

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

**Audit of Progress on the Good Relations Duty
2000 - 2003**

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Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

Audit of Progress on the Good Relations Duty 2000 - 2003

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Accuracy of information contained in this report

Sections 2 and 3 of this report are based only on information included in public authority annual progress reports. It has not been possible for the Equality Commission to confirm the accuracy of such information.

Inclusion of information provided by public authorities on the implementation of the good relations duty in this Audit Report does not necessarily indicate Equality Commission endorsement or approval.

Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Audit of Progress on the Good Relations Duty 2000 - 2003

1. Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to produce an equality scheme detailing how they propose to fulfill the duties imposed by Section 75. Equality schemes, which must be approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, are both a statement of commitment to the statutory duties and a five year plan for implementing the duties. One of the commitments made by each public body is that they will submit an annual report of progress to the Commission, setting out the steps taken to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The Commission uses this information to assist it in its duty of keeping the effectiveness of Section 75 under review, and to publicly report on progress.

Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, without prejudice to their obligations under Section 75 (1), to “have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.”

Progress Reports

To date, the Commission has published two reports on the implementation of the duties, the first for the period 1 January 2000 - 31 March 2002, and the second for the period 1 April 2002 - 31 March 2003. These reports detail progress on all aspects of Equality Schemes and are available on the Commission’s website at www.equalityni.org. The Progress Reports identify not only where progress is being made, but also where there is a need for further work. The reports found that the implementation of the good relations duty by public authorities was very mixed. Some public bodies have been proactive, incorporating good relations objectives and targets into their corporate or operational plans, conducting internal and external good relations audits, developing strategies and action plans, and providing specific training on the Section 75 (2) duty. Others, however, have been less active, and have asked the Commission for further information and guidance on how to implement the good relations duty.

Good Relations Audit

As a result of these findings, the Commission has conducted this audit of how the good relations duty has been addressed by public authorities up to March 2003. This Audit Report collates all of the information that has been provided to us in individual annual progress reports. We hope it will enable designated public authorities to review the type of measures that are being undertaken and assist them to identify measures which may be appropriate for their organisations.

The audit will also assist the Commission to develop guidance on the implementation of the good relations duty through the identification of appropriate measures and initiatives and examples of good practice.

A total of 177 authorities had been designated for Section 75 purposes by the end of March 2003; 153 public authorities submitted progress reports to the Commission for the 2000 - 2002 period; 156 progress reports were submitted for the 2002 - 2003 period.

The provision of progress reports in electronic format has been invaluable to the production of this audit, enabling the reproduction of sometimes large sections of public authorities' annual progress reports. These extracts may have been edited, however, to ensure readability and avoid repetition (for example, introductory information on initiatives may be provided in more than one annual progress report by the same authority).

This report is based only on the information provided by public authorities in their annual progress reports. It has not been possible for the Commission to confirm the accuracy of such information, nor to seek further details of the measures and actions reported.

Inclusion of information provided by public authorities on the implementation of the good relations duty in this Audit Report does not necessarily indicate Equality Commission endorsement or approval.

Your Views

The Commission would welcome comments on the measures included in this Audit, particularly in relation to those which readers consider to be good practice or which would be considered to effectively promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group in Northern Ireland. Comments, preferably by email, should be forwarded to Carolyn Brown, Good Relations Officer, Statutory Duty Team at cbrown@equalityni.org. Carolyn would also be pleased to receive comments in writing, at the Commission's address, or by telephone on 028 9089 0852.

Annual Progress Report Template

Public authorities subject to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act have submitted up to three progress reports to the Equality Commission for the periods 1 January 2000 - 31 March 2001, 1 April 2001 - 31 March 2002, and 1 April 2002 - 31 March 2003. The Commission produced reporting templates for each of these periods to help public authorities address all of the key issues, and to ensure consistency and completeness of progress reporting.

The Commission's first progress report template, for the period 1 January 2000 - 31 March 2001, did not ask for specific information on the implementation of the good relations duty in its own right, but sought information on the arrangements that had been made for the strategic implementation of the equality and good relations duties generally. However, the Commission's guidance templates for annual progress reports for 2001 - 2002 and for 2002 - 2003 asked public authorities to:

“Provide details of steps to progress the Good Relations duty such as undertaking a good relations audit, developing a strategy or providing training.”

This Audit Report consists of the responses by public authorities in their annual progress reports to this section of the template. However, information from other sections of progress reports may be included on occasions, if considered to be of relevance to the promotion of good relations.

The Commission has again provided public authorities with a Progress Report template for 2003/04. This template contains a separate section for reporting on the good relations duty, and it also contains a series of prompts to assist authorities in providing relevant information. The Commission anticipates receiving a considerable amount of information on good relations for the 2003/04 period.

Format of Audit

The main body of the Audit Report is divided into five sections: Northern Ireland Government departments, Education, Health, Local Government and Other. The fifth section (Other) contains information from a diverse range of bodies, including non-departmental public bodies in Northern Ireland, UK-wide public authorities and cross-border bodies.

As indicated above, over 300 progress reports were reviewed by the Commission to collate information for this report. However, readers will not find an entry for every designated public authority, as only reports indicating how the good relations duty is being addressed are included.

In response to the request in the template to “provide details of steps to progress the good relations duty”, some authorities have reported measures which promote equality of opportunity (such as ensuring access to information), or which are outreach measures to encourage participation or raise awareness. To the extent that these measures contribute to the promotion of good relations, these activities have been included in this report. The Commission recognises that equality is a necessary pre-requisite for good relations; as the Secretary of State said during the parliamentary debate on the passage of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: *“Good relations cannot be based on inequality between different religions or ethnic groups. Social cohesion requires equality to be reinforced by good community relations”* (**House of Commons, Official Report, 27 July 1998**), and again in the recent Northern Ireland Grand Committee debate when John Spellar said *“...good relations can be built only on equality between communities and equality of opportunity for individuals”* (**17 June 2004**).

Other authorities have reported measures relating to Section 75 categories other than religious belief, political opinion and racial group, although these are the only three categories to which the good relations duty applies. Outreach measures to people with disabilities, women and the LGB community have therefore generally been omitted from this report.

Themes

In reviewing annual progress reports for details of how the good relations duty had been implemented up to the end of March 2003, it was apparent that there were a number of common themes. Some of these themes have been identified and are discussed in Section 2 of this report, including the development of good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and operational plans, the provision of good relations training, the use of audits and development of strategies, organisational change programmes, community relations programmes, equality impact assessments and individual approaches.

Progress by the Equality Commission

The Equality Commission has developed a strategic framework for delivering good relations in Northern Ireland within our remit and for ensuring that we support employers and public service providers who have specific legal requirements. We have established an in-house working group to effectively implement our strategy and work is ongoing on the development of good relations guidance. This will build on existing Commission guidance and advice on good relations, and will include information on the background and context of the good relations duties in Northern Ireland, an examination of the relationships and conflicts between the statutory obligations under the different pieces of

legislation, identification of a range of strategies and mechanisms, comments on the usefulness of currently available tools and mechanisms, such as the impact assessment process, and examples of good practice and recommendations. The Commission is also establishing a Good Relations Forum to inform the work, develop policy, share good practice and for stakeholders and representative groups to work together for a collaborative perspective on equality, cohesion and human rights.

Summary

There is evidence in annual progress reports of good progress being made on the good relations duty by a number of authorities across the sectors - local government, education, health, government departments and agencies - and of delivery on the ground of innovative initiatives to promote good relations.

The work that has been reported by public authorities indicates that the good relations duty can be progressed in many ways, often through statutory functions. Unsurprisingly, positive engagement with good relations issues prior to the introduction of the statutory duty was a factor in making progress. This is particularly the case in local government and education.

A proportion of authorities reported that they are implementing the good relations duty through the implementation of their Equality Scheme, but have not provided details of how this is being operationalised.

Where specific action to implement this duty has not been taken to date, reasons given included that organisations were waiting for the outcome of the government's consultation on community relations policy through 'A Shared Future'; that there has not been specific guidance on implementing the good relations duty from the Equality Commission; that the organisation was focusing on the equality duty under s.75 (1) or on implementing its Equality Scheme; or that the organisation was focusing on conducting equality impact assessments.

Given that significant work to progress the good relations duty is evident in the annual reports of a number of public authorities, the Commission looks forward to all public bodies making more substantive progress in this area, for example by undertaking a good relations audit, developing a strategy to promote good relations, and mainstreaming good relations into their policy-making and review processes.

2. An Overview of Good Relations Themes

Objectives and Targets

Some public authorities are showing top level commitment to the implementation of both of the statutory duties by including equality and good relations objectives and targets in corporate, operational and business plans. These are also being cascaded into departmental public service agreements, divisional and performance improvement plans, and in some cases, into the individual personal objectives of Equality Officers and also of departmental and policy managers.

Other organisations have included the principles of equality and good relations in Corporate Vision or Values statements. In addition to the Section 75 duties, reference has been made to principles such as fairness, managing diversity, social inclusion, active citizenship, community development etc.

Training

The most frequently reported method of implementing the good relations duty is the provision of training. Many authorities, across the public sector, are providing training courses in diversity, sectarianism, racism, good relations, prejudice reduction etc. The provision of such training has the effect of raising awareness of equality, diversity, multi-culturalism and good relations across the public sector and therefore of a significant proportion (almost a third) of the monitored¹ workforce in Northern Ireland, and is supplementing existing equality, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training. In some cases attendance at such training is compulsory, with Chief Executives writing personally to those who do not attend. Diversity training is also often included in induction courses for new staff.

To provide such training, organisations have taken advantage of expertise from organisations such as the Community Relations Council, Counteract, Future Ways and Mediation Northern Ireland, as well as arranging more specific training by groups representing the nine Section 75 categories.

Example - Derry City Council

Derry City Council's training activities included an Equality Awareness Programme in which 15 organisations representative of Section 75 groups provided training to Council staff. The training included the personal perspectives of the members of the groups living in the Derry

¹ Fair employment legislation requires employers in Northern Ireland with 11 or more employees to register with the Equality Commission and to submit annual monitoring returns detailing the community composition of their workforces.

City area. The Council reported that “This local personal exploration of identity was a valuable learning tool for staff... staff felt they had a greater awareness of Section 75 groups and they benefited from hearing from actual members from each of the groups.”

Example - ANIC / Further Education Colleges

A three-year programme, AGREE (Actioning Good Relations, Equity and Equality), aimed at mainstreaming the principles and practices of equity, diversity and interdependence within the Colleges, has been drawn up by the Association of NI Colleges (ANIC) and the Colleges, in conjunction with Trademark (a non-profit making consultancy). This course has been accredited by the NI Open College Network at Level 3, and aims to build capacity within the Colleges by training staff to become trainers in the areas of race, religion and political opinion. The first AGREE course began in May 2003 with a second course in September 2003.

Good Relations Audits and Strategies

A number of public authorities have reported conducting good relations audits, and others are planning to do so. Both internal and external audits are conducted in order to determine the state of relations within organisations and to ascertain how they are perceived in the community they serve, by those with different religious beliefs or political opinions, or belonging to different racial groups. Audits may use a variety of methodologies, from staff surveys or questionnaires, to the use of more in-depth interviews and focus groups.

These audits inform the development of good relations strategies or policies, which typically include a statement reaffirming the organisation’s commitment to the promotion of good relations, the tailoring of community relations policies to the specific needs of the organisation’s customers or stakeholders, and the identification of measures that can be taken to improve relations, or to address areas or issues of concern or anticipated difficulty.

Example - Belfast City Council

The Council developed a Good Relations Strategy following an audit of the work being carried out within the Council which might have an impact on good relations. The Council’s Good Relations Strategy is based on the following principles:

- to promote equality of opportunity in the discharge of the Council’s responsibilities, taking into account the needs of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, of men and women generally, of persons with a disability and persons without and of persons with dependants and persons without
- to promote tolerance and understanding throughout the City by providing support, including the equitable use of available budgets, for appropriate initiatives which celebrate the cultural diversity of Belfast

- to promote good relations between people of different religious and political beliefs and different racial groups in every aspect of Council activities
- to use the Council's influence as a democratically elected body, providing civic leadership to the City, to promote good relations throughout society.

The Council states that the Strategy brings good relations issues - community relations, cultural diversity, equality in the delivery of services and a representative workforce - centre stage in the business of the Council, setting out the positive contribution each can make to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the City. It can also provide a locally relevant framework for addressing sensitive issues which can lead to controversy and confrontation within the Council - flags and emblems, symbols, language diversity etc.

Some of the actions identified by the Council and included in the Strategy are:

- establish a Good Relations Unit within the Chief Executive's Department
- establish a Community Relations Programme which will support and promote good community relations within the City
- establish an inter-Departmental Good Relations Working Group to manage the Programme
- formulate an action plan to promote good community relations within the Council workforce
- establish a Cultural Diversity Fund to support appropriate approved projects which contribute towards an inclusive pluralist society
- establish a Cultural Diversity Programme to promote the shared history of Belfast, including Council led initiatives, exhibitions and other events as suggested by the Cultural Diversity Sub-Committee
- commence the implementation of the agreed recommendations of the Good Relations Steering Panel in relation to the anti-sectarian resolution of the Council
- implement the recommendations of the Advisory Panel in relation to the City Hall memorabilia

Organisational Change Programmes

Some public authorities have introduced organisational change programmes, particularly Future Ways' "Equity, Diversity and Interdependence" Framework (EDI). The EDI Framework is designed to support organisations in Northern Ireland address the challenges of mainstreaming the principles of fairness, diversity and interdependence and has been developed on the basis that Northern Ireland's transition, following the Belfast Agreement, is presenting organisations and communities with new challenges and learning needs.

