must be kept clean and protected, a comb is carried for securing the hair, a miniature sword is carried to symbolically defend truth and justice, shorts are worn by men as a symbol of chastity, and a bracelet is worn on the right wrist to indicate oneness with God. Turbans are worn. Sikh festivals or Melas often coincide with Hindu festivals. The central festival is Vaisakhi, a celebration of harvest and of Guru Gobind Singh's creation of the Khalsa, the pure brotherhood of Sikhs. Sikhism forbids smoking and consuming alcohol. Devout Sikhs will not eat any animal product or by-product but many Sikhs do eat meat. Ritually slaughtered meat such as Halal is forbidden. The cow is sacred therefore Sikhs do not eat beef. Pork is avoided.



Baha'i and the Baha'i Community

Baha'i is a relatively new world religion, just 200 years old. There is a vibrant Baha'i community in Northern Ireland and Baha'i Spiritual Assemblies in five towns. Baha'is believe in the essential unity of the great world religions and that God has revealed himself through a series of interventions including Abraham, Jesus, Buddha, Krishna and Muhammed. Baha'is believe in equality between genders, elimination of the extremes of wealth and poverty, universal education and the unity of humanity. Baha'i has no clergy as such but daily prayer is required – a short prayer said in private is required each day. There are a number of holy days in a year and one period of fasting for 19 days immediately before the Spring equinox which is usually around the 21st March. Sacred text includes the writings of Báb and Bahá'u'lláh including the Most Holy Book. The texts of other religions are also considered sacred texts by Baha'is. There are no dietary requirements. Alcohol is forbidden.



Buddhism and the Buddhist Community

Buddhism is largely based on the teachings of Buddha or the awakened one. He was an enlightened teacher that helped people end suffering to attain the highest happiness or nirvana. There are two major branches of Buddhism: Mahayana including Zen and Tibetan Buddhism (Dalai Lama is the head monk); and Theravada. But there are also many more denominations. Both main branches are represented in Northern Ireland. There is no personal relationship with God. The way to enlightenment is through morality, meditation and wisdom. Buddhists can pray at a temple or at home; often they will use mantras or short prayers. There are a number of festivals the most important of which is Wesak (Buddha Day) which falls in May or early June. Denominations will differ on dietary rules but generally diet is vegetarian or vegan. Alcohol is forbidden.



Humanism and the Humanist Community

Humanist thought has been around for at least 2,500 years. There are examples of humanist thinking in ancient China, India, and Greece. Humanism is a philosophy or an approach to life that represents a way of trying to understand ourselves and our world from a non-religious perspective. Humanists trust to evidence and the scientific method when it comes to understanding how the universe works and reject the idea of the supernatural: they are therefore either atheist (they do not believe in a god or gods) or agnostic (they believe we can never know whether a god or gods exist). They believe our morality evolved naturally and they make their ethical decisions based on reason, empathy, and a concern for the wellbeing of human beings and other animals. They believe that, in the absence of any evidence of an afterlife or any discernible purpose to the universe, human beings can and should act to give their own lives meaning by seeking happiness in this life and helping others to do the same. Humanists do not have any particular rituals or practices they must perform; however, many take the opportunity to recognise and celebrate landmarks in people's lives, and humanist celebrants conduct naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals for the non-religious.

KEY REMINDERS FOR ORGANISING A DIVERSE EVENT

In Northern Ireland there are many people from different faiths and many people of no faith.

There are many things to consider if organising an event especially if people from diverse backgrounds are attending or you hope will attend. We have summarised a few of the key considerations in the table below.

Theme	Consideration
Promotion and Raising Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make sure any promotional material is consistent with the diversity you are seeking for the event or that represents the local community;- Have an initial conversation with representative groups about the material and the session;- Review access arrangements for people with disabilities, including promotional access to materials and access to buildings is important;- Ask people from the different backgrounds to get involved, shape the programme, and help with outreach;- Review invitation lists and include people from the various communities relevant to the event;- Explore using different languages, broadening social media or other engagement. It might be useful to include social media tags from diverse organisations.
Food, Drink and Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Think about the date/day and make sure there is no clash with holy and prayer days for different faiths.- Make yourself aware of any food restrictions or dietary needs. For example, several faiths will not eat beef or pork;- Check any venue for symbols that may offend – not to remove symbols but to ensure they do not offend;- Providing space in a location or in an itinerary for prayers may be appropriate depending on the type of activity, how long and when it is taking place;- The venue for a meeting or event should be safe and accessible for people from all backgrounds.

Theme	Consideration
Inclusion in the Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that when volunteers are involved consideration is given to how to do that with volunteers from minority backgrounds, different faiths and ethnic backgrounds; - Are volunteers, including those from different backgrounds, clear about how they can input to decisions that affect them? - Can people with disabilities access information and buildings? - Your organisation should be clear and visible about its aims and ambitions for the inclusion of people from different backgrounds; - Review membership of staff, volunteers, management or steering groups to ensure involvement of minority communities and people from different backgrounds, especially to see if it is similar to the local community.
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are exit interviews carried out to understand why people have dropped out or failed to attend an event or series of events? - Monitoring not just attitudes and satisfaction but also rates of participation of people from different backgrounds, would be useful; - Are satisfaction ratings similar for people from different backgrounds? - Have you plans for what to do if people from some backgrounds are less positive or attend less often?

Top Ten Considerations and Reminders for Events

No.	Considerations	Reminders
1	Promotion, awareness and engagement	Include symbols or pictures that demonstrate your approach to diversity
2	Aims and objectives of your organisation	Clearly and publicly state your commitment to diversity
3	Customs and practice	Try to ensure you do not hold activities and events when different people from faiths or community background may have other commitments
4	Food, drink and culture	Develop a checklist for organising events and activities that include a Do and Don't reminder
5	Communication tools	Include organisations and people from different backgrounds in your promotional campaigns
6	Venues and symbols	Check all venues for symbols that may offend, not necessarily to remove symbols
7	Volunteers and staff	Regularly do an audit to see if those involved in your organisation are as diverse as you aspire to
8	Adverse impacts and legislation	Check requirements and obligations regularly
9	Family involvement	If relevant make sure families from minority backgrounds can access information and feel included to the same degree as others
10	Monitoring and evaluation	Always monitor not just attendance but satisfaction and compare satisfaction rates of different groups



DO

Make sure the organisation understands the value of diversity and inclusion and promote it publicly

Ask people about their beliefs and positively explore that diversity

Build relationships with people from different backgrounds

Check your meeting dates against the prayer and worship days for all faiths

Avoid times of fasting if you are organising an event that involves food

Ensure there is a good variety of food options when catering, helping everyone to enjoy the event consistent with their faith

Ensure there is induction and training for staff and volunteers

Keep discussing and providing information to volunteers on diversity matters

Challenge racism and sectarianism immediately and appropriately



DON'T

Generalise about people from different backgrounds and faiths about their identity or political outlook

Assume your organisation is accessible to all just because you have an open door policy

Be put off by concern for unknowns or language - you can get help

Organise events that may clash with major festivals, fastings or prayer days

Use symbols or materials that may be offensive to people from different backgrounds or faiths

Allow racism or sectarianism to go unchallenged, ever

WHAT IF?