The Framework is focused on improving the quality of relationships which shape and inform an organisation's business - workplace, local communities, suppliers, customers, shareholders and investors - in the belief that relationships based on trust contribute to sustaining an organisation's business and sustaining wider social cohesion than relationships based on silence and conflict.

Example - Western Routes Community Relations Programme

The Western Routes Project is a unique and innovative project involving the five District Councils in Tyrone and Fermanagh, designed to use a co-ordinated regional approach to promoting community relations issues. It is an example of partnership in action with public representatives, statutory and voluntary sector bodies and communities coming together for the good of the area.

The strategic aim of the project is to enhance the process of peace and reconciliation throughout the region:

- Within Councils - the programme will assist policy and programme development and support staff seeking to develop services with a greater community awareness, with a focus on enhancing the role of the Community Relations officers;
- Within and between the local communities - working with women's groups, local umbrella groups, church groups and regional networks;
- Local partnerships - working directly with and in support of local district partnerships; and
- Inter agency work - in conjunction with initiatives such as Counteract, Sport in the Community, Interface, economic development and adult education programmes.

Example - Joined in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (JEDI)

The JEDI Initiative aims to develop a coherent strategy for community relations, youth work and education for citizenship within the Northern Ireland youth services. Seven pilot projects are underway, and the information gathered from the pilot exercises will be analysed by the JEDI project team and will assist the strategy development process.

In addition, a product of the JEDI work within the policy setting is a Step-by-Step Guide to ensure the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (EDI) are at the core of the policy and operations of youth organisations.

As a result of the JEDI audit report of the policy development process, three key priority areas have been identified on which the youth service will focus. These include:

- The implementation of a comprehensive induction process for all new volunteer and part-time staff;
- The revision and implementation of a staff development policy and training programme, in line with the EDI principles;
- The revision of current policy on allocation of resources

Community Relations Council's 'A Good Relations Framework'

In 2002-03 a number of health bodies reported that they were considering piloting the CRC's draft framework in 2003-04. This has been developed to assist organisations to address sectarianism and racism within their organisation. A Good Relations Framework, which was formally launched in September 2004, aims to address the promotion of good relations through a process of facilitation and development with recognised, measurable outcomes. It facilitates organisations to: produce a statement of commitment to good relations, to carry out internal and external audits, and to develop an understanding of managing relationships within their everyday work. CRC's Framework consists of five steps: statement of commitment; auditing internally and externally; training; mainstreaming good relations and delivering change; monitoring and evaluation.

Community Relations Programmes

A number of organisations, particularly but not only Councils, gave details of implementing the good relations duty through their Community Relations plans, programmes or strategies, which are being refocused to take account of the good relations duty, e.g. Ballymoney Borough Council states that the aims of its Community Relations programme are: greater contact between communities; programmes and events which promote greater mutual understanding; interest, appreciation and tolerance of cultural diversity.

Many examples of community relations work relevant to the good relations duty were included in progress reports. A few examples were: an Islamic Community Conference, participation in a Multi-Cultural Health Fair, Derry City Shadow Council for Young People, North-West Community Network, the establishment and development of the Causeway Chinese Society, the development of a video to examine issues of expression of identity and human rights as pertaining to the rural community.

Example - Ballymena Borough Council

Ballymena Borough Council, in partnership with Ballymena Community Forum, has helped fund the services of an Ethnic Minorities Officer and Ethnic Minorities Project. The aim of the project is to develop the capacity of all ethnic minority communities within the borough and assure access to all services. The project involves conducting a base-line study to identify the needs of ethnic minority communities, providing training and support to ethnic minorities, developing volunteering opportunities, working with interpreters, and developing an inter-agency approach to support ethnic minorities.

Example - Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Housing Executive's strategy for promoting good relations is pursued through its programme for community development and improvement of community relations. This

programme aims to contribute in a meaningful way on two fronts: to help create safer neighbourhoods; and to facilitate the development of better relationships between communities, and in some instances within communities.

Practical elements developed by the Housing Executive include:

- Providing additional local support for residents e.g. the establishment of 53 Neighbourhood Warden Posts.
- A number of “Concierge” Schemes have been established in high rise blocks which have traditionally been the focus of anti-social behaviour.
- The skills and talents of front-line staff are being reviewed through the Modernising Services Agenda to develop ways to assist local people in practical terms.
- A partnership on crime initiative has been introduced in 10 estates through the Creating Common Ground Consortium.
- A Community Safety Team has been established.
- An in-house mediation service has been introduced to help tackle problems of anti-social behaviour.
- A good neighbour competition was held to highlight best practice in the delivery of community safety.

By working towards safer neighbourhoods and bringing people and communities closer together, the Housing Executive is positively contributing to the promotion of good relations.

Equality Impact Assessments

Where a good relations policy or strategy had been developed by a public authority, this was usually screened in for equality impact assessment purposes. EQIA processes are also being applied to policies which have significant good relations impacts such as those in relation to the flying of flags (in local councils), emblems, bunting, community support programmes, community services, culture and arts funding, civic recognition; in health, terms and conditions of hospital nursing staff (to reflect the increasing diversity within the workforce); neighbourhood renewal.

A number of authorities, particularly government departments, reported that “all EQIAs carried out address the implications of policies for good relations”.

Other Ways the Good Relations Duty has been addressed.

A number of organisations advised that they have re-located the role of the person responsible for the daily implementation of the equality scheme in a central policy unit or

equivalent. For example, Ballymena Borough Council's Good Relations Strategy included changing the role of the Community Relations Officer and repositioning the community relations function from within the Economic Development Unit to the Equality Unit. In Belfast City Council the Equality Officer is based in the Policy Services Section of the Chief Executive's Department and is in a position to influence other significant Council policies and strategies e.g. Best Value reviews and consultations, New TSN, PSI, Investors in People, Peace II initiatives. This also recognised opportunities for partnership working.

Measures which enhanced the implementation of the good relations duty included the appointment of specialist staff such as Good Relations Officers, a Community Safety Officer, or a Policy Development Officer, the establishment of a Good Relations Unit, and the allocation of specific resources, such as the development of an equality budget.

Some Councils mentioned the more focused targeting of grants, for example 'to ensure no hidden deterrents prevent community groups from applying', or to target projects which address the issues identified in a Good Relations Strategy.

Specific initiatives in relation to flags, murals, interface areas, inter- and intra-community tension, mediation, community action projects were also reported.

Outcomes

As recognised by one Council in their progress report:

"through active promotion of equality and good relations there is now a greater level of informed decision-making which has had a positive impact upon the civic leadership role of the Council.

"The implementation of the statutory duties has played an important role in enabling the Council to address issues which previously may have been viewed as being of a contentious or sensitive nature."

3. Progress on Implementing the Good Relations Duty by Public Authorities by Sector

3(i) Government Departments

There are eleven government departments in Northern Ireland: Office Of The First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Department of Education, Department of Employment and Learning, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Department of the Environment, Department of Finance and Personnel, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Department of Regional Development and Department for Social Development.

OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER (OFMDFM)

The Department has included objectives and targets on equality and good relations in the Programme for Government.

“In August 2001, a ‘Working Paper,’ “Review of Community Relations Policy” was prepared and a preliminary consultation exercise was undertaken. This focused in particular on community divisions in Ardoyne and taking forward, in association with DSD, the North Belfast Community Action Project. The Department chaired an inter-departmental group on North Belfast which included all Departments in the devolved administration and the NIO...

“That review has taken account of the changing context for community relations policy and programmes and has, in particular, recognised the importance of the statutory duty concerning good relations arising from s75.”

OFMDFM stated that “a major milestone was the issue in January 2003 of the consultation document “A Shared Future” inviting views on the future vision, aims and objectives of community relations policy. The Department stated that it was working closely with a number of groups and organisations including the Community Relations Council on the consultation process. Internally, an inter-departmental group has been established to work in parallel, but without prejudice to the outcome of the consultation process, in examining how good relations can be mainstreamed more effectively into Government programmes.”

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DARD)

The Department advises that “the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in Northern Ireland in February 2001 had an extremely serious impact across the Department and required the redirection of very significant staff resources from virtually every business area of the Department to handle disease control measures. This resulted in very little work being done to take forward equality matters until after the summer of 2001.”

In its 2002-03 report, DARD stated that it had “not yet taken action to progress the good relations duty”. However, elsewhere in its report it makes the following statement in relation to strategic implementation of the duties:

The Department’s Rural Development Programme includes partnership working at a number of levels - “at local level with communities and project promoters; at sub-regional level with key local players assembled to deliver and implement local strategies, and at regional level with government agencies and other representative bodies. For example, the Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative and the LEADER + Initiative will be delivered by Partnerships and Local Action Groups drawn from the community. There is also partnership between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in the delivery of elements of the INTERREG III Initiative, a cross-border community network initiative under PEACE II, and trans-national co-operation under the LEADER + Initiative. This multi-faceted, cohesive approach at all levels enables the sharing and dissemination of Section 75 awareness, good practice and responsibilities.

“The Department works in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the Rural Community Network and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland are members of the Rural Housing Estates Partnership that provides strategic leadership for the Rural Community Estates Programme. The overall aim of the Programme is to target and work with communities in selected rural housing estates where there is little or no infrastructure (for local residents) to build towards equality of opportunity and access to resources and services. The Programme provides support for up to twelve rural housing estate clusters with low levels of community support. The Rural Community Network has successfully applied for funding under the EU Programme for Building Sustainable Prosperity.

“The Department is also in partnership with the Rural Development Council, the Rural Community Network, Youth Council Northern Ireland, Southern Education and Library Board, Department of Education and Youth Action Northern Ireland has initiated the Rural Youth Community Development Programme. Youth Action Northern Ireland has since successfully applied for funding under the Programme for Building Sustainable Prosperity to pilot a Rural Youth Community Development Programme in two areas. This Programme will increase the participation of rural young people in the Rural Development Programme to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural communities.”

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE (DCAL)

In 2002-03, the Department reported that it undertook the following work to promote good relations:

“A range of activity took place as part of the Diversity 21 programme, designed to recognise the different interests, languages, music, faith and history represented in Northern Ireland; examine cultural diversity with a view to promoting deeper understanding; and represent this diversity as a sign of strength within our society.

Activities included:

- workshops exploring the different drums of Northern Ireland, along with exhibition material on language, faith and history in Northern Ireland and the wider Commonwealth, to a number of organisations and community groups throughout the province;
- Intercom 21, a contemporary music project which used music as a means of exploring diversity;
- a cultural diversity funding scheme enabled the Department to provide £130,927 financial assistance to 16 groups, enabling them to take forward cultural diversity projects and programmes;
- the Diversity 21 Awards, recognising the contribution made to cultural diversity by those working in this field.

“Work has been initiated on proposals for a legislative package to tackle sectarianism in sport, as well as health and safety at sports grounds and public order offences. This involves a scoping study to identify all of the issues to be addressed. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to discourage sectarianism within sport, make sporting venues safer and reduce public order offences.

“An ‘open space’ conference was held on 4 November 2002 on the subject of minority ethnic languages, attended by stakeholders from the public sector and minority ethnic communities. A number of recommendations aimed at providing support to minority ethnic language communities have been embodied in a report, which was circulated to interested parties. It is proposed that an inter-departmental working group will take these recommendations forward when resources are available.

“The Department, in partnership with the Department of Education (DE), continued to support the Verbal Arts Centre in Londonderry, a cultural resource that promotes written and spoken creative expression through arts activities and education programmes. The DE funding is provided through its community relations programme for work specifically earmarked at promoting good relations through art and education between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.”

Training on the Section 75 duties is included in all induction courses. In 2001-02, 125 staff attended awareness training on the Section 75 duties. In addition, 24 staff undertook religious diversity training, including the Permanent Secretary and members of the Executive Team.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DE)

In 2002, the Department reported that it had worked in partnerships with the Forum for the Education of Traveller Children (NI) and Traveller representative groups in relation to the PSI Working Group Report on Travellers.

DE/NDPB Working Groups were established to discuss education issues for the children of asylum seekers, and as a forum for discussion on drawing up New TSN Action Plans,

In 2003, the Department stated that it was “continuing its proactive approach to its work in relation to the Good Relations duty. DE’s Business plan has as one of its supporting objectives ‘to improve mutual understanding of cultural diversity in relation to children/young people’. In furtherance of this objective, DE funds programmes provided by the voluntary sector, the objective of which is to improve and enhance community relations for children in Northern Ireland. Examples include:

“The Community Relations Core Funding Scheme - aimed at voluntary and non-profit making organisations that can identify how their proposed programme can contribute to the improvement of community relations between young people, in accordance with the Scheme’s objectives. During the current funding period (2001-2004) funding totalling approximately £1.5m per annum is being devoted to approved programmes under the Scheme.” It was currently advertising for 2004-07.

“The Schools’ Community Relations Programme - administered by the ELBs, aims to encourage schools to bring together young people from across the community divide through programmes of curriculum-based activity designed to promote community relations in schools and to provide a valuable dimension to EMU and Cultural Heritage in the Curriculum. Currently, funding totalling £1.2m per annum is devoted to the Programme.

“The Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme - managed by the Youth Sections of the ELBs, makes funding available to youth and community groups to offer activity and training programmes which promote greater cross-community understanding and development. Funding for this scheme is currently running at £0.7m per annum.”

The Department has also described the following research projects in its progress report:

“Integration of Traveller Children into Mainstream Secondary Schools - this research explores the experience of Traveller children in mainstream secondary schools in West Belfast and more widely across Northern Ireland. The report suggests possibilities for future action relating to enhancing the integration and social inclusion of Traveller children at post-primary level.

“Education of Socially Disadvantaged Parents and School Children - this project reviews evidence on the attitudes of socially disadvantaged parents and children towards education. The report includes material on ethnic minorities and young mothers.”

DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING (DEL)

The Department states that it is committed to tackling poverty and social disadvantage. “One of the areas where the Department can do most to tackle social exclusion is in relation to unemployment. The Department’s JobCentre network, which is part of Preparation for Work Division, provides employment brokerage, careers guidance and information on in-work benefits and delivers a range of programmes aimed at increasing employability and tackling unemployment, including New Deal and Worktrack, Training for Work, Jobclubs and Bridge to Employment under Focus for Work.”

“JobCentres continue to promote good relations with their customers including all Section 75 groups and their representatives. Relationships have been developed with local community and voluntary groups to ensure all customers are aware of services and facilities and feel confident accessing them.”

An Advisory Committee on Promoting Community Relations in Tertiary Education “was established as a result of funding from the Community Relations measure of the EU Physical and Social Environment Programme. The Department is represented on this group along with the CRC, the student body and the higher and further education teacher sector. The Committee produced a report in September 1999, followed by a conference in March 2000.”

DEL states in its progress report that “although the Department’s main focus during 2002/03 was the programme of EQIAs, during the year it also developed its good relations duty throughout many of its programmes and services. The following paragraphs describe some notable examples.

“**Taskforces** - the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Taskforces published their conclusions and recommendations in a joint report, which was formally presented to the DETI and DSD Ministers in March 2002. The aim of the Taskforces is to bring forward recommendations aimed at reducing unemployment and poverty. The Department is represented on both Taskforces.

“The Department responded to the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Taskforces in December 2002, when the Employability Taskforce report was published and the Minister announced that the Targeted Initiatives would be piloted in West Belfast, Greater Shankill, Londonderry and Strabane.

“**Equal Programme** - the Department implements the Equal programme for Northern Ireland. The objective of the programme is to promote new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market, both for those in work and those seeking work. Equal also includes action to assist the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers.

“It also forms part of the integrated European Community strategy to combat discrimination (in particular that based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation) and social exclusion. ...

“**Higher Education (HE) Equality Consortium** - the Department continues to be represented on the ‘Higher Education Equality Consortium’ - a group which brings together those responsible for co-ordinating the work on the statutory equality duties within the HE institutions. The Department welcomes its involvement with this Group as another opportunity to ensure a ‘joined up’ approach to the fulfillment of its equality commitments. ...

“**Cultural Diversity in Further Education** - a report prepared by a working group, set up by the Department during 2000 to advance Cultural Diversity issues (including Community Relations), was completed on 30th December 2002 through the submission of a draft report entitled “Cultural Diversity - Good Practice in the Further Education sector in Northern Ireland”.

“To progress this work the Department has formed a Steering Group. This group consists of representatives of the Department, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), the National Union of Students/Union of Students Ireland (NUS/USI), the Further Education (FE) Equality Officer and the Chief Executive of the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC). The Department, under the auspices of the steering group, will issue the draft Good Practice guide to all 16 Further Education colleges.

“In tandem with this, the Department intends to support three Cultural Diversity pilot projects, which will run for twelve months... be supported by the FE Equality Officer, and enjoy the support of NUS/USI. This work is advancing well and it is intended that the Working Document, accompanied by a circular, will issue during Autumn 2003, seeking bids from FE colleges to run pilots in cultural diversity...

“**Learndirect** - during 2002 - 2003, £300K was made available to support 26 Essential Skills for Life Pilot Projects which had been selected by Ufl (University for Industry) to test

the use of Learndirect materials in different contexts i.e. in urban and rural settings, in the workforce, with single parents and with disabled persons and members of Northern Ireland's ethnic communities.

“£35,000 was used to support four successful ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) projects where Learndirect centres worked closely with the Mid Ulster Chinese Community Association, The Chinese Welfare Association in Belfast, The Indian Community Centre, The Belfast Islamic Centre and the Centro Portuguese in Dungannon. These projects provided the opportunity for individuals from these ethnic communities to recognise their personal potential and to play a full part in Northern Ireland society.

“£50,000 was also used to support five successful Disadvantaged projects where centres worked closely with associations such as Praxis, Respond, Challenge New Horizons and Disability Action. These projects provided learning opportunities through Learndirect to stimulate and motivate people suffering from mental health problems and learning disabilities.”

DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT (DETI)

DETI has “undertaken research into good relations in the [2002-03] year with a view to developing a “Good Relations” strategy and a specific “good relations” initiative during 2003 - 2004. DETI is also considering, with a number of interested parties, a major conference on bullying in the workplace during 2003/2004. DETI will also consider the possibility of implementing a good relations audit within the Department.”

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT (DOE)

The DOE states that “all EQIAs carried out address the implications of policies for good relations” and that “training on good relations is part of the S75 awareness training provided for staff and has highlighted the need to continue to develop this important area.”

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL (DFP)

The Department reported that “plans are in hand for a Pilot Training Course on Diversity which covers the Good Relations Duty.

“The Department has developed good working relations with groups representative of the Section 75 categories through the various consultation exercises carried out throughout the reporting period. (The fruit of our efforts was the close collaboration with the voluntary and community sector at the Equality Seminar hosted by DFP on 9 May 2003).”

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES & PUBLIC SAFETY (DHSSPS)

The Department states in its progress report that “while the outcome of ‘A Shared Future’ will have a significant impact on how the ‘good relations duty’ is taken forward...the Department is looking at other ways to promote this duty. The Good Practice Reviews being taken forward under the direction of the HSSPS Equality Steering Group have been designed to help address the promotion of good relations. Although each Review is different, collectively they place the service user at the heart of this work. The reviews are concerned with making changes to our services, addressing diversity, user involvement, addressing communication and complaints. The outcomes of these Reviews will help ensure our services address the individual needs of all users.

“Race Relations - The Department in partnership with the Equality Commission developed *Racial Equality in Health - A Good Practice Guide*, which was aimed at helping health and social service staff recognise the particular health needs of black and minority ethnic communities. The Guide was launched for consultation in March 2002 by the then Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Ms Bairbre de Brún and Mrs Joan Harbison, the Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission. The final document will be launched in June 2003.

“The Regional Health and Social Services Interpreting Service for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Project, ‘More than words’, which commenced in April 2002, is being funded over three years through Executive Programme Funds. The regional initiative will significantly improve access to health and social services by black and minority ethnic communities who do not speak English either as a first or competent second language. The Eastern Health and Social Services Board was commissioned to manage and deliver the project with the Department’s Evaluation and Equality Unit overseeing the Project.

“To assist in the establishment and development of the project a conference was held on 31 March 2003 for health and social services, black and minority ethnic groups and other stakeholders. The aim of the conference was to inform key stakeholders of the development process and to include and empower them in shaping the project. In addition, Health and Minority Ethnic representatives attended from the Republic of Ireland where interest in the project’s development process is emerging.

“Representatives from the Republic of Ireland recognise the potential of the project and are looking at the possibility of implementing a similar service. Evaluation of the event indicated that the majority of delegates found the event ‘very useful’ and that it had met people’s expectations and in some cases exceeded people’s expectations. A copy of the conference report is available on the Department’s website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

“Steady progress has been made on the development of the Interpreting Service, and

plans for it to be in operation by the end of January 2004 should be achieved. In line with this, the Project is currently designing an interactive website to help convey information to the wider Health and Social Services, Black and Minority Ethnic Groups, interpreters and beyond.

“Mapping Minority Ethnic Languages in Northern Ireland - The Department contributed to the funding of research carried out by Daniel Holder, Multi-Cultural Resource Centre. The research report “In other Words,” was launched at the 31 March 2003 conference hosted by Regional Health and Social Services Interpreting Project for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups. The research was carried out in response to the recognition that it is vital to developing initiatives such as the Regional Interpreting Service. The research will help to inform policy and service developers; promote better consultation; and ensure the effective communication of information.

“Whilst community activists would have a good idea about the linguistic profile of their own communities, this information was not collated anywhere across the Black and Minority Ethnic sector. In addition, to answer specific questions activists were relying on estimates, as this was the only method available. It became essential therefore to conduct research to address these issues and put into the public domain evidence that could assist in the effective provision of information and could also inform initiatives regarding interpreter provision of the range of emerging languages. The research saw the nature of the language barrier as key to a more in-depth understating of effective communication.”

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DRD)

DRD provided the following information in progress reports:

“All EQIAs carried out address the implications for good relations.

“Training on good relations has been provided for management staff as part of awareness training on s.75 generally, [and] Equality Unit staff have attended a ‘Diversity Matters’ seminar.”

The Department has implemented a number of measures in relation to transport, including funding “a range of Voluntary and Community groups to assist the development of community-based transport solutions, ...working along with schools and the Health Promotion Agency to promote ‘Safer Routes to Schools’ projects; the introduction of the Senior Smartpass (NI Concessionary Fares Scheme), a Review of the ‘Getting Out and About’ website (a guide to accessible transport within Northern Ireland) and the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities and the Rural Transport Fund, [which] continue to provide support to community organisations that provide transport to, amongst others, people with disabilities.”

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (DSD)

The Department reported that it is “involved in the North Belfast Community Action Project. This Project aims to put in place a plan of short, medium and long-term action to address social and community issues in North Belfast. It focuses particularly on building community capacity in those areas where it is weak and maintaining community activity where it is working well. A desired outcome of the community capacity building programme which lies at the heart of the recommendations will be that communities are helped to come together.

“The Department also provided funding to the Churches’ Community Work Alliance to develop community work with the churches.”

In 2001-02 “work on two pilot group housing schemes for Travellers commenced. One of these (in Omagh) was completed in January 2001. These schemes enable those who wish to settle into a community to do so.

“In addition, the Social Security Agency undertook a consultation project to establish the views of Travellers on social security service provision. The outcomes of the project were discussed with the Equality Commission and the Agency is currently reviewing the equality training it provides to staff.”

“During 2001 - 2002 the Department developed the ‘Partners for Change’ strategy which set out the relationship for working with the voluntary and community sector and identified Government’s strategy for the support of the voluntary and community sector...”

The Department’s annual progress report for 2002-03 stated the following in regards to progress on the good relations duty:

“DSD administers a number of grant schemes and programmes either on behalf of or in partnership with the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). The CRISP Programme for example, promotes partnership and cross-community working by putting communities in the lead in regenerating their areas. The likely impact of proposed CRISP projects in terms of the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations is considered as part of the economic appraisal process.

“Under the Peace 2.11 Area Based Regeneration Measure, twelve communities in Belfast, Londonderry, Strabane, Downpatrick, Coleraine, Craigavon and Ballymena will each receive funding to tackle the legacy of the conflict, reconciliation difficulties and high levels of multiple deprivation. Eight of the 12 neighbourhoods are interface areas and have high levels of marginalisation. The other four are single identity neighbourhoods suffering in different ways from the legacy of the conflict.

“Local Strategic Partnerships/District Councils, who have responsibility for the administration of Measure 2.11 of Peace II, which is focused on social integration, inclusion and reconciliation of town centres and deprived neighbourhoods, have consulted widely with local communities through a range of mediums to make people aware of funding available and how to access it.

“Urban II, a regeneration initiative programme targeted at inner North Belfast, is delivered in partnership with the local community. The programme focuses amongst other things on addressing interface issues

“The North West Development Office (NWDO) has funded a number of project groups which contribute directly to the promotion of good relations.

“The Department can point to many instances where it has contributed to the promotion of good relations in the community through funding or targeting social need. Other examples include the appointment of Traveller liaison officers in both Foyle and Lisnagelvin offices, the development of a second group housing pilot scheme for travellers completed in September as well as the Department’s involvement in the North Belfast Community Action Unit jointly with OFMDFM.

“The Department participated in the development of the draft Race Strategy and will be a member of the Race Forum contributing to the Action Plan being developed.

“The Department is acutely aware that neighbourhood renewal in Northern Ireland faces distinctive challenges and constraints brought about by the high rates of segregation, sectarianism and the relationship between poverty and the most divided urban areas. A key objective of the Department’s strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, “People and Place”, will be to develop confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life in their areas. Increasing the capacity and confidence of local communities brings the prospect of these communities reaching out across social and community barriers and generally promoting reconciliation and active citizenship. We know this is no easy task. That is why we see the strategy as having a seven to ten year time frame to enable us to develop an inclusive approach that is realistic in what it can achieve, taking into account the distrust and fear in the affected communities.

“The £3m Local Community Fund, announced in 2003, was established ‘*to develop community capacity and leadership*’... As the Fund develops and is rolled out the Department will be gathering information on its impact and benefits including its potential to promote good relations.

“Good Relations policy is already embedded in employment policy across the Department. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and must carry out their duties in a way which promotes a good and harmonious working environment. Breaches of equal opportunities policy will lead to disciplinary action.

“The Social Security Agency launched a revised complaints procedure during the year and Harassment Contact Officers were appointed.

“Widespread equality training has been delivered over the past number of years and the Department is currently engaged in refresher training for all staff.

“In terms of ensuring good relations in the workplace, the Child Support Agency (CSA) has a set of dress standards which forbids staff to wear sports tops clearly identifiable with either community.

“There is a leaflet available in the SSA entitled “Equality in the Social Security Agency” which covers both staff and customer issues. It is available in Social Security Offices and on the Internet.

“Implementation of section 75 (1) also contributes to the implementation of the section 75 (2) duty as they are complementary.”

3(ii) Education Sector

This section provides information on the implementation of the good relations duty by public authorities in the education sector. It includes the universities, the further and higher education sector, and the education and library boards. Progress on good relations by smaller education bodies, such as Ulster Supported Employment Limited (USEL), may be found in the Other Northern Ireland, Cross-Border and UK Public Authorities section.