What if...I bring my own baggage to an activity?

A first step is to recognise that we all have baggage shaped by our upbringing regardless of where and what that was. In Northern Ireland it may be shaped by a more segregated society and our perceptions or realities of the past.

Recognising that is often a first step in trying to genuinely understand others and listen to their views. The exercises in this Toolkit are about trying to get people to think and discuss...not setting a right and wrong answer to some questions.

The important thing is to start. The more dialogue we have, reasonably and respectfully with people from different backgrounds, the better we will get at it and the more we learn.

What if...I make mistakes in leading a discussion?

If you are unsure about something then ask someone. People from the communities that you are discussing will usually be delighted to answer any questions you have. There are also support organisations highlighted at the back.

Mistakes are made by everyone; they are a natural part of doing something different, doing something that you have not done before, or that might change how people think.

The important thing is to genuinely try to embrace minority communities and increase a sense of belonging.

What if...I use the wrong language?

Language changes all the time. You will not be alone – people working on good relations for decades get language wrong.

As with many other things, the key is genuinely trying to say and do the right thing. If you get something wrong, people will forgive, help you correct it, and move on in a supportive way.

Ask the people concerned and use the descriptions and language they would choose.

What if...I encounter discriminatory behaviour like racism or sectarianism, homophobia or sexism?

What would you do if you saw bullying take place in your group? You would refer to a bullying policy, but you would also know what to do instinctively.

Rules should be made clear and implemented quickly and without exceptions.

Racism and sectarianism should always be challenged. Volunteers need to know that it will not be tolerated and those who do challenge it appropriately and reasonably need to know the organisation will support them.

What if...I don't understand something?

Approach any discussion openly and honestly. If you don't know an answer don't try to "wing" it because people will catch on - be honest, tell people you don't know, and that you will find out and revisit the issue at a later stage.

This may be particularly important for building the trust of volunteers.

What if...I need help?

We have provided the details of some people and organisations who you can approach for help. They may be willing to advise on a range of issues and questions. They may also be willing to come out and speak with your volunteers.

Volunteer Now provides a range of support around managing volunteers. Here is a link to those further resources:

www.volunteernow.co.uk/publication

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

In this Toolkit we have included five exercises and activities to undertake with volunteers as an introduction to good relations.

They are mainly sessions that might last for one hour. However, as they are based on inter-activity and discussion the length of time needed will depend on how the session is facilitated and how engaged the volunteers are.

We have developed a set of quizzes linked to worksheets that in a fun and interactive way raise some important topics. The worksheets suggest ways to open the conversation further with participants.

Key Messages

After each activity, some topics for discussion are suggested relating to the key messages.

Magnificent Seven Challenge

For your organisation here is a Magnificent Seven Challenge – can you tick each one to say your organisation is good relations friendly?

If you can't tick them all with certainty what are you going to do about the ones that are not ticked?

No.	Considerations	Tick?
1	Your organisation makes a clear and public commitment to support diversity and inclusion that everyone can see and hear	
2	The leadership of your organisation reflects its culture which accepts difference as a positive and enriching aspect of your work for people of all community and ethnic backgrounds	
3	You promote positive relations between people of different religious, political and ethnic backgrounds, pro-actively not just as a reactive commitment to tolerance	
4	People from minority communities, whether from different religious or ethnic backgrounds, feel they are respected within your organisation	
5	All people working or volunteering in your organisation feel they can trust the organisation to be fair and open	
6	Your organisation provides space and opportunity for all people from different backgrounds to be heard and contribute equally	
7	All staff and volunteers might feel a sense of belonging in your organisation with a focus on what people have in common	

EXERCISE ONE

Catch Yourself ON

(Estimated time: 20 minutes)

This can be used at the start or end of a session as a symbolic exercise and to get volunteers moving and talking.

You will need:

- Three yellow tennis balls
- Two footballs
- One different coloured tennis ball.

They do not have to be tennis balls or footballs – just so long as they are soft.

Organise your group of volunteers into a large circle. Make sure there is nothing breakable close by.

Introduce the first tennis ball and ask volunteers to throw it to another volunteer so that they can catch it. Try to make sure all volunteers get a chance to catch it before introducing a second tennis ball.

This time there will be two tennis balls being thrown by different volunteers to different volunteers at the same time - gently.

Now introduce a third tennis ball – same instructions. Toss the ball gently to another volunteer so that they will catch it. There will now be three tennis balls in the air at the same time.

Now introduce a football. Except this should be thrown to the volunteer next to you and rotated in a clockwise direction.

After a short time introduce the other football – thrown to the volunteer next to you, this time in an anti-clockwise direction. While the footballs are both circulating so too should the three tennis balls, randomly thrown to volunteers so that they are best able to catch them.

Now STOP the game. Show them the different coloured tennis ball. Explain that this ball cannot be dropped ***under any circumstances***. Think of a penalty if it is dropped such as both the thrower and dropper of the ball must juggle all the balls at the end of the session.

Now start the game again with the three tennis balls being randomly thrown, the two footballs rotating in both a clockwise and anti-clockwise direction at the same time, and the different coloured ball which cannot be dropped being randomly thrown also between volunteers.

After a couple of minutes – or when the important different coloured ball is dropped – stop the exercise and ask volunteers what the balls represent.

The answers could be:

Football

Those good relations challenges that happen regularly – we generally know when they may be. They come round regularly and we can anticipate them.

Ask what good relations challenges these might represent? Their answers may include (without malice depending on what your background) St Patrick's Day or Orange Order parades, big votes like Assembly elections or Brexit.

We can anticipate these events because we know when they are coming and we can prepare ourselves in different ways.

Yellow Tennis Balls

These are smaller, more regular ways that sectarianism and racism can occur. We do not know when it is going to happen and they can come at us with short notice.