UNIVERSITIES

The five universities of Northern Ireland are Queen's University, Belfast, the University of Ulster, Stranmillis University College, St. Mary's University College and the Open University. In order to progress the statutory equality duties, the five Universities formed the Higher Education Equality Consortium (HEEC), and worked together in drafting their equality schemes.

In 2001 - 2002, members of the HEEC met with Community Relations Council (CRC), Future Ways and NUS-USI to discuss ways in which to progress the good relations duty within the universities. Three of the universities reported conducting an initial audit of existing good relations practice to use as a basis for developing their good relations strategies. Representatives of the CRC and NUS-USI met the HEEC again in 2003 to discuss the possibility of one of the Universities/Colleges becoming a 'pilot organisation' for implementing the CRC's 'A Good Relations Framework'. This facilitated the development of an initial audit of existing good relations practice within the University/Colleges. This will be used to develop a Good Relations Strategy and determine training needs.

In addition to the joint measures described above, Stranmillis stated that "consultation with Ballymena Borough Council, Futureways, the Community Relations Council and the Community Relations Officers of the Eastern Council Region in July 2002 provided good insight into Good Relations Strategies which consist of a series of audits, barriers to achievement and benchmarking areas of progress."

COLLEGES OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The further and higher education colleges are:

Armagh College of Further Education
 Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education
 Castlereagh College of Further and Higher Education

Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education
East Antrim Institute of Further and Higher Education
East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education
East Tyrone College of Further and Higher Education
Fermanagh College of Further and Higher Education
Limavady College of Further and Higher Education
Lisburn Institute of Further and Higher Education
Newry and Kilkeel Institute of Further and Higher Education
North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education
North East Institute of Further and Higher Education
North West Institute of Further and Higher Education
Omagh College of Further and Higher Education
Upper Bann Institute of Further and Higher Education

FURTHER EDUCATION SECTOR-WIDE INITIATIVES

Conference - in 2002 “the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) and the North East Institute hosted a ‘Racism in Further Education’ Conference. Speakers at the event included staff from the Commission for Black Staff, University of Ulster, the NI Civic Forum and Trademark.

“Arising from consultations, some new policies were being developed, for example, Race Guidelines for the Further Education sector.”

The AGREE Programme - The sixteen further education colleges all participate in the AGREE Programme (Actioning Good Relations, Equity and Equality), for which the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) acts as a central contact and facilitator. The programme seeks to go beyond compliance with the good relations duty by ensuring organisations’ commitment to mainstreaming the principles and practices of equity, diversity and interdependence. The Programme is described in the following statement:

“The workplace in Northern Ireland is one of the few places where people meet together. It has therefore, at times, been the place of deepest silence but it also holds great potential to model the benefits of a society moving out of conflict, both in terms of meeting organisations’ goals and in terms of investing in social stability.

“Colleges of Further and Higher Education, whilst accounting as a workplace for over eleven thousand employees, are also one of the few places where our young people meet together. If society is to cope with the transition to a peaceful and just society those places where people meet must become places of dialogue and reconciliation.

“If the institutions in which these people meet do not learn to deal with the different

identities and aspirations of students, employees, governors and their communities, there is a very real danger they will lose this opportunity.

“The promotion of good relations is about breaking through the denial, avoidance and amnesia that has often organised the way organisations deal with the conflict. It challenges sectarianism and racism and promotes equality, develops respect for diversity, and raises awareness of the interdependence of the people and institutions within Northern Ireland. Good relations states a public commitment to these beliefs and continually seeks ways to build on them for the future.

“All colleges have agreed that in addition to complying with the requirements of its Equality Scheme, to pro-actively promote as a priority ‘the establishment of good relations between people of different religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups’.”

The Further Education sector has agreed the definition of good relations as *‘the ability to acknowledge the existence of conflict, or any tacit cultural tension, and to discuss what are often contentious issues in a safe and supportive environment.’*

“The programme has three distinct groups dealing with differing issues: an Advisory Panel, a Development Group and a Working Group.”

The Advisory Panel consists of “knowledgeable practitioners within their fields, which relate to the categories of Section 75(2)”, and includes representatives of OFMDFM, Equality Commission, DEL, Community Relations Council, NICEM, Institute for Conflict Research, Community Foundation for NI, COSO and students.

The AGREE Advisory Panel has “a guidance and development role in harnessing new ideas and considering policy, college structures and the AGREE Programme activities in light of their experience. The panel will advise both the Programme Development Group and Working Group.”

The Development Group “has a policy development and strategy intervention role in the initiation of critical dialogue in relation to sectarianism and racism and around the principles of fairness and valuing difference within the Further Education Sector.” The Group consists of representatives of each of the colleges and of NUS-USI. Its purpose is “to consider and advise on policy implementation and its impact on associated college structures, annual plans and suggested interventions, in the context of the overall AGREE Programme and operation of the Sector’s Good Relations Policy.” It also “acts as a centralised focus group for the exchange of information and material.”

The Working Group is described as “the driving force behind the implementation of the programme strategy.” The Group is made up of two representatives from the Association

of Northern Ireland Colleges, the Equality Co-ordinator and the Employee Relations Manager, who ensure Executive responsibility for the programme, and two representatives are drawn from Trademark (a non-profit making consultancy), who “ensure strategic responsibility for the programme.” Administrative support for the Working Group is provided by ANIC. The Working Group has “overall responsibility for the Management of all ‘transformational’ processes, and ensures the seven steps laid out in the Programmes Strategy are taking place.” The Working Group will be responsible for the planning and implementation of the Programme alongside monitoring and evaluation.

The seven steps of the AGREE Programme strategy are:

- Step 1 Invitation
- Step 2 To Establish Critical Dialogue
- Step 3 To Growing Leadership Commitment and Understanding
- Step 4 To Identify the Issues
- Step 5 Growing Commitment and Understanding Across the Wider Organisation
- Step 6 Experimenting and Modelling New Working Practices
- Step 7 Implementing New Models of Practice into Mainstream Structures and Relationships

“The Futureways Programme, Trademark and the ANIC Equality Unit will be hosting a range of Seminars at the end of 2003 to other public authorities. The aim of seminars is to inform equality practitioners about the strategy ANIC and Trademark have undertaken in relation to Good Relations, and the work Futureways is currently conducting with public authorities in relation to the process. It will concentrate on the concept of Good Relations and how this process might be managed.”

“The AGREE Programme...has produced an accredited training for trainers course. This course, accredited through the NI Open College Network at level 3, aims to build capacity within colleges through training nominated staff in the areas of race, religion and political opinion. The course commenced in May 2003, with another course starting in September 2003.”

North West Institute of Further and Higher Education - in addition to participating in the AGREE programme, the college reported that it is developing a race policy, which was being consulted upon at the time of making the progress report. The draft race policy proposes, inter alia, to monitor the admission of students and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups where reasonably practicable, to promote awareness and to communicate commitment. Following agreement the policy will be published to employees, the public, learners, and work placement providers and an equality action plan drawn up with the assistance of the ANIC Equality Unit. The Equality Interdepartmental Working Group will review the policy on a regular basis.

EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS

This section details the measures reported by the Belfast, North Eastern, South Eastern, Southern and Western Education and Library Boards, and also by the Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards, the Youth Council, the Council For Catholic Maintained Schools, and the Northern Ireland Council For Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment.

Joint Initiatives - there are a number of projects and initiatives relevant to the promotion of good relations in the education sector. The following have been mentioned in annual progress reports by more than one of the bodies in this sector.

CEJI/NICEM Anti-Discrimination and Diversity - this project is described by BELB, NEELB, SELB, SCELB and the Youth Council in their 2002-03 annual progress reports. Although it is a regional initiative, "because of the limited resources it will run in the Belfast Education and Library board, smaller education bodies e.g. Staff Commission, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Youth Council, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education and the Department of Education."

"This is a transnational project by Centre Europeen Juif D'Information and the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities. It is designed to:

'Mainstream equality and diversity into policy and practice through positive community relations and participation with the aims of assisting public authorities to eliminate discrimination and providing culturally sensitive, equitable, caring and quality services.' "

In Northern Ireland the project is confined to the education sector. Currently the three European cities involved are Berlin, Altea and Belfast.

"The objectives of the project are to:

1. Contribute to the elimination of discrimination in the fields of health and education;
2. Facilitate a training process through which public authorities will establish an action plan to:
 - a. develop equality and diversity policy in order to provide more culturally sensitive, equitable, caring and quality services;
 - b. foster better community relations and communication strategies with local groups;
 - c. implement equality and diversity policy in all aspects of human resources, in particular in recruitment, training, review, promotion, retention and progression."

Six trainers per city "have been selected to deliver the training programme. In Northern Ireland there are four trainers from the community/voluntary sector and two from the public sector", one from BELB and one from the Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards. The training of trainers took place in January 2003 in Belfast, and a pilot

training programme for senior board officers was scheduled for May 2003. The Board is represented on the Steering Group established to assist in the management of the project.

“The scope for joint working on the promotion of good relations is being examined.”

Joint Education and Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) - JEDI is funded by the International Fund for Ireland (Community Bridges Programme), the Department of Education (European Structural Funds), the Education and Library Boards and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

“The JEDI Initiative will develop a coherent strategy for community relations, youth work and education for citizenship within the Northern Ireland youth services. Under Executive Programme Funding, seven pilot projects are underway which will pilot policy and assist the strategy development process.” Each of the Education and Library Boards, the Youth Council and Youthnet are implementing pilot projects looking at issues such as youth organisation and city centre initiatives, rural isolation, working with ethnic minorities and issues around gay and lesbian young people. The information gathered from the pilot exercises will be analysed by the JEDI project team.

“In addition, a product of the JEDI work within the policy setting is a Step-by-Step Guide to ensure the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (EDI) are at the core of the policy and operations of organisations. The Guide is designed to operate on two levels. Document One is the Step-by-Step Guide itself, describing the main things you will have to do and consider when embedding EDI principles into your organisation. Document Two is a series of working papers developed to provide an in-depth discussion on key concepts and issues referred to within the Guide...

“The JEDI audit report of the policy development process was officially launched in board headquarters. As a result of the audit three key priority areas have been identified on which the youth service will focus. These include:

- The implementation of a comprehensive induction process for all new volunteer and part-time staff;
- The revision and implementation of a staff development policy and training programme, in line with the EDI principles;
- The revision of current policy on allocation of resources.”

Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership (YESIP) - the Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership is an intermediary funding body set up to distribute EU Peace and Reconciliation Funding. “The overall measure is entitled ‘developing children and young people’ with a budget of £20 million until December 2006. The Southern Education and Library Board are the lead body on behalf of the Department of Education and the five Education and Library Boards, supported by the sectoral partner YouthNet.

“The aim of this Peace II funding is to build on the successful interventions commenced under Peace I and to further target those groups of children and young people who are at greatest risk of social exclusion and marginalisation, both in schools and in the youth sector. The funding is targeted at those areas of greatest social need as defined by the Noble Deprivation Index.

“£12 million has already been committed to over 100 projects working with children and young people in communities all across Northern Ireland. This includes eight Area Based Strategy programmes which have received enhanced support and funding to help them provide an area-wide solution to the problems of assessing suitable employment for those young people in most need of education, training and guidance. The key aim of promoting social inclusion is reflected in the funding of innovative and responsive projects designed to meet these needs, for example:

- Young disabled (A.E.C.T. - Pan Disability Transitions)
- Travellers (Belfast Travellers Alternative Education)
- Ethnic minorities (Wah Hep Community Association)
- Families of victims (W.A.V.E.)
- Men and women (Shankill Young Women’s Group)
- Families of ex-prisoners (Tar Anall)

“To assist in the most effective allocation of the remaining funds, YESIP officers have met support groups and umbrella bodies working with those children and young people currently under-represented in Peace II funding, to discuss potential programmes of work. To help identify any gaps in the take up of Peace II funding at a very local level, the Southern board has agreed Terms of Reference with Queen’s University Belfast for a Research Project to be completed by October 2003. This research will improve the targeting of the beneficiaries from Peace II funding and by mapping them against their home addresses in TSN wards and their membership of Section 75 target groups. YESIP will then be able to identify any areas of under-representation.”

Community Relations Council - in March 2002 CRC made a presentation to the Statutory Duty Co-ordinating Group on how the Boards could promote good relations. CRC outlined the Community Relations Operating Principles, namely equity, diversity and interdependence and recommended that these principles be incorporated into a good relations policy. An information pack which included guidelines for drafting a good relations strategy was made available.

Promotion of Good Community Relations among Young People - the purpose of the policy is to provide “financial support for a range of educational programmes, initiatives and facilities which provide structured, sustained, opportunities for young people to meet, in order to foster self respect, respect for others and the improvement of relationships between different cultural traditions.

“The project team has been appointed and has received training by Focus Consultancy Service, Disability Action; the Chair has requested additional staff training.”

Youth Service Community Relations Programmes - “the programmes developed are aimed at offering young people practical opportunities to gain greater understanding of the main cultural traditions in Northern Ireland and to enable them to contribute positively to the development of good relations.”

Asylum Seekers/Refugees Working Group - BELB, SELB and WELB reported that a joint DE/NDPB Working Group meets bi-annually “to discuss education issues relating to asylum seekers/refugees.”

Music and Library Services - BELB and NEELB provided information on and explained how their library and music services bring young people together, developing cross-community contacts and friendships, and developing skills, promoting social inclusion and addressing social exclusion. Examples include storytelling in primary schools, Bookstart, Rhyming Round Belfast, School of Music concerts, and Express, a concert at the Waterfront Hall involving performers from a cross-section of Belfast schools. BELB also described how its BELBCLEAN training programme for caretakers includes equality training and facilitates contact and networks between employees who may not otherwise have met.

BELFAST EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

The Board has included “the promotion of equality, recognition and value for diversity and dealing with the legacy of conflict in a divided city” in its action plans.

“Since the introduction of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the subsequent approval of the board’s equality scheme, the board has been involved in a number of initiatives directed at promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial groups.

“Interface Areas - the ongoing challenges facing schools located in interface areas in North and East Belfast continue to be addressed both at strategic and operational levels within the board. Emergency issues are handled, on a daily basis, by officers from the health and safety, maintenance, security, transport and press sections.

“A multi-disciplinary group of officers within the education department collate and respond to the emerging needs of staff and pupils in these schools. In practical terms this includes liaising with the school governors, the principals, Department of Education, a wide range of external support agencies as well as in-house curriculum, advice and support. Officers have been closely involved in identifying and securing additional resource requirements.”

North Belfast Youth Workers in Schools Initiative - In 2002 the Board reported: “in response to the difficulties in the North Belfast area the Board established an emergency management team chaired by the Chief Administrative Officer. The group meets on a regular basis to co-ordinate the support which schools require in such situations. An important outcome has been the creation of a communications infrastructure between political representatives, community groups, schools, OFMDFM and PSNI. Board officers have identified resource requirements for the education community in North Belfast and have obtained substantial funding for this area.”

In 2003 the Board reported “the North Belfast Youth Workers in Schools Initiative is a government response to the serious civil disturbances which have largely affected schools and young people in identified communities.

“The main purpose of the project is to enhance school support structures for vulnerable young people and to contribute to the rebuilding of community relationships in those areas of civil unrest.

“A team of six professional youth workers are currently working within schools in the North Belfast areas. Each school has its own dedicated youth worker...The youth workers undertake focused developmental work with pupils during agreed school hours and also develop links beyond the school into the various school catchment areas, working closely with the community and other local youth providers in order to promote the rebuilding of community relationships. Several successful prejudice reduction programmes have already formed the basis for a number of cross community programmes over the summer months.” The schools currently involved in the initiative are Belfast Boys’ Model School, Belfast Girls’ Model School, St Gabriel’s College, Castle High School, St Patrick’s College and Hazelwood College.

“Working as part of the staff team the school based youth workers address the developmental needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Programmes offered have included cultural awareness, anger management, citizenship and personal and social development. Accredited programmes including ASDAN key skills and Prince’s Trust xl programmes are also opportunities offered to young people involved with the initiative.

“Out of school youth work is focused largely in school catchment areas and compliments the work being undertaken with individuals and groups during school hours. Emphasis is on informal education approaches and use is made of existing youth provision with in the local areas. Accredited courses are also offered with the OCR Trainee Leader Certificate being offered to young people, encouraging them to play a more active role with the youth organisations in their areas.”

Summer Interface Schemes, North and East Belfast - “Schemes have been set up for the summer period when the risk of cross community problems at interface areas

increases. Additional resources and training have been provided for programmes and outings which will encourage young people to participate in constructive activities during this period.

“Approximately 6122 (3126 male and 2996 female) young people aged between 9 and 18 years participated in programmes organised by youth, community and local residents associations. Feedback would indicate that the diversionary programmes organised to take young people out of ‘interface areas’ was very successful, particularly where there was parental involvement.”

New Targeting Social Need (NTSN) - “the board is currently revising its Corporate Plan for the period 2003-2006. [At] the same time a learning strategy has been developed and a quality improvement plan compiled. The board will reflect all of these plans and strategies in the next NTSN action plan and will continue to build on the work already started to ensure that the maximum possible resource and effort is directed to those areas and people most in need.”

Irish Traveller Community - “the Belfast Education and Library Board has been actively involved within the ‘Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group on Traveller Education’ which highlighted the disadvantages and difficulties many Travellers face in their daily lives...The Board welcomed the recent launch in February 2003 of the government’s ‘Response to the P.S.I Working Group on Travellers’, [and] continues to work with the Department of Education on implementing this response through its membership of the ‘Forum for the Education of Traveller Children (NI)’.”

A Support Officer and an Education Welfare Officer for the Travelling community have been appointed. The Board also provides an Outreach Support Teacher for Traveller pupils in secondary education, and one full-time youth worker and two part-time youth workers working on targeted provision with Belfast Travellers’ Sites Group. The Board provides transport to and from school for all Traveller pupils in the Board area.

“This year [2003] shows evidence of a further widening of access to education for the Traveller Community from nursery to secondary level in the Belfast area.

“Nursery Education: An increasing number of Traveller parents are now placing their children in pre-school provision in the Belfast area. Promotion and support of the benefit of Early Years learning has helped to improve attendance and registration levels this year. For the first time ever there is a waiting list in the Barnardo’s pre-school playgroup and children registered and attending in reception or full-time nursery school. Transfer links between nursery and primary school continue to be promoted and supported by the board.

“Primary School: There are currently at least one hundred and two Traveller children registered in six primary schools in North and West Belfast. This increase in the number

of primary schools been accessed by the Traveller Community across these parts of the city reflects the fact that most Irish Traveller families are now living in settled housing and accessing their local primary schools.

“Secondary School: This year shows evidence of a widening of access to secondary education for the Traveller Community as a whole. There have been at least thirty-eight secondary school-age pupils registered and attending six secondary schools including mainstream secondary, moderate learning difficulty and Belfast Board Education Other Than School provision.

“Although attendance levels for many young Traveller pupils over fourteen continues to cause concern, a growing number of young Traveller pupils are now choosing to remain at school to leaving age 16. For the first time this year one Traveller pupil has completed Year 12 and wishes to remain in full-time education at age 17.

“The board has actively sought to create and maintain links between primary and secondary schools to promote and support primary 7 pupils and their parents in accessing the transfer procedure to secondary school. In the past three years the number of secondary schools receiving accepted placements in year eight from the Traveller Community has doubled from three to six.”

Asylum Seekers/Refugees Working Group - In 2002 the Board reported that it had “put in place a support system for asylum seeker/refugee families in the Board area. A number of in-house services, including education welfare, education psychology and English as an additional language, will liaise to establish and assess the educational needs of the family. A joint DE/NDPB Working Group meets bi-annually to discuss education issues relating to asylum seekers/refugees.”

NORTH EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

“The Boards/Staff Commission recognise that good relations can only be developed on the basis of equality and full equality will only come if there are good relations. The Boards/Staff Commission are committed to the promotion of good relations within our workforce, in policy development and in the delivery of services. The principles of equity, diversity and interdependence which underpin this work have been mainstreamed into policy-making and service delivery.”

The ‘Promoting a Culture of Tolerance’ policy was approved by the Board in April 2001. “The policy seeks to promote a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity at all levels of the organisation and in the wider community. Promotion of equality and good relations is one of the objectives of the policy.” The policy includes staff training.

The Board also reports that “Education Guidance Centres, under the Education Psychology Service, bring together Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils from different backgrounds to promote their behavioural and emotional adjustment in the context of the Promoting Tolerance policy.”

“The Pre-school education expansion programme brings people of different religions and political backgrounds together in different ways at various levels.”

The Curriculum Advisory and Support Service appointed two new staff to assist with the growing number of children in NEELB area for whom English is a second language. The Board also has a Field Officer for Irish, and funds a new post for the development of the Citizenship curriculum in schools.

Under the auspices of the Education Welfare Service, a teacher for Traveller children has been appointed, and preliminary work to establish a special interest group of Education Welfare Officers involved with Traveller children was undertaken.

“The NEELB Culture of Tolerance Policy provides the basis for this mainstreaming within the Board. A range of examples of this are outlined below:

“Promoting Good Relations among Young People - the Youth Service makes a major contribution to the development and practice of improving community relations. Most of the young people who take part in youth work activities also participate in community relations programmes. Recent research highlights that 85% of members of full-time youth clubs were involved in some form of community relations programmes, 65% of members of full-time youth clubs were involved in cross community contact.

“The Youth Service is currently the subject of a major policy review. The new policy has not yet been fully developed but it is being taken forward by a Youth Service Liaison forum, the membership of which comprises one-third young people.”

Youth Service Community Relations Programmes - “the NEELB Youth Service runs an annual programme of preparation work with youth from different community backgrounds examining issues of identity and diversity. This programme leads on to an annual camp which in 2002 brought together 60 young people in the age range 10-17 at Newcastle, Co. Down. Through a week’s programme of outdoor pursuits and structured discussion sessions, they were able to examine in a meaningful way cultural diversity and difference. Both voluntary and board youth units avail of the scheme.

“Groups are approximately 60/40 in terms of community background and 50/50 in terms of gender. Plans are in hand to make the 2003 event more accessible to young people with disabilities. An encouraging feature of the programme is the number of past participants who have availed of further training from the youth service in order to act as leaders in subsequent years.”

“Ethnicity awareness training has been provided to all youth service officers.”

“**The NEELB Youth Forum** - this initiative aims to put in place local structures that allow young people to develop informed opinions about issues that affect them and afford them the right to be consulted by those who make important decisions on their behalf.

“In the past year two seminars were organised for young people from all sections and parts of the community with a view to arriving at a consensus on acceptable methods for local consultation with young people.

“It is envisaged that a board wide consultative body will be set up with representatives from each local council area. Consultation will be based on the ‘Citizen’s Jury’ model and the young people will be trained and prepared for the process of consultation and the production of a final report.”

“**International Exchange Programme** - within the framework of the Board’s International Policy 130 schools in the North Eastern Board Area have been supported in the development of bilateral or multi-lateral links with European partners. In particular, NEELB has been very effective in promoting Comenius funded links within the EU Socrates Scheme: 120 Comenius projects have been approved for Northern Ireland in 2003-4 (making it the most successful region in the UK), 52 of which are within the North Eastern area.

“This ongoing success has led to a significant broadening of horizons for teachers and pupils and enhanced opportunities to contact and visit partners abroad, promoting the development of Education for Mutual Understanding. 2,158 teacher exchanges and 4,280 pupil exchanges have taken place between the North Eastern Board area and its linked partner regions in France, Germany and Spain.

“Eight young people from Newtownabbey visited Bosnia and Croatia as part of an exchange programme which had also allowed them to host young people from Bosnia and Germany. The local young people from a variety of backgrounds followed a programme focused on learning about the Bosnian war of 1992 -1995 and the current post war situation. They worked with their hosts and a German group from Brandenburg to design and paint a youth themed mural at the local school. They also taught activities to Bosnian children and studied the culture, religion and lifestyle of the region. The exchange visit was evaluated as extremely beneficial as it allowed the young people to learn about conflict situations in other countries and to share their own community experiences of the conflict in Northern Ireland. They worked together on sharing and presenting their different community backgrounds and were able to compare conflict experiences in Bosnia with their own. The group also learned leadership and communication skills and the project developed their views of other European cultures and peoples. Strong relationships have been built up both on an inter-community level

and on the international level and the group is looking forward to visiting Brandenburg in July 2003 to continue their work.

An “**International Festival for Children**...was held at the Antrim Board Centre in May 2002 with funding from Awards for All... Sharada Bhat, development worker with the Indian Community Centre in Belfast led a workshop on the culture and traditions of India. Gordon Topping, Chief Executive of the North Eastern Board welcomed guests, performers and participants to the event which was part of the policy of promoting tolerance in the North East by bringing children of different backgrounds together to learn about different cultures.”

“**Multi-Cultural Festival** - this event was held in September 2002 at Cambridge House School to celebrate cultural diversity. In association with the Integrated Education Fund the Board organised a series of multicultural workshops on aspects of African, Indian, Chinese and Latin American cultures for around 300 post primary children. In the evening a professional multiethnic show was provided to invited guests from across the community by the Artfrique Movement which also included Indian, Chinese, Latin American, Irish and Ulster Scots items. The Board saw the event as reinforcing its commitment to the development of an inclusive and harmonious society in which diversity is respected and valued.”

“**Summer Schools** - a three year programme of Summer Schools was launched by The North Eastern Board in 2002 using a grant from the New Opportunities Fund.” The programme was “delivered at eleven locations across the board’s area and brought together pupils in the P4 to P7 range from across the community to learn together.”

“Promotion of Good Relations related projects:

- 2002/2003 saw a substantial increase in applications to and grants paid to NEELB schools by the Schools Community Relations Programme for projects involving around 8000 children.
- The first of four cohorts of Post Primary Schools staff were trained in Local and Global Citizenship, a teaching programme which includes Human rights, Diversity, Active Democracy and Social Justice elements.
- A promotion of good relations good practice video for schools, made with pupils of St Olcan’s, Parkhall and Rostulla schools entitled ‘Celtic Cowboys and Frontier Indians’ was released.
- The Bill of Rights in Schools Project is operational in four Post Primary Schools in the NEELB area.
- NEELB has most successful applications to the ‘Integrated Education Fund’ for project grants to improve religious, political and cultural understanding.”

SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

The South Eastern Education and Library Board reported the CRC's presentation to the Statutory Duty Co-ordinating Group (see Joint Initiatives, above), and referred to the policy on the Promotion of Good Community Relations among Young People.

SOUTHERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

The Community Relations in Schools Programme includes cross-community programmes and a residential Special Bridge Builder project.

The Traveller Support Service improves educational provision for Traveller children and ensures uptake of educational provision. A Travellers' Support Worker for the Newry area has been appointed, in partnership with other NDPBs

The Support Service for Minority Ethnic Groups includes the English as an Additional Language Team, which comprises six teachers who provide specific language support and liaise with the Board Librarian to provide schools with additional multi-cultural resources. The Team Leader works directly with Principals, teachers, families and local community groups (Al Nur, Wah Hep, Portuguese Forum) to facilitate the integration of children from minority ethnic groups into schools and the wider community.

WESTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

In 2002 the Board reported that it had nominated two officers to have overall responsibility for the development of community relations strategies within the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service and the Youth Service. The Youth Service has also appointed four part-time Field Workers to promote community relations in part-time youth clubs.