Ask them how we can better cope with them – a bit like how we were able to catch the tennis balls? We looked at each other, communicated with each other, sometimes just with our eyes, people might have called out a person's name to warn them the throw was coming – we cooperated, helped each other with soft throws, built a relationship of sorts and trusted each other.

Important Tennis Ball

What did this represent? Well, this might represent us as an individual – the most important thing there. We concentrated on that ball more than any other. The more we looked after it the better we became at throwing and catching it despite everything else that was going on.

The more skilled we get at understanding good relations and diversity the more skilled we will get also at catching the other balls – dealing with the regular big issues and responding to the smaller everyday sectarianism and racism.

DISCUSSION WORKSHEET – CATCH YOURSELF ON:

Theme	Lines of Reflection
Communication	The more we communicated with each other the better. There may have been different ways of communicating – speech, eye contact, coughing, cries – but when they were intended to help others they generally made the team work better.
Anticipation	The more notice we had about the balls coming to us, the more prepared we were to catch them. But we always had to be alert – sometimes even the footballs, those regular good relations challenges that come around often, took us by surprise.
Trust	When people co-operated and when we helped each other we built trust, knowing that we were trying to achieve a common goal.

EXERCISE TWO

Myth Busting Quiz

(Estimated time: one hour)

This exercise allows you to explore some myths about life in Northern Ireland especially involving people from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who have come to Northern Ireland in recent years.

In this section we provide a quiz with 15 questions and answers. We outline some questions you can pose after each question and discussion points that are important in considering good relations issues.

You may manage the quiz whatever way you think appropriate for your volunteers.

We suggest:

- 1** Split your group of volunteers into teams of four or so. Try to get reasonable background balance in the teams. Ask them to give their team a name.
- 2** Make sure each team either has a blank sheet of paper so that you can read out the questions and answers in turn, or photocopy and provide each team with the quiz sheet attached.
- 3** There are 15 questions so we suggest giving each team approximately one minute per question to discuss and come up with their agreed answer. There should be no conferring between one team and another, just within the same team.
- 4** Ask the team to swap pages so that they do not mark their own scores.
- 5** After each answer is given ask volunteers why they answered as they did, whether right or wrong, and use the questions supplied to ask them about the issue or discuss it. The answer section also includes some information for discussion around the myths that are busted.
- 6** At the end of the session, you may have some sweets to give to the winning team. If you can, put up our concluding slide or give it as a hand-out as key lesson reminder.

MYTH BUSTING QUIZ

No.	Question	Options	Tick?
1	What percentage of migrant men are employed in the UK and Ireland?	A) 62% B) 73% C) 84% D) 100%	
2	Of those migrants who come to the UK and Ireland and are unemployed, what percentage claim unemployment benefit?	A) 17% B) 24% C) 43% D) 71%	
3	Of all doctors in the UK and Ireland what percentage are foreign nationals, born in neither the UK or Ireland?	A) 10% B) 18% C) 25% D) 32%	
4	What percentage of migrant workers are employed in some form of night shift work?	A) 5% B) 15% C) 17% D) 24%	
5	How long do migrant workers from EEA (European Economic Area) countries have to live in Northern Ireland before being entitled to claim for Jobseekers Allowance or Housing Benefit?	A) As soon as they arrive B) 1 month C) 3 months D) 6 months	
6	In Northern Ireland Non EEA (European Economic Area) migrant workers generally are entitled to...?	A) No benefits at all B) Only Housing Benefit C) All benefits that are available for local people D) All benefits that are available for local people plus extra for family	
7	How many times more likely are recent migrant workers to be living in private rented accommodation than local people?	A) Less likely in private accommodation because they get priority for social housing from NIHE B) The same likelihood to be in private rented accommodation as local people C) X3 more likely than local people to be in private rented accommodation D) Migrant workers will get houses bought for them	

8	Roughly, what is the religious faith of the 1,600 or so Syrian refugees that have come to Northern Ireland?	A) All Muslim B) Mostly Muslim C) Mostly atheist D) An equal mix of Muslim, Christian and other faiths	
9	What country has taken most Syrian refugees?	A) USA B) Lebanon C) United Kingdom D) Sweden	
10	Of the Syrian refugees coming to the UK what percentage ended up coming to Northern Ireland (NI is just over 3% of the total UK population)?	A) 1% B) 3% C) 5% D) 9%	
11	How often is there a racist incident in Northern Ireland?	A) Once every 9 hours B) Once every day C) Once every two days D) Once every week	
12	How often is there a sectarian incident in Northern Ireland?	A) Once every 10 hours B) Once every day C) Once every two days D) Once every week	
13	In what year was the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement signed?	A) 1974 B) 1985 C) 1998 D) 2010	
14	Approximately how many interface barriers, or peace walls, are there in Northern Ireland today?	A) 100 B) 60 C) 50 D) 25	
15	When the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement was signed 7% of children went to integrated schools in Northern Ireland. How many children go to integrated schools now?	A) 4% B) 7% C) 10% D) 15%	

ANSWERS – MYTH BUSTING

These are also suggested discussion points that are detailed further.

Question	Options
1	C – While 84% of migrant men are employed that compares to 79% of men of working age born in the UK. Migrant workers come to the UK and Ireland to work and are statistically more likely to take lower paid jobs.
2	A – If a migrant worker in the UK or Ireland becomes unemployed just 17% then go on to claim unemployment benefits, compared to 29% of local people who become unemployed.
3	C – There are many migrant workers in the NHS and while 25% of doctors are born outside the UK and Ireland, many more nurses are. This percentage has actually declined in recent years partly due to Brexit.
4	D – Many workers in the UK and Ireland who are foreign nationals undertake night-time and shift work – 24%. This compares to 17% of UK born workers who undertake some form of night shift work.
5	C – Migrant workers cannot apply for unemployment benefits for three months, unlike many perceptions. Even then they may not get it. So, for at least the first three months they will need a job or money to buy food, clothes and pay for accommodation.
6	A – Migrant workers from Non-EEA countries (e.g., Africa, Asia, America etc) are not automatically entitled to unemployment benefits at all, though some are. This is different to refugees who come to the country fleeing from persecution elsewhere.
7	C – While many people believe migrant workers come to “take our houses” in fact migrant workers are much more likely to live in private rented accommodation than social housing from the Housing Executive or housing association.
8	D – Not all Arabs are Muslim and not all Muslims are Arab. The refugees escaping Syria in recent years are roughly balanced across many faiths including Christians.