For schools, in-service courses for teachers have been provided to enable them to develop effective community relations programmes both within the Education for Mutual Understanding curriculum and in the context of working with other schools.

An introductory course on community relations was provided for part-time youth workers. In addition, professional youth workers were to be trained, from September 2002, to facilitate community relations workshops in local areas. Training would also be provided to young people involved in youth councils and the WELB forum.

The Board reports that its New TSN Action Plan for 2000-2003 focused support on young people at risk of marginalisation, including Traveller children, children in care, school age

mothers, persistent non-attendees, children with special educational needs and young people with disabilities. A DE/NDPB Working Group exists to discuss New TSN issues and agree a common approach.

Both the Southern and Western Education and Library Boards referred to the following events:

“Industrial Relations Symposium - in October 2002 a symposium was organised to enhance industrial relations. Two of the main themes led to specific contributions on the equality agenda, namely the ‘Role of Trade Unions in Confronting Sectarianism in the Community’ and ‘Improving Industrial Relations’ including welfare, training and equality in the context of the recent National Joint Council (NJC) Guide ‘Finding the Balance - Work Life Policies in Practice’.”

The scope for joint working on the promotion of good relations is being examined.

Annual Conference - the Association of Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards organised a conference on ‘Education for Diversity and Inclusion’ which was held in October 2002. The theme of the conference provided the opportunity for the keynote speakers to address what we mean when we talk about Education for Diversity and Inclusion at international, national and local level. Delegates also had the opportunity to participate in workshops where they could explore and discuss with experts a wide range of issues relating to diversity and inclusion in the context of Northern Ireland context.

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) - the Boards and the Staff Commission are working with NICEM on the introduction of anti-discrimination measures in public authorities.

STAFF COMMISSION FOR EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARDS

“The Staff Commission’s initial customer base is the five Education and Library Boards. It also has a duty to persons seeking to be employed within the Education Service. The scope to develop a community relations strategy, when not operating as a service provider and with a staff of seven people is limited. However, the Staff Commission has, through its overall programme of work and its participation in a number of events, sought to make progress in this regard, namely the NICEM/CEJI project ‘Anti discrimination and Diversity in Action’. The Staff Commission has released one of its staff to act as a Trainer for the project. The Commission participated in a number of events organised during European Week Against Racism 15-21 March 2003”, and also met with the CRC under the auspices of the inter-Board/Staff Commission Statutory Duty Co-ordinating Group. It will, in the coming year, explore more fully the scope for developing a good relations strategy.

YOUTH COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Youth Council stated that it is part of a consortium of youth service agencies, statutory and voluntary, engaged in projects with a range of Section 75 groups supported by Executive Programme Funding including the WELB's work with young Travellers. The Youth Council is also engaged in a research project with ethnic minorities.

The Youth Council has a NTSN Action Plan in place which complements that drawn up by the Department of Education.

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out its commitment, in all areas of its work to be Young Person Centered, to equity, diversity and interdependence, to be proactive, and to strive for excellence. The Youth Council states that it recognises that good relations can only be developed on the basis of equality and full equality will only come if there are good relations. The Council is committed to the promotion of good relations within its workforce, in policy development and in the delivery of services.

The principles of equity, diversity and interdependence which underpin this work have been mainstreamed into policy-making and service delivery.

"Promoting Good Relations among Young People - the Youth Service makes a major contribution to the development and practice of improving community relations. Most of the young people who take part in youth work activities also participate in community relations programmes. Recent research highlights that 85% of members of full-time youth clubs were involved in some form of community relations programmes, 65% of members of full-time youth clubs were involved in cross community contact.

"The Youth Service is currently the subject of a major policy review which is being taken forward by a Youth Service Liaison Forum, the membership of which comprises one-third young people."

COUNCIL FOR CATHOLIC MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Officers of the Council have attended training programmes on Equality Impact Assessment. The programmes focused on policy areas designated for impact assessment as part of the DE timetable and in which the Council will have a co-operative or co-joining role. One of the policy areas covered to date is the promotion of good community relations among young people.

NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM, EXAMINATIONS & ASSESSMENT

Regarding the Good Relations duty, CCEA reports its support for a number of voluntary organisations and charities through fundraising.

3(iii) Health Sector

This section details the implementation of the good relations duty as reported by the health Boards, Councils and Trusts in Northern Ireland, and also by health service agencies. Information provided by other bodies which come under the auspices of the Department of Health, Social Services and Personal Safety (DHSSPS) can be found in the section of this report headed 'Other Northern Ireland, Cross-Border and UK Bodies'.

This section is divided by 'Board Area' - Eastern, Northern, Southern, and Western Health Board Area, and HPSS Agencies - and the public authorities included in each are listed at the start of each section.

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD AREA

In addition to the Health and Social Services Board and Council, there are eight Trusts in the Eastern Health Board area: Ulster Community & Hospitals HSS Trust, Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust, Green Park Healthcare Trust, South & East Belfast HSS Trust, Down Lisburn Trust, Royal Hospitals Trust, Mater Infirmorum HSS Trust, and North & West Belfast HSS Trust.

EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

In their 2001 - 2002 reports, both the EHSSB and the EHSS Council stated that progress in promoting good relations amongst political and religious groups had been slow, though this was not through lack of commitment but because of uncertainty and a lack of clarity on the way forward.

The issue was discussed within the Eastern Area Best Practice Group, which includes the EHSSB, EHSSC and Trusts. The group intended to pursue a co-ordinated approach, drawing on current experiences and knowledge within agencies and best practice in the area of good relations.

In terms of promoting good relations amongst racial groups, the Board continued to consolidate and develop activity in relation to its 'Promoting Racial Equality Policy'. This included:

- continuation of the Board's Core Working Group on Black and Minority Ethnic Issues
- engagement of senior staff in work relating to asylum seekers
- ongoing financial support for the Minority Ethnic Community Health and Social Wellbeing Project

- monitoring and review of the Board's Interpreting Service with the Chinese Welfare Service
- taking a lead role in implementing a Regional Interpreting Service
- hosting a workshop entitled 'Working towards good practice for black and minority ethnic groups'

Equality targets included in the 'Priorities for Action' initiative for 2003-04 "relate to the conduct of the EQIA programme, consultation, contribution to both Best Practice Guidance and Good Practice Reviews, training and Promoting Race Equality in health (and social services). The latter is also part of New Targeting Social Need Priorities.

"During 2002-2003 the Board's Equality Manager regularly reported to the Senior Management Team and to Board Members. This process of review helps to generate an interactive debate and draws attention to objectives that are easily and immediately achievable and those that are more complex requiring a longer timescale and more debate."

The EHSSB drew attention to the "substantive work and ... progress in relation to promoting good relations with Black and Minority Ethnic Groups, required by both Section 75 duties and the Race Relations Order 1997. This work is an integral part of the Board's commissioning and monitoring processes. Its objective is to ensure that the services that are commissioned from the Health and Social Services Trusts reflect cultural and religious diversity. Ongoing monitoring also helps to highlight gaps and equally importantly promotes good practice. During site visits in 2003 evidence was provided by some Trusts on efforts made to provide training in cultural and religious diversity and to provide practical guidance within staff handbooks on diversity issues. This work is to be promoted as good practice.

"During 2002-2003 a number of celebratory events were organised within the Board in recognition of Anti Racist Week (November 2002), Chinese New Year (February 2003), International Day Against Racism (March 21st) and European Week Against Racism (March 2003). A number of staff were also invited to celebrate these events within the BME organisations. Such activity continues to promote and develop good relations and diversity activity. Additional work in respect of political opinion and religion is less advanced. Board Human Resources polices attempt to reflect the needs of a diverse workforce.

"The Board officers are currently consulting, internally, on the OFMDFM's strategy entitled "A Shared Vision". The outcome of this consultation will be a paper, presented to Board members. This will generate further debate on what further actions could be undertaken internally. The appropriateness of research materials on equity, diversity and interdependence produced by Counteract and Future Ways will be examined within this context. In 2003-2004 training in religious diversity will be co-ordinated. The Inter-faith Forum will be engaged in its delivery."

EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The Council reports that “promoting good relations between political and religious groups is ongoing in the daily work of the Council staff. Interview panels for Council staff are not biased towards any section of the community.

“Teambuilding exercises not only focus staff on the role and activities of the Council but also on the promotion of good relations within the workplace.

“Through our facilitation of various focus and public group meetings of user participation, the Council promotes good relations by ensuring each member of the community who attends is given an equal opportunity to express their views and opinions without being biased to any.

“Currently the Good Practice Group is co-ordinating Diversity training with the Inter-Faith Forum. The Council will avail of this training that focuses on good relations.”

BELFAST CITY HOSPITAL HSS TRUST

The Trust states that the good relations duty has been “the most difficult aspect of its equality agenda”. It hopes that the outcome of “A Shared Future” will enable the Trust “to better consider how to deal with this good relations duty. In the meantime the good practice reviews which have been taken forward under the HPSS Equality Steering Group are helping to address the promotion of good relations”. However the Trust acknowledges that it needs to do more work in this area.

Race Relations - at the time of its report, the Trust was awaiting the DHSS and Equality Commission joint guide on Racial Equality in Health. The Trust gave consideration to ethnic monitoring of patients during 2002-03, which was taken forward in the period following the annual report. Representatives of the Trust met with representatives of NICEM and the Eastern Health & Social Services Board to identify “any specific issues which were of concern to NICEM representatives”, but it was concluded that in general the services provided by the Trust “have not raised any particular matters. The key learning from the consultation was that individuals had some madeifficulty in understanding the overall HPSS system and the role of the GP as ‘the gate-keeper’. “

“An issue which was raised through this consultation is that of interpreting services. The Trust is participating in the DHSSPS sponsored project “more than words” which is being managed through the EHSSB. Representatives from the Trust attended the conference on 31 March 2003 hosted by the DHSS&PS to consider issues arising from the consultations with representatives of the ethnic minority populations.”

GREEN PARK HEALTHCARE TRUST

The Trust reports that it has included the promotion of good relations in its Equality Performance Indicators. With regard to these indicators, the Trust states that it has worked with the Eastern Area Best Practice Forum on Good Relations; it has participated in workshops on good relations, and work on the communications of the duties will continue in partnership with the Public Relations Department.

During 2001-02, training in the Section 75 duties was incorporated in courses such as Nursing Assistant Update Courses, NEBS Management Courses, Recruitment and Selection training, Staff Appraisal and Performance Review training, and Corporate Induction Training. Specific Section 75 training was provided to Trust Board members and Senior Managers, and good relations duty awareness is included in all equality training.

In 2002-03, “an audit of key Trust work areas was carried out in relation to good relations between people of different racial groups. This included a site visit by representatives from the African Cultural Centre and the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre. The Trust has also promoted awareness of the work of the Northern Ireland Filipino Society among members of staff from the Philippines, which has included placing posters in staff accommodation and circulating handouts.”

SOUTH & EAST BELFAST HSS TRUST

In March 2003 “EHSSB officers and a representative from an ethnic minority group met Trust representatives... to take part in a site visit as part of the EHSSB Race Equality Audit. This was an opportunity for the Trust to provide evidence of what is being done to meet the needs of black and minority ethnic (BME) people...”

“Feedback from the visit was generally positive and the shortened application form produced by Human Resources was lauded [in the final report] as an example to other Trusts and Boards in how to make recruitment more accessible to ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups. As a result of the site visit, a working group has been established to look at how the Trust can reduce barriers to recruitment for people with foreign health-related qualifications and help ease the route to gaining UK recognition for these. Development of support arrangements for new employees from ethnic minority backgrounds are being investigated.

“Initiatives to promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group have largely concentrated on awareness raising and training, specifically the Trust’s Equality Scheme Awareness Sessions and Cultural Awareness training which were held during 2002 - 2003.”

A representative from the Interfaith Forum ran a “pilot training session aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of staff about other faiths at the end of March 2003. At the time of reporting, the Trust was evaluating the session to assess how effective it would be in promoting understanding, which may in turn promote Good Relations, and how training in this area could most effectively be delivered.”

In regards to progressing the good relations duty, the Trust has also reported the development of a new Mental Health Centre “close to areas of high mental health need and designed to serve both communities. It is situated at the bottom of the Woodstock Road, which is close to one of the main community interfaces in Belfast. A pedestrian entrance was provided at the front of the building to facilitate access by clients from Short Strand.”

DOWN LISBURN TRUST

Equality training includes training on the good relations duty. Staff received training on issues related to religious/political difference through initiatives such as ‘Getting off the Fence’ which was produced by CCETSW [Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work]. Trainers within the Trust have attended ‘Equality in Action’ training by NICEM. The Trust also commissioned three consultancy days from NICEM, the Chinese Welfare Association and MCRC to look at issues specific to race in Down Lisburn Trust.

The Trust’s Community Safety Strategy which was developed in partnership with Lisburn City Council, the Police Service for NI, SEELB and the Probation Board, addresses issues of good relations such as sectarianism and racism.

The Trust was involved in the EHSSB’s good relations workshop, ‘Working Towards Good Practice for Black and Ethnic Minorities’.

The Trust worked with other members of the Health Sector to progress work on good relations and sought advice from the Equality Commission.

In its 2002-03 annual progress report the Trust reiterates its commitment to the promotion of good relations. Discussions of community relations issues took place in staff and induction training. The Trust states that the launch of ‘A Shared Future’ by the Minister for Community Relations in January 2003 “has prompted a renewed focus on this aspect of the Trust’s obligations, and it is anticipated that that this document will have a significant impact on how the organisation progresses its Good Relations duty into the future.”

ROYAL HOSPITALS TRUST

The Trust's Equality Performance Indicators include obtaining "high level commitment to the establishment of a Good Relations Development Group" and mainstreaming "communications of equality and good relations across the organisation".

The Royal Hospitals Trust stated that it was committed to producing a Good Relations Policy for the hospitals. To aid this process a Good Relations Development Group, to "represent a diversity of views, opinions and backgrounds across the Hospitals" was established. Facilitation of the group is being led by the Future Ways Group of the University of Ulster. The group attended a residential workshop "to explore internal relationships among staff, relationships between staff and visitors, and relationships with the community we serve. Follow up meetings with Directors have been organised to progress this area of work with final recommendations to be made to the Equality Steering Group in September 2003."

MATER INFIRMORUM HOSPITAL HSS TRUST

Awareness training on diversity, anti-discrimination and the good relations duties is included in the Trust's corporate training and development programmes, including the Equality and Human Rights training programme, the Trust's Welcome Pack, corporate induction and corporate induction update programmes, which include information and leaflets on the requirements of Section 75 (equality and good relations) and the Human Rights Act.

Diversity and anti-discrimination awareness is also promoted in the corporate programmes such as Management of Harassment and Bullying to Create a Harmonious Environment, Patient Focused Customer Care, and Recruitment and Selection.

During 2002-03 the Trust "embarked on an exercise to employ overseas nurses from India and 13 overseas nurses were appointed. The orientation and induction programme for the overseas nurses included forging links with the local community and with minority ethnic groups."

"The Traveller Movement (NI) delivered awareness training on health related issues, ethnicity and traditions in March 2003...other community and voluntary groups are [also] to provide awareness training across the Section 75 categories, which will support and complement the Trust's equality and human rights awareness training programme. The involvement of the Section 75 groups in the awareness programme has been well received and has helped to raise the awareness of the barriers and negative attitudes some individuals face in trying to access healthcare services."

“Race & Religion - The Trust has developed a draft User Guide for staff providing general information on race and religion. In particular the user guide provides basic information on culturally sensitive issues relating to privacy, single sex wards, birthing, offices of the deceased, diet, holy/special days of celebration/ remembrance, how to access interpreters and religious elders.

“The following awareness booklets by the Interfaith Forum are available in all ward and clinical areas: “A Handbook of Faiths: A brief introduction to faith communities in Northern Ireland” and “Check Up: A guide to the special healthcare needs of ethnic religious minority communities.”

“...the Trust’s Promoting Racial Equality Forum has been developing a policy for the Promotion of Racial Equality.” At the time of the 2002-03 annual report, the document was in its final draft and was to be adopted as a formal Trust policy during 2003-04 and will be incorporated into awareness training programmes.

The Trust’s Community Forum “played a pivotal role” in appointing a Patient Support Officer, an advocacy post within the Trust. “Information leaflets on how to contact the Patient Support Officer are widely available within the Trust and have also been circulated to a range of local community and voluntary groups and GP surgeries. During the year the Trust’s Patient Support Officer met with a number of minority ethnic groups and asylum seekers to advise them of the clinical services provided and to seek their views on how to make our services more culturally sensitive. The minority ethnic groups visited included the Indian Community, Chinese Welfare Association, Jewish Community, Islamic Centre, Muslim Women’s Group, NICEM and the Multicultural Resource Centre.”

“The Patient Support Worker also acts as the liaison person in relation to accessing interpreting services which during the year have been expanded to include FLEX (a service provided through the University of Ulster). An information notice for clinical areas on how to access interpreting services inside and outside normal working hours has been widely circulated within the Trust and is available on the Trust Intranet.

“The Trust will be involved in the Regional Health and Social Services Interpreting Project for black and minority ethnic groups launched by the DHSSPS, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Department of Education in 2002. It was agreed that the Equality Managers within Boards and Trusts would take on a link/liaison role within the Project.”

The Trust planned to hold an Open Day in November 2003 to celebrate diversity and a number of minority ethnic groups had agreed to assist in the planning of the event and to participate.

“The Trust recognises that progress needs to be maintained within the Promoting Racial Equality Forum and an action plan is currently being devised.”

Religion, Political Opinion & Race - the Trust acknowledges that it has “achieved limited progress in the good relations areas of political opinion and religion”. The Trust committed to actively review these areas in the coming year “and welcomed the work to be undertaken by the Equality Commission to develop a good relations strategy”. The Trust also welcomed the launch of “A Shared Future” by the Minister for Community Relations in January 2003.

NORTH & WEST BELFAST HSST

By 2003, the Trust’s Good Relations sub-group had “commenced work on the development of a Community Relations Strategy and was reviewing the Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Framework as a possible model”. It was also “carrying out an audit of activity already taking place within the Trust to promote good relations within the local community and within the workplace”. The Equality Review Group “has been tasked with carrying out an informal audit of the current situation within their services in relation to any negative incidences which have occurred between staff or within Trust facilities.”

“The Trust is committed to improving community relations, particularly in North Belfast which is an area of significant deprivation and has experienced some of the worst violence of the past 30 years. There are a number of peace walls dividing communities and tensions between communities remain high. The Trust works in partnership with and supports many of the local community groups. The Deputy Chief Executive of the Trust is a member of the North Belfast Partnership Board and the Trust has been involved in a number of initiatives including the North Belfast Community Action Project. The Trust fully supports the detailed action plan designed to address social and community issues in North Belfast proposed in the NBCAP’s May 2002 report and will contribute as required to their implementation.

“The Assistant Director of Community Services has been working actively within the community around ‘flash-point’ areas of North Belfast such as Ardoyne and Duncairn. He is involved in an interagency group set up to look at the consequences of disturbances and has been providing support, such as Health Promotion Services, to community groups in these areas. The Trust leads the Displaced Families Interagency Working Group assisting individual families who are displaced due to violence and has set up confidential trauma counselling services.”

In partnership with the Eastern Health & Social Services Board the Trust planned to host an International Conference, ‘Towards a Better Future - Building Healthy Communities’, in October 2003. “This is one of the responses arising from the ‘Caring Through the Troubles’ report, commissioned by the Trust, which recommended that the Trust establish an initiative on the social and psychological reconstruction of communities affected by the Troubles in North and West Belfast. The aim of the conference is to raise awareness of

the impact of the Troubles on the health and well being of the population in Northern Ireland and to develop a long-term strategy for dealing with the consequences of conflict.”

The Trust is of the view that “the ongoing political tension within North and West Belfast creates a difficulty in carrying out a formal good relations audit amongst staff and it should be recognised that the Trust is committed to providing a harmonious working environment free from discrimination or harassment across any of the defined groups.”

ULSTER COMMUNITY & HOSPITALS HSS TRUST

In 2002 - 2003, the Trust stated that it “continues to be committed to making progress with regard to the good relations duty”, but requests “guidance from the Equality Commission with regard to this requirement”.

NORTHERN HEALTH BOARD AREA

The Northern Health Board area consists of the Northern Health and Social Services Board, the Northern Health and Social Services Council, United Hospitals HSS Trust, Causeway HSS Trust and Homefirst Community HSS Trust.

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

The NHSSB states that “driving forward the good relations agenda is, at times, problematic. Without commonly accepted guidance on the way forward and because of the sensitivities with this issue, it has been something of a challenge.” The Board stated it was also “awaiting publication of the joint DHSSPS/Equality Commission Good Practice Guide “Racial Equality in Health” which should contribute to this debate.”

In the first two years of the operation of the statutory duties, the NHSSB undertook a staff survey “in order to find a good relations baseline, and organised a seminar in the Northern Board area to look at the application of the Equity, Diversity and Interdependence framework locally.”

During 2002-03, the Northern Ethnic Minority Steering Group was established. This group consists of representatives from health, education and minority ethnic groups. The group meets quarterly and provides a forum to make links within communities, for the sharing of information and for raising issues and providing collective solutions as well as informing policy.

Good Practice Review - The NHSSB and the NHSSC “have also been taking forward a Good Practice Review on Promoting Positive Staff Attitudes to Diversity. This was part of a region-wide equality work programme and was in addition to the work on equality impact assessments which is being taken forward regionally. During consultation on the screening of policies in the HPSS, it became evident that there were a number of issues which were of significant importance to the equality agenda, but which did not lend themselves to an impact assessment.

The aim of the review was to provide staff with “some guidance and support in how to deal effectively with patients and clients coming from an increasingly diverse society and who present for care or treatment”, and to “raise awareness of diversity issues among staff [in order to] help in the promotion of good relations [which] will lead to harmonious working relationships.”

“Work on this Good Practice Review commenced in January 2002 and was completed in February 2003. This Review included a review of literature on staff attitudes to the nine equality categories as well as a number of focused consultation sessions with various groups representing the categories and a section on Good Practice. The recommendations from this Review were passed to the Regional Equality Steering Group who consulted regionally on the four Good Practice Reviews.”

The recommendations “centred around the following areas:

- Establishing a diversity internet site to provide information on all the nine categories that would be easily accessible to staff.
- Ensuring that all visual and written images emanating from the HPSS reflect the diversity of the community.
- Developing an easy reference guide for staff with information on the nine categories.
- Devising a training programme and materials for the whole of the HPSS.
- Embedding diversity awareness into the planning and evaluation of services.
- Establishing a Regional Equality Good Practice Award.”

The Northern Neighbourhood Health Action Zone “is a community led partnership initiative that aims to improve the health and social well-being of people and communities living within the Northern Health and Social Services Board area. Some 14 neighbourhoods are now involved and the NHSSB is the lead organisation. While the primary focus of this initiative is to bring together relevant agencies, regional and local, to encourage them to co-operate in implementing Community Action Plans, it is noticeable that this has helped in the promotion of good relations, albeit indirectly.

“The Health Action Zone tends to focus on areas of social disadvantage in both communities. Traditionally, these communities may not have had much contact with

people in the other areas and may not have had many opportunities for engagement with those from the “other” community. A workshop organised in September 2002 in a neutral venue drew representatives from the different communities to look at funding opportunities and to examine other community-led initiatives. This allowed groups from different sides of the community to share good practice, forge links and went some way to breaking down barriers between the various groups. Critical to the success of this venture was the fact that the workshop was not heralded as a good relations initiative but rather had more tangible and practical objectives which were relevant to all the participants.

“Relationships between the different communities were further improved when a number of representatives from different areas attended a two day course organised by the Mediation Network NI on handling conflict within groups. Although the focus was not solely on communal conflict, participants came away with a greater understanding of the nature of conflict and how to manage it effectively.

“Networking all the neighbourhoods together and encouraging them to work together on areas of common concern has been productive and has helped foster good relations. The Strategic Group (which oversees the direction of the Health Action Zone) meets in a different area each time and the meeting is followed by a “walkabout” in that particular estate. This has helped people at first hand recognise the common problems they experience and has challenged perceptions about the other communities. All in all this practical working with local communities has indirectly helped in the promotion of good relations.

“The Board has also been involved in a number of other areas which contribute to the promotion of good relations:

- a presentation on the CCETSW report “Getting off the Fence” was made to the Senior Management Team This recognises the importance of anti-discriminatory practice.
- A South African social worker with experience of working in post-conflict situations contributed to the consultation work in developing one of the Children’s Services Pilots.
- The Board was instrumental in connecting a local mediation group with a Children’s Unit in order to undertake identity work with young people and staff.
- Acting on the outcome of a needs assessment, the Living with the Trauma of the Troubles Panel developed an interagency protocol for displaced families who have suffered intimidation.”

All of the three Trusts in the Northern Board area referred to the Joint Declaration of Protection, which United Hospitals Trust states was “revised in 2002-03 in consultation with the Staff Consultative Committee. This is a joint statement made by management

and staff side organisations. It states a commitment to every employee having the right to work free from intimidation or harassment on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, race, disability or trade union membership”, and aims “to make sure that staff understand the part they play to ensure a harmonious working environment”. Trusts have also referred to agreed policies and procedures for dealing with harassment and bullying.

UNITED HOSPITALS HSS TRUST

The Trust lists a number of organisations with which it works in partnership, and which assist the Trust to develop relationships, obtain information and consult with the community it serves, including the Northern Area Best Practice Forum, Northern Ethnic Minority Steering Group, the Regional Equality Liaison Panel, the North Eastern Area Equality Officers Forum (membership includes NEELB, Borough Councils and University of Ulster), Ballymena Victim Support Branch, Ballymena Community Forum, Ballymena Multi Agency Panel, Ballymena Traveller Support Group and the Task Group which is chaired by a representative of the Multi Cultural Resource Centre and consists of EHSSB, Housing Executive, Law Centre, Inland Revenue, Social Security Department and voluntary organisations.

The Trust has established links with a number of minority ethnic groups including the Multi Cultural Resource Centre (MCRC), Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), Chinese Welfare Association (CWA) and NI Filipino Association, and representatives of these organisations link into Trust wide initiatives e.g. United Hospitals Interpreting Project (UHIP).

The Ballymena Multi Agency Panel is developing a ‘Welcome Pack’ for ethnic minorities. Representatives of this group include: Housing Executive, PSNI, NEELB, NHSSB and Borough Council.

CAUSEWAY HSS TRUST

During 2002-03 the Trust continued to “work in close collaboration with a number of established community networks on a daily basis.”

“The Trust has a policy and Action Plan on New Targeting Social Need which aims to tackle social need and social inclusion by targeting efforts and available resources on people, groups and areas in greatest objective social need. It is a policy which impacts on decisions regarding service provision and resource allocation within all programmes of care. The work of targeting social need is closely related to other areas of Trust policy including the Section 75 duties, partnership working and community development. The

Trust's Equality Manager is a member of the Trust's Steering Group for New Targeting Social Need."