9	B – Neighbouring countries to Syria like Lebanon have taken most Syrian refugees. Lebanon has taken in around 6 million people from Syria (about 22% of the total Lebanese population) compared to approximately 20,000 taken by the UK and Ireland. The UK and Ireland are not in the top 20 countries of those who have taken most refugees from Syria.
10	D – Northern Ireland has taken nearly 10% of all Syrian refugees coming to the UK, around 1,800, demonstrating the generosity and tolerance of people in Northern Ireland.
11	A – Last year there were 936 racist incidents in Northern Ireland, nearly three a day.
12	A – Last year there were 888 sectarian incidents, fewer than the number of racist incidents. However, you might want to think about how many fewer people from a BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) background live in Northern Ireland compared to local people from either a Protestant or Catholic background.
13	C – 1998, nearly 25 years ago when the political agreement that helped create power sharing political structures was concluded.
14	A – There are around 100 peace barriers in Northern Ireland mainly in Belfast but also in Derry/Londonderry and Portadown. This is nearly as many as in 1998 when the Agreement was concluded. There are other interface areas that do not have walls and fences.
15	B – There are still 7% of children and young people going to integrated schools just as there was in 1998 when the Agreement was concluded.

DISCUSSION WORKSHEET – MYTH BUSTING:

Theme	Lines of Reflection
<p>Respect – for our new communities</p>	<p>Actually, in general migrant workers have jobs, pay taxes and are less likely to claim unemployment benefit or take social housing than people who have lived in Northern Ireland all their lives.</p> <p>Often the jobs they do are either highly skilled and essential e.g. in the health service or lower skilled where local people have little appetite for them</p> <p>The net contribution of migrant workers to the UK and Irish economy is net positive for £billions of additional taxes. Think also of the number of BAME people running successful businesses in Northern Ireland, often for decades.</p>
<p>Accepting Difference – racism</p>	<p>As can be seen from the statistics there is proportionately around the same number of racist incidents than sectarian incidents.</p> <p>The Race Relations Order bans discrimination and segregation on racial grounds. It includes Irish Travellers as a specific racial group.</p> <p>Northern Ireland is a much better place than 30 years ago but maybe it takes a bit of time for people who lived through a civil conflict to understand and embrace difference.</p> <p>However, people from all communities and backgrounds are making major positive contributions to Northern Ireland; and the multi-cultural aspect of what Northern Ireland is now enriches our local culture. It doesn't diminish it.</p>
<p>Accepting Difference – sectarianism</p>	<p>Sectarianism is recognised as a sub-set of racism. While Northern Ireland has moved on in many ways, there is still a lot of sectarianism with people often living segregated lives.</p> <p>Few areas have an even balance of people from a Protestant and Catholic community background. Often there is one side of the community more numerous but usually where the other side of the community is still present in significant numbers. However, people from a Protestant and Catholic background from a young age don't spend significant time together making friends; and often play different sports or have different cultural or leisure interests.</p>

EXERCISE THREE

General good relations quiz

(Estimated time: one hour)

This exercise allows you to introduce the basic principles and key learning for good relations but in a fun way with a quiz and discussion amongst volunteers. The quiz covers all aspects of good relations – the three categories from section 75(2): different political, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

In this section we provide a quiz with 15 questions and answers. We outline some questions you can pose after each question and discussion points that are important in considering good relations issues.

You may manage the quiz whatever way you think appropriate for your volunteers.

We suggest:

- 1** Split your group of volunteers into teams of four or so. Try to get reasonable background balance in the teams. Ask them to give their team a name.
- 2** Make sure each team either has a blank sheet of paper so that you can read out the questions and answers in turn, or photocopy and provide each team with the quiz sheet attached.
- 3** There are 15 questions so we suggest giving each team approximately one minute per question to discuss and come up with their agreed answer. There should be no conferring between one team and another, just within the same team.
- 4** Ask the team to swap pages so that they do not mark their own scores.
- 5** After each answer is given ask volunteers why they answered as they did, whether right or wrong, and use the questions supplied to ask them about the issue or discuss it.
- 6** At the end of the session, you may have some sweets to give to the winning team. If you can, put up our concluding slide or give it as a hand-out as key lesson reminder.

GENERAL GOOD RELATIONS QUIZ

No.	Question	Options	Tick?
1	What is the main day of worship for a Muslim?	A) Thursday B) Friday C) Saturday D) Sunday	
2	Alan Turing was gay, one of the main scientists in Bletchley Park decoding Nazi communications during World War II and is credited with helping to build the first ever computer. What happened to him?	A) He went on to help set up Microsoft and became the first openly gay CEO of a FTSE 100 company B) He was prosecuted for gross indecency in 1952, undertook chemical castration treatment, and probably committed suicide in 1954, at age 41 C) He won a Victory Cross for single-handedly fighting off 12 Nazi paratroopers who tried to steal the Enigma machine D) He had a breakdown and tried to assassinate Prime Minister Winston Churchill during a visit to Bletchley Park in 1944	
3	Across the world what percentage of Travellers and Romani live in houses?	A) 90% B) 70% C) 35% D) 15%	
4	Many tunes played by Loyalist flute bands have the same melodies as traditional Irish music?	A) True B) False	
5	What happened when Monake, grandson of Genghis Khan, organised a debate between Christians, Muslims and Buddhists in 1254?	A) They ended up fighting each other B) The Christians and Muslims all became Buddhists C) Monake had them all beheaded D) They refused to talk to each other, then sang at each other, then got drunk together	
6	What animal do Hindus believe is special?	A) Cow B) Pig C) Horse D) Snake	
7	Roughly as many Protestants as Catholics died in the Troubles in Northern Ireland?	A) True B) False	

8	In Jerusalem what has a Muslim family done each morning since 1187?	<p>A) Washed the feet of pilgrims</p> <p>B) Used a key to unlock the Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre</p> <p>C) Raised an Israeli flag</p> <p>D) Prayed for peace and inter-faith understanding</p>	
9	In what decade were Romani women last forced to be sterilised in Czechoslovakia?	<p>A) 1860s</p> <p>B) 1910s</p> <p>C) 1940s</p> <p>D) 1980s</p>	
10	How much more or less likely is a child to experience violence if they have a disability compared to a child without a disability?	<p>A) X2 less likely</p> <p>B) The same</p> <p>C) X3 more likely</p> <p>D) X10 more likely</p>	
11	Why did Vladimir the Great make Russia Christian rather than Muslim in the 10th century?	<p>A) His mother told him</p> <p>B) Peter was his favourite name</p> <p>C) He liked alcohol</p> <p>D) The Pope was his cousin</p>	
12	Which of these statements IS true?	<p>A) All Arabs are Muslim</p> <p>B) All Irish people are Protestant or Catholic</p> <p>C) Christians wrote the Old Testament of the Bible</p> <p>D) The Qur'an recognises Jesus as a major Prophet</p>	
13	How many Travellers are thought to be in Northern Ireland?	<p>A) 1,000</p> <p>B) 10,000</p> <p>C) 25,000</p> <p>D) 75,000</p>	
14	The letters "Bally" in place names means town (baile). Ballycastle, for example, means town of the castle and Ballygowan near Belfast means McGowan's town – McGowan must have been a local landowner. What does Ballymena mean?	<p>A) The town of men</p> <p>B) The town in the middle</p> <p>C) The town that is best</p> <p>D) The town in the mountain</p>	
15	What religion was Jesus?	<p>A) Christian</p> <p>B) Muslim</p> <p>C) Jewish</p> <p>D) No particular religion</p>	

ANSWERS – GENERAL GOOD RELATIONS QUIZ

These are also suggested discussion points that are detailed further in the main education guide.

Question	Options
1	B – up to five times on a Friday with the main prayer session at lunchtime. Muslims need to face Mecca and have clean facilities. Why is that? What are the worship days for other faiths and how might worshipping on those days affect peoples' lives?
2	B – Alan Turing likely committed suicide with cyanide because of his treatment when he was just 41 years old. He had been chemically castrated because "gross indecency" was then a criminal offence. Ask and discuss whether his treatment was fair and what he might have achieved if he lived to be an average age?
3	A – Most (90%) Travellers and Romani now live in houses which is a great sacrifice for many of them. Why would that be a sacrifice? What do they think are the advantages and disadvantages of living in houses? Will their culture disappear?
4	True – Much of the music has similar roots. Does anyone know people who play traditional Irish music or play in a flute band?
5	D – After they got talking and built a relationship, they realised that despite their differences they had much more in common as human beings. They became friends and eventually agreed to disagree peacefully.
6	A – you may explore why that is and what animals are regarded in particular ways by other faiths.
7	True – Over 3,500 people died in the conflict in Northern Ireland, around 1,500 Catholic, 1,250 Protestant and nearly 700 from outside Northern Ireland. Around half of victims were civilians, not involved in the security services or armed groups.

8	B – you may discuss why the Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) all regard Jerusalem as a sacred place, what the faiths have in common, and why people respect different faith traditions in their history or even why Jerusalem and Israel have evolved since Jesus' time
9	D – It is hard to believe women of any background were forcibly sterilised right up to the 1980s but that is what happened to some Romani women. What do you think the effect was on the Romani community?
10	C – People with disabilities, including children, are much more likely to be the victim of a physical attack. You might discuss why that is?
11	C – The Muslim faith forbade alcohol consumption because they believed it made people intemperate. Vladimir the Great did not think it suited the Russian population. What do you think of a religion that encourages people not to drink alcohol? Are there other faiths than Islam that do? Are there parts of the world where Muslims can drink alcohol?
12	D – Jesus is mentioned in the Qur'an more often than any other prophet except Muhammed. He is respected as a major prophet but not as the son of God. Is this a surprise and why?
13	A – Just 1,000 though Traveller organisations think it closer to 10,000. Why would the Traveller community numbers be under-estimated? Do people know of any Travellers?
14	B – Many townland or other names are originally Irish such as Ballymena and Ballycastle. Can you think of other ways in which the Irish language is used today?
15	C – Jesus was actually Jewish. Regarded by his followers as the son of God, Christianity grew as a faith after Jesus died. The Old Testament was Jewish scripture.

DISCUSSION WORKSHEET – GENERAL GOOD RELATIONS QUIZ:

Theme	Lines of Reflection
<p>Respect</p>	<p>In order to genuinely respect people from other backgrounds it is useful to properly understand more about their culture, traditions and beliefs. Often, they are not too different from our own.</p> <p>As human beings, regardless of our background or beliefs, we often have the same concerns, fears and needs.</p>
<p>Positive Relations</p>	<p>When people develop a relationship with others, they often get rid of misjudged and misplaced bigotry or prejudice, sometimes caused by a simple lack of understanding.</p> <p>There are many examples of people from different faith backgrounds working together with genuineness without the cooperation affecting or diluting their own faith or beliefs. Some extraordinary examples of relationship development are included in the quiz, some are remarkable and some funny.</p> <p>Can you think of other examples when people from different backgrounds constructively work together?</p>
<p>Accepting Difference</p>	<p>Many people of different faith backgrounds make really positive contributions to Northern Ireland and to the communities within which they live. There are common threads of compassion across all faiths because the issues that unite people are greater than those that divide.</p> <p>Difference is fascinating and it enriches.</p>

EXERCISE FOUR

Planning for Inclusion

(Estimated time: one hour)

You have been asked to gather local people's views on what to do about a derelict piece of land in your area or village. With good relations it is important that everyone locally who wants to be involved has the chance to take part equally and fairly.

Here are some suggestions about how to consult people:

The local Presbyterian church hall in town has a great hall. It is cheap to hire. Let's hold a meeting there on Tuesday morning and invite everyone along.

We could stand at the shops on Saturday and do a survey.

I think an online survey through council's website would be the best way to allow everyone to take part. Everyone has computers these days.

If we hold meetings, how do we tell people about them? Parish bulletins? The local newspapers?

Do door to door surveys and leaflets!

There's a big GAA match on this Sunday. There would be plenty of people there could fill in a survey. Or we could give out leaflets advertising a meeting?

Do we need to think about local residents who don't have English as their first language?

If we held some meetings in the evening would that suit everyone?

Is it worth asking young people what they think? How can we include children or teenagers?

Use Facebook and Twitter!

There's a group for people with disabilities. Should we think about how people with different disabilities can take part?

Impress people with big words and important sounding presentations. If they don't understand, too bad – we can just get on with our job then!

SESSION:

In groups answer the following questions.

- 1 What is right or wrong about some of the ideas above (choose at least one from each colour)?
- 2 What consultation strategy would you devise?
- 3 What principles are important in your consultation strategy?

There is no correct or single answer here. The purpose is to understand that thinking about good relations, rights and equality is not a paper exercise – they actually affect real decisions.