The Trust continues to undertake work "on the creation of a culture based on promoting good relations. The concept of good relations was included in a range of training programmes which took place during 2002/2003 including induction, management development and customer care courses. The Trust also has a number of examples of good practice in promoting good relations among staff and clients/service-users through policies and work practices and in relationships with other groups/organisations. In particular, the Trust has in place a Whole Hospital Philosophy for Causeway Hospital which is based on the concept of respect and dignity. One example of a Human Resource policy that promotes good relations is the Policy on the Management of Harassment."

As detailed above, under NHSSB, the Trust refers to its Joint Declaration of Protection in the context of good relations.

HOMEFIRST COMMUNITY HSS TRUST

The Trust is of the view that "the principles of community development reflect the objectives of New TSN" and it states it is committed to "the philosophy of social inclusion and enhancing the role of communities in decision making and service planning."

The Trust has a Community Development Strategy and in September 2002 it "appointed a Project Manager for Community Development, as part of a one-year pilot programme to implement the strategy and mainstream community development approaches within the Trust. A multi-agency Community Development Co-ordination Team was established to support the project and to implement effective partnership working practices.

"The Trust endorses the principles of partnership working advocated in the New Targeting Social Need (TSN) Policy and the Investing for Health Strategy. A number of partnership projects are already in existence across the Trust and involve a wide range of staff groups including the Rural Health and Social Wellbeing Project South Derry, the Rathenraw Community Development Project, Antrim, Community Empowerment Larne, and Surestart projects in the Ballymena and Cookstown areas."

A paper was presented to the Trust's Senior Management Team on how it should take forward the promotion of good relations. The paper described the requirements of the legislation and set out "some of the reasons why promoting good relations within an organisation is necessary:

- we need workplaces that reflect a commitment to treating people fairly, according people respect and valuing their contribution;

- in making a commitment to good relations organisations can address issues of mistrust, silence and prejudice in the workplace;
- flawed relationships can disrupt services and give rise to recruitment problems, legal cases, and absenteeism;
- organisations committed to the wider civic task of promoting public well being will already be committed to promoting good relations. Good relations will grow from a committed culture rather than a compliant culture;
- Northern Ireland has more or less been insulated from the wider demographic changes taking place across Europe as a result of immigration and more mobile workforces. With peace and the likely expansion of the European Community, Northern Ireland may become an increasingly attractive place to settle and work; and
- the future health and well being of all will be assisted by an organisation honestly and openly dealing with sensitive issues that, in this society, have been and still have the capacity to skew staff relationships and affect service delivery.”

The paper links the promotion of good relations and the Trust’s development strategy. It goes on to discuss various methodologies and templates which are available, including the Community Relations Council’s ‘Good Relations Framework’, University of Ulster/ Future Ways’ “Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Framework”, the recommendations of the “Getting off the Fence” report and recommendations by Counteract. The Trust was also reminded in the paper that Lord Herman Ouseley, former head of the Commission for Racial Equality in Britain, suggested at a seminar attended by Trust staff that “to promote good relations an organisation must look at best practice emerging at community level, and that the driving force must be from the top and accompanied by a sustained approach to change.”

Although some work in support of this duty had already started, in particular the recent staff attitudes survey, it was suggested that “there was clearly a need to undertake further analysis, including an internal and external audit.” The Equality Unit was hosting a placement student that academic year and it was proposed that she would “develop an audit tool developed from a combination of the most appropriate elements” of the available frameworks and tools.

It was anticipated that “the audit would involve asking a series of questions about the geographical area served by Homefirst and the perceptions Trust staff and the community hold of the organisation. It would involve a considerable amount of desk research and discussions with key members of staff and voluntary and community groups, and would provide a profile of the organisation and find out how it is seen by its customers/clients and staff.”

As a result of consideration of this paper, “agreement was given for a good relations audit to be carried out.” This will be implemented in 2003-04. The identified good practice, and the findings from the audit, “will establish a baseline for the Trust’s good relations strategy.”

The Trust also reported that it has taken the following steps to progress the Good Relations duty:

- Three Trust officers completed training on the Equality, Diversity and Interdependence Framework developed by Future Ways at the University of Ulster. This provides the skills required to develop approaches and practices, which promote good relations.
- Approved social worker training and the community care post-qualifying programme for health professionals include anti-sectarian issues and good relations.
- Section 75 awareness training includes training on the good relations duty. Senior managers and staff from the Equality Unit have attended seminars and conferences regarding good relations. This has helped to develop an understanding of how to progress the good relations duty.

SOUTHERN HEALTH BOARD AREA

Authorities included in the Southern Health Board area are the Southern Health and Social Services Board, the Southern Health and Social Services Council, the Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust, Craigavon & Banbridge HSS Trust, Craigavon Area Hospitals Trust and Newry & Mourne HSS Trust.

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

In its 2002 annual progress report, the Board stated that “promoting good relations has proved challenging”, but that it had made a start through a number of initiatives, for example the establishment of a local interpreting service for the Chinese and Asian communities in the Board’s area, which “facilitates communication between professionals and those who do not speak English” (this service is provided in collaboration with the SELB and the local SSA), and the establishment of the Board’s Investing for Health Partnership, which will “seek to improve the health of the local population by tackling the root causes of ill health such as housing, employment and social conditions.”

In 2002-03, the authorities in this group reported a number of common initiatives, as described below.

Multi-Cultural Handbook - following the success of Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust's Multicultural Health Fair, (in addition to receiving the NI Diversity 21 Award, this initiative picked up 2nd place in the prestigious HPSS Quality Award 2002), "the Southern Board, Council and Trusts have developed, in co-operation with regional and voluntary black and minority ethnic groups, a Multi-Cultural Handbook for Staff in order to raise awareness of the various cultures and customs followed by the many differing black and minority ethnic groups residing in Northern Ireland e.g. dress, diet, care of the dying etc. This Handbook is to be officially launched by the Chief Executive, SHSSB, Chief Commissioner of the ECNI and regional and local representations of black and minority ethnic groups on the 24 June 2003. In addition, the SHSS Board, Council and Trusts will be working in collaboration with the DHSS&PS and the ECNI in furthering the recommendations contained in the 'Racial Equality In Health and Social Care - Good Practice Guide' and 'Promoting Social Inclusion - Working Group Report on Travellers'."

Traveller Community Needs Assessment - "The Board undertook a major piece of research into the needs of the Traveller Community. The Needs Assessment of the Traveller Community in the Southern Health and Social Services Board area was launched by the then Minister of Health" in 2003, which a number of representatives of the Trusts attended. Following on from this, Craigavon & Banbridge Community Trust states it will "consider the recommendations", while Newry & Mourne Trust states it "will be furthering the recommendations contained therein."

Collaboration with NI Interfaith Forum - "The Board has, and will continue to collaborate with the Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum in various work both organisations are progressing." Craigavon & Banbridge Community and Newry & Mourne Trusts report that they have disseminated their cultural diversity handbooks and calendars etc.

Information Leaflet for Portuguese Speaking Community - "The Board has developed an information leaflet advising how to access health services in NI, which has been translated into Portuguese. It includes information on registering with a GP and Dentist, identifies out of hour facilities and accident and emergency departments at local hospitals. We have circulated this leaflet widely to Trusts, Health and Social Services Councils, GPs, Dentists, Pharmacists and Opticians, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) (the major employment agency in the area) and the Citizen Advice Bureau, etc."

Interpreting Services - "The SHSS Board, Trusts and Council in co-operation with other local Public Authorities have established an Interpreting Service within the Southern Area for the Chinese and Asian communities which aims to meet the needs of these local communities. The Board is currently undertaking an evaluation of this service which, it is hoped, will allow improvements in the service to be made. To help develop the service, a workshop is currently being planned for July 2003 at which representatives from the

Portuguese speaking community have been invited to seek to establish a sounder service for this community in the Board's area."

Language Line - "The Board is entering into a contract with Language Line for a greater diversity of language needs and it is hoped that this will address specific difficulties experienced in GP surgeries throughout the Board's area. Key staff have been trained in the use of this service. It aims to prove useful in providing solutions to any language barriers which healthcare professionals may face. This is available to all Trust staff in addition to other interpreting and translating services such as FLEX (University of Ulster) and Central Translations. Ongoing support is often requested for hospital staff and this is readily facilitated."

Regional Interpreting Project - "The HPSS has established a Regional Interpreting Project under the direction of the EHSSB. The aim of the Project is to create a register of available accredited interpreters for the various languages identified by the needs assessment exercises. Work in progress at present is the undertaking of a needs assessment exercise throughout all health and social care organisations, including family health services. Standards of good practice on the use of interpreters will be established along with governing codes of practice."

Inter-Agency Forum in Southern Board area - "The Southern Board health authorities "are collaborating on an inter-agency forum with public authorities in the Southern Board Area along with NICEM to address the needs of all black and minority ethnic groups/individuals within their local catchment area and those migrant workers coming to the province. One key objective of this multi-agency initiative is to produce a welcoming pack detailing information about each of the agencies and services available."

ARMAGH & DUNGANNON HSS TRUST

Community Development Strategy - "The Trust launched its Community Development Strategy in September 2002. The strategy is the result of collaboration between local voluntary/ community groups, which ensures that it is tailored to meet the needs of the community it serves. Due to the volume of ongoing community development work within the Trust area a twin track approach has been necessary. The Community Development team continues to work on the ground with community and voluntary organisations. Information leaflets and training packs have been developed to build awareness of the work of Community Development throughout the Trust. The team currently provide support to over 200 partnerships, networks and groups.

"The ethos of Community Development is to work with and provide support to all members of the community irrespective of political affiliation or religious persuasion. The Community Development Team works with any voluntary or community group with a

health and/or social well being remit. Over the past year the Team has provided information and support on an equitable basis throughout the Trust area. This includes groups with a particular political focus e.g. REACT and religious groupings such as the Crossfire Trust. The majority of our work is with groups who operate on a cross community basis for example the Senior Citizens Forum, Armagh and Dungannon, Parent and Toddler Groups across the Trust area, Volunteer Bureau and Community Transport. The Team remit is to work with groups on issues of health and social well being which transcend political and religious interest.

“The Community Development Team has been committed to capacity building through the following methods:

- Provision of information regarding external funding opportunities.
- Training and practical assistance with funding applications.
- Signposting to services.
- Research projects and community audits related to health and social well being.
- Carrying out needs assessments, monitoring, reviewing and evaluation.
- Processing grant aid applications.
- Practical support and assistance to groups.
- Assistance with action and strategic planning.
- Development of and involvement in partnership approaches, including partnership bids for funding.
- Influencing local, regional and national policy.”

Community Health Fair - “The Community Development Team, Health Promotion and the community in Middletown all worked together to organise a Health Fair in May 2002 in the new Community House in Middletown. This was an occasion to raise awareness on a wide range of available health and social care services across the communities. A variety of professional services provided information, assessment and advice. Fact sheets and training initiatives on community development approaches were also available.

“The day encouraged a holistic view of health taking account of other issues such as housing, environmental, rural, employment and childcare. It was recognised that persons representing all nine included categories attended the day.”

Survey of the Needs of the Chinese Community - “Armagh & Dungannon Health & Social Services Trust and Wah Hep Chinese Community Association are working in partnership to draw up a baseline survey of the health and social needs of the local Chinese community. This survey started in March 2003 and the work is ongoing. A pilot survey was initiated first; the purpose of which is twofold - first it will inform the two agencies about the character of the Chinese Community’s health and social needs initially in the Armagh area. This survey illustrates the extent to which Chinese people

are aware of Health and Social Services and their ability to access these services. It also creates an opportunity to present a snapshot of such a community, the difficulties it faces, and its needs to a wider audience of those involved in statutory, voluntary and community sectors with a particular focus on minority ethnic communities.”

Portuguese Community - “Armagh & Dungannon Health & Social Services Trust has recognised and is responding to the ever-growing health and social needs of the Portuguese community living and working in the Trust’s area. The Trust has formed a working group in conjunction with Craigavon & Banbridge H&SS Trust and Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust to address the issue of accessible information for the Portuguese community.”

“An information day was organised to increase staff awareness of the healthcare needs of the Portuguese community in our area. The information was delivered by STEP (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme). Staff requests to repeat the event are being considered.”

“Armagh & Dungannon H&SS Trust Community Development Team is a member of a multi-agency Portuguese Community Forum. The partnership includes Dungannon District Council LSP, SELB, CAB, HAZ, Volunteer Bureau, Trade Union, NICEM, Moy Park with the lead partner STEP. The work here is ongoing and continues to receive funding from the Investment in Health Programme. A new drop in centre was established in 2002 - 2003 and is run by Portuguese volunteers. Some health and social needs of the Portuguese have been identified including access to GP’s and other health and social services, language and communication barriers. These barriers are continually being addressed via the provision of interpreting services and the availability of healthcare information in minority languages.”

Traveller Community - “The Community Development Team also facilitated a half day training session on Cultural Awareness of the Traveller Community. The course which was delivered by Belfast Education and Development Group was open to key Trust Staff and to Members of ATSG and An Tearmann. There was a good attendance and the feedback was very positive. The Team hope to arrange further Cultural Awareness Training sessions for key staff and volunteers.”

CRAIGAVON & BANBRIDGE COMMUNITY HSS TRUST

The Trust’s Community Development Unit works with and supports minority ethnic community groups active in the area - Wah-Hep; Al Nur; Craigavon Vietnamese Club; Southern Travellers Early Years Programme; Craigavon Travellers Support Committee. The Trust provides grant aid to various Voluntary and Community Groups in its catchment area.

“The Trust undertook an attitudinal survey amongst its current staff to gauge the level of tolerance of various black and minority ethnic groups resident in its geographical area. In addition, the Director of Human Resources conducted a series of focus meetings with representatives of these various groups. Arising out of this research it is planned to undertake a number of initiatives including the following:

- develop a communication strategy with ethnic community groups, the aim of which would be to organise