Key points include:

- It is probably advisable that a range of methods are used to collect people's opinions.
 - Some places and activities will likely attract some of the groups you want but not all.
 - Not everyone has access to the internet or knows how to use a computer but for some people it is a great way to give views.
 - Not everyone can read written English as a first language. Are there other groups of people who may not read English?
 - People may be available at different times during the day for meetings depending on their work and childcare arrangements.
 - In promoting activities it is important to realise that not everyone gets information from the same places.
 - Places where meetings are held should have disability access and should be welcoming of people from all communities.
 - Perhaps a range of venues and times could be used.
 - People of all ages, languages, abilities and disabilities should be able to participate – so interpretation, translation, sign language etc. do need to be considered if they are affordable.
 - Use of plain English is important so that as many people as possible understand the consultation.
- After giving each group 30 minutes to answer the three questions ask them in turn to feedback on their answers.
- Pick out the common themes from their answers which should include:**
- Taking care not to bias activities to better suit some people more than others.
 - Principles such as: fairness, equity, accessibility for all, openness.
- You may wish to point out that people can get involved in taking decisions in their areas without necessarily getting involved in politics.

DISCUSSION WORKSHEET – PLANNING FOR INCLUSION:

Theme	Lines of Reflection
<p>Public Commitment</p>	<p>Those undertaking the consultation should demonstrate an open and inclusive approach throughout, including a public commitment to seeking everyone’s views.</p> <p>Therefore, limiting consultation to certain groups or using venues and events that are likely to be more attractive to people from particular backgrounds, is not living up to a commitment to openness – and is also likely to skew responses.</p>
<p>Trust</p>	<p>The people affected by the issues are not going to trust the process if they feel they are being deliberately or even unconsciously excluded. This can lead to the responses being skewed and misleading results.</p> <p>People might then “vote with their feet” by not taking part or withdrawing from involvement in the process or with the organisation undertaking the consultation.</p>
<p>All Being Heard, Contributions Valued</p>	<p>People should feel confident that they will be fairly included in the consultation and their views heard and taken on board. They should feel they have an equal chance of shaping the final outcome.</p> <p>It requires positive engagement – not just the organisers saying everyone can get involved but taking steps to maximise the chance that people of all backgrounds will be involved.</p>

EXERCISE FIVE

Who Belongs?

(Estimated time: one hour)

Learning

- Reflect on how being part of a community works.
- Reflect on who is most likely to be “in” or “out” and why.
- How a sense of belonging can be encouraged.
- Greater appreciation of challenges facing a minority community.

What You Need

You need a card or paper with a role written on it – one role for each participant. The following roles could be used:

- A GAA player
- A member of a flute band
- A successful businessperson
- A lesbian at university
- An Assembly member – MLA
- A Presbyterian Minister
- An Imam from the local mosque
- A single mother with two children
- A married man without children
- A Parish Priest
- A wheelchair user
- A migrant worker who is a doctor
- An asylum seeker
- A female teacher
- A 16-year boy from the high school

Allocate the roles randomly and introduce the game.

Each participant must imagine being the person they have been allocated – they should not share who they are with others.

Participants should stand in a line at a wall facing the longest part of the room.

You will then read out a series of statements. When you read out each statement participants should take one step forward if their character answers YES to the statement. If the character would answer NO or they are UNSURE, the participants should stay where they are.

Read the following statements out to the participants. Take your time, allow them to think and take the step forward only if their character would answer YES.

Statements

1. I feel safe in my community
2. I can vote
3. I know I'll never go hungry
4. I know what my future is likely to be
5. I am unlikely to be a victim of a racist crime
6. I am unlikely to be a victim of a sectarian crime
7. I am confident I can get a job
8. I feel confident that my political opinions matter
9. I am not at risk of being beaten up
10. I know I can celebrate my culture and traditions
11. I have a good salary
12. I won't be the victim of discrimination
13. I feel that where I live people understand me
14. I feel connected with the people who live near me
15. People are likely to invite me to things outside my immediate circle

Once all questions are read, ask participants to put their card or paper on the floor face up so that everyone can see who they were.

Discussion

Discussion may follow naturally as people comment on where each person left their card or paper. Make sure people comment out loud and that only one person speaks at a time.

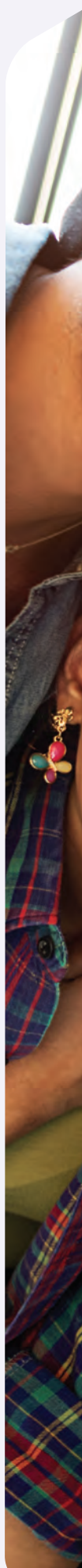
You might like to consider:

- Why are some people behind other people?
- What were the main factors in people being at the front or back – age, gender, religion, ethnicity, employment?
- Does the order say anything about who has power and who has not? Does it matter?
- How much does a person's religion or ethnicity affect their sense of belonging? Why?
- Where do participants feel they would be themselves? How would they feel if they were toward the back?

You might ask what assumptions people made about their character in order to answer the questions.

DISCUSSION WORKSHEET – WHO BELONGS:

Theme	Lines of Reflection
What is Belonging?	<p>There is a difference between FITTING IN and REALLY BELONGING. People who belong are accepted for who and what they are – and that diversity is what enriches. It can be called inter-culturalism.</p> <p>People have many more things in common regardless of backgrounds including needs that should be addressed.</p>
Trust	<p>This exercise is also about who has power and who feels excluded from decision-making, an important part of good relations.</p> <p>When people feel excluded, they start to mistrust the processes and the people leading the processes.</p> <p>Often those with power can be unaware that others are excluded – they can't pro-actively consider this and its consequence.</p>
Respect	<p>When people believe they are being listened to and have a real say in things, they are more likely to feel valued and of value.</p> <p>If people feel respected, they are likely also to respect others.</p>







CASE STUDIES

Jo Scott, Millisle Youth Forum

Background

Millisle Youth Forum was established in 2009. They have grown into a large youth club open six nights a week.

Why do you do good relations work with volunteers?

Right from the start we knew we wanted to be a group that was open to all young people and that we were going to have to work hard to make this happen. Once you do have different people in through the doors, you need to make sure that they all feel safe and that no one feels like a minority.

We have a very good working relationship with Ards & North Down Council's good relations Team as well as County Down Rural Community Network. They help us deliver good relations training keeping it relevant to the issues across the Borough and the latest statistics; for example, around demographic changes and hate crime. At the very least, we try and deliver this training every two years, but ideally once a year. The young people have such a lack of knowledge about each other; they listen and absorb what their mum, dad or granny might be saying. We try and balance maintaining respect for their families whilst encouraging them to think for themselves and dispelling some myths.

How does good relations work help volunteers cope with difference and diversity?

We need our volunteers to feel safe enough to notice and challenge prejudice. It isn't always easy in a majority area. People from a minority background often have to learn to keep their head down with a focus on keeping themselves and their families safe. We have created a safe space within the four walls of our club; the challenge is that this is not always the case outside.

What has been the benefit of good relations work to your organisation?

We have a very mixed group of youth leaders who then bring their own young people and families. We all need to be able to understand what is going on in each other's lives and develop our skills and confidence to ask questions and challenge. For many people,

Bottom line is that we have to keep our volunteers and their families safe. We always think through and develop our programmes together as youth leaders and never do anything without allies, groups that can stand with you and beside you. Thinking through things carefully doesn't mean you don't do it, but it does mean that everyone is clear about the programmes purpose and the potential risks.

Jo Scott

Millisle Youth Forum
Millisle Community Hub
75 Main Street
Millisle BT22 2HR

Tel: 07719 339953

Email: jo@millisle.org.uk

We need our volunteers to feel safe enough to notice and challenge prejudice. It isn't always easy in a majority area. People from a minority background often have to learn to keep their head down with a focus on keeping themselves and their families safe.

diversity can be something that is feared, making us uncomfortable. Acknowledging these feelings is an important first step. Once this is acknowledged, then good relations can blow your mind away. Without our commitment to good relations, we would have fewer volunteers, fewer young people and we would be less viable as an organisation.



CASE STUDIES

Rural Community Network

Background

The Rural Community Network (RCN) is a regional voluntary organisation established by community groups from rural areas in 1991 to articulate the voice of rural communities.

RCN mainly works with volunteers in rural community groups as well as management boards or committees. A lot of the work is around an introduction to good relations as people often don't understand the concept or how its applicable to their group. This introduction would include awareness raising, unpacking language and terminology as well as understanding the policy and legal context of good relations and the history of where the term has come from.

Why do you do good relations work with volunteers?

There is often a vacuum between the ongoing politics and communities having the resources and support to make sense of what is happening. Political context and disconnect from each other makes good relations so important.

How does good relations work help volunteers cope with difference and diversity?

An important part of this work is supporting groups understand the context of where they live – sometimes the differences between perceptions of who lives in an area and what the statistics say. Giving people the data and

letting them explore what that means for their group and its values and purpose is a key part of the learning. It's about introducing more shades of grey instead of black and white and giving people the space to really think through the work they engage in and how they can perhaps be more inclusive.

What has been the benefit of good relations work to your organisation?

There are pragmatic, moral and legal dimensions to this question. It can be about creating the space to think about the values and principles of a group and exploring to what extent the group's practice are aligned with them. It can also be about pragmatics: engaging with good relations can open up funding possibilities, new work areas, new opportunities. Finally, there are legal obligations that need considered

RCN; they know that we practice what we preach, that we always do the research and background work. I never send information out into the public domain, speak at an event, or engage in an activity without asking other eyes to look at it or gather their views. You have to always question and interrogate even the slightest thing. Never assume, never be complacent. And if you get it wrong, apologise, don't shift the blame and never make that mistake again.

Charmain Jones

Good Relations Officer
Rural Community Network
38a Oldtown Street
Cookstown BT80 8EF

Tel: 028 8676 6670

Email: charmain@ruralcommunitynetwork.org

There is often a vacuum between the ongoing politics and communities having the resources and support to make sense of what is happening. Political context and disconnect from each other makes good relations so important.

and complied with such as Section 75. Sometimes a session with a group can lead to questions around personnel and human resources for example.

Good relations and reconciliation work has been the bedrock of RCN since its inception. This gives people comfort when contacting



CASE STUDIES

The Bytes Project

Background

The Bytes Project is a youth work charity that has been working with the most vulnerable young people in Northern Ireland for nearly three decades.

Currently our main focus with volunteers is our EU funded Peace Bytes programme where some young people are trainee workers on placements. The good relations work is part and parcel of the 30-week programme that combines tech, innovative youth work practices and one-to-one support with young people aged 14 - 24 in Northern Ireland and the cross-border region. We work with many of these young people in their own areas which can tend to be single identity. Our good relations approach is therefore

in two phases: the first phase is talking with young people about their own identities and backgrounds; the second part is bringing together groups of young people from different geographies and exploring what it might mean to see the world from another perspective. We also organise events as well as visits to different parts of these islands.

Why do you do good relations work with volunteers?

Whilst these young volunteers have grown up in the latter years of the Peace Process, the mental and physical barriers of the Troubles continue to shape many of their lives. If we didn't deal with good relations as part of opening up their world and choices, then we would only be doing half

a job. We find that sectarianism takes up much more of the agenda and space than racism does; not surprising in that the young people have more lived and conscious experience of sectarianism. However, when there is an opportunity like Black Lives Matter Movement, we engage in the discussion. Gender and LGBT identities also form part of the good relations discussions with often great anxiety from young people about the language that is appropriate or not.

How does good relations work help volunteers cope with difference and diversity?

Many of the young people we work with have grown up in economically disadvantaged areas which have and are still experiencing the consequences and legacies of the Troubles. Providing the young people with the information and

What has been the benefit of good relations work to your organisation?

In essence good relations is part and parcel of providing the best youth work possible and it provides our framework of values and practice. It also brings us into new working partnerships such as TIDES and other good relations organisations. This massively contributes to our own professional learning and development.

Patrick Thompson

Communications & Engagement Manager

Tel: 028 9028 8810

Email: Patrick.thompson@bytes.org

Many of the young people we work with have grown up in economically disadvantaged areas which have and are still experiencing the consequences and legacies of the Troubles.

tools to make sense of this, can widen their choices with regards future employment, training and friendships. Our focus is always practical and pragmatic beginning with young people's own lived experience and knowledge and not transferring the assumptions of a different generation.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

If you would like to reach out to an organisation for further assistance on any of the issues raised here, to ask for speakers or visitors to your youth group, here are some suggestions.

This does not cover all organisations that may be of assistance, but it is a starting point.

Contacts

There are a number of regional organisations that will help you develop a good relations programme further, some of which have funding to help you develop a programme.

These include:

Regional

Volunteer Now

Skainos Centre
239 Newtownards Road
BT4 1AF

Tel: 028 9023 2020
info@volunteernow.co.uk
www.volunteernow.co.uk

Volunteer Now has a range of publications on its website that will support this work. This Toolkit have been developed to support the promotion and development of good relations and should be used as a principal resource.

For key publications to support your work search: <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/publication/> for:
Promoting Equality and Diversity in Volunteering
Monitoring Diversity and Equality of Opportunity in Volunteering
Equality Monitoring Review
Format 2021 (Example)

Investing in Volunteers is a quality standard for volunteer management and consists of six Quality Areas against which volunteer involving organisations can benchmark themselves. The framework is free to download and use. Visit <https://investinginvolunteers.co.uk/> and download the standard to help improve your practice.

Community Relations Council

2nd Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 9022 7500
info@nicrc.org.uk
www.community-relations.org.uk

The Executive Office

Good Relations and T:BUC Division
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3SR

Local

At a local level, the 11 Councils all have good relations officers and programmes, including funding, to help local organisations develop and deliver good relations work. They also offer advice and guidance. Ask for the good relations officer(s):

Council Area	Telephone	Email
Antrim and Newtownabbey	028 9034 0000	goodrelations@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk
Ards and North Down	0300 013 3333	goodrelations@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	0300 0300 900	mary.toal@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk
Belfast	028 9032 0202	goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk
Causeway Coast and Glens	028 7034 7034	good.relations@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk
Derry City and Strabane	028 7125 3253	Carol.Stewart@derrystrabane.com
Fermanagh and Omagh	0300 303 1777	goodrelations@fermanaghomagh.com
Lisburn City and Castlereagh	028 9244 7300	lynsey.gray@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk
Mid and East Antrim	0300 124 5000	fiona.surgenor@midandeantrim.gov.uk
Mid Ulster	0300 013 2132	philip.moffett@midulstercouncil.org
Newry City Mourne and Down	0330 137 4000	martina.flynn@nmandd.org

REMINDER QUESTIONS

Here are a number of questions you may want to reflect on for encouraging more volunteers from diverse backgrounds. They are self-explanatory.

We all do our best with sometimes limited resources and time. You will be no different so some of the activities suggested may not be possible, but they are seeking to enable organisations toward better and better practice. Most of them require little additional time commitment.

You may not need to do much differently but even doing a few things differently and better from a good relations perspective is a good start.

A blank space has been left at each section to write in some ideas or commitments.

Do not hesitate to print off, photocopy and share.

Volunteer inclusion is one of the six Quality Areas against which volunteer involving organisations can benchmark themselves.

Quality area 3. Volunteer inclusion

There is a positive approach to inclusion, equity and diversity and a proactive approach to making volunteering accessible

The organisation is inclusive and managed in a way that encourages the involvement of and is welcoming to a wide range of people

There is a proactive approach to increasing volunteer diversity, addressing under-representation, and including targeted groups as part of the organisation's inclusion, equity and diversity aims

Information about volunteering opportunities is made as widely available as possible using a range of methods and there is active engagement with a diverse range of people

Where possible there is a wide range of accessible opportunities that can be adapted throughout the volunteer's journey

Hopefully the checklist can further help organisations meet this Quality Area.

Checklist			
No.	Topic	Questions	Ideas and Actions
1	Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you know if your volunteer numbers are representative of people in your area or the type of work you do? b. Have you a method of gathering data from volunteers about their community and faith background? c. Have you reviewed your promotional literature and resources to ensure they reflect your ambition to have a diverse cadre of volunteers? d. Have you engaged with people or organisations from different backgrounds that may help in constructively shaping materials, resources or outreach efforts? e. Have you identified festivals or cultural events that may be a source for volunteer recruitment? f. Have you asked people from different backgrounds to get involved? g. If people from different backgrounds (including BAME communities) are not involved, have you asked why not and what would encourage them to get involved? h. Are you sure that invitation lists for events have been reviewed and are representative and inclusive? 	
2	Communication tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have you reviewed communication tools such as social media, leaflets and posters to ensure they reflect the diversity of the type of work you do? b. Is there a need to explore different language options for explaining your work and services? c. Are you aware of good practice in promoting diversity by similar organisations elsewhere? d. Do you invite a diverse range of speakers or guests to your events? e. Is there a need for an interpreter? 	

Checklist

No.	Topic	Questions	Ideas and Actions
3	Food, drink and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are you aware of your volunteer needs for worshipping, diet or religious commitments that may inhibit their volunteer commitments? b. Do you make necessary catering arrangements for volunteers from different faith backgrounds? 	
4	Venues and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is reasonable to have relevant symbols in a venue, but have you audited your venue to ensure there is nothing offensive or that would deter volunteers from other backgrounds and faiths? b. Is the location considered safe and welcoming for volunteers from different backgrounds and faiths? c. Is the timing of volunteer events suitable for volunteers of different backgrounds and faiths? d. Could materials and content be more inclusive of volunteers from different backgrounds and faiths? e. Do you need to undertake awareness sessions about diversity? 	
5	Staff and committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Is diversity a part of induction for staff or committee members? b. Are recruitment processes clear and inclusive? c. Does the organisation have a supportive environment for raising issues or concerns around diversity and inclusion? d. Are there written procedures that everyone is aware of for raising issues or concerns around diversity and inclusion? e. Do staff and volunteers know they have access to special leave, or are able to dress or express themselves in ways that are appropriate for people from different backgrounds and faiths? 	

Checklist

		Checklist	
No.	Topic	Questions	Ideas and Actions
6	Volunteer involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are volunteers asked their views about programmes and delivery? b. Do you give consideration and allow time to build relationships and trust with volunteers? c. Is it convenient and accessible for volunteers from all backgrounds and faiths to input ideas and provide feedback? 	
7	Aims and objectives of your organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are diversity, inclusion and equality, values that are clear and visible within your organisation? b. Does your organisation have policies on accessibility, inclusion, dignity? c. Have you undertaken a diversity audit? d. Does your organisation approach diversity as a core part of your planning? e. Has your organisation developed indicators and targets for diversity? f. Do your management committee and staff come from diverse backgrounds? g. Does your organisation have a champion for diversity? 	
8	Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you assess rates of participation, including comparators to local community demographics if relevant? b. Do you set targets with clear goals for minority inclusion and participation? c. Do you assess satisfaction ratings by community demographics? d. Do volunteers from different backgrounds and faiths have similar satisfactory ratings? e. Do you carry out exit interviews or feedback? 	



T:buc

Changing for the better, together



Northern Ireland
Executive

VOLUNTEER NOW
connect · build · change

Volunteer Now delivers services across Northern Ireland.
We have offices in Belfast, Antrim, Enniskillen and Newry.

T: 028 9023 2020 E: info@volunteernow.co.uk www.volunteernow.co.uk

Registered Office: The Skainos Centre, 239 Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 1AF

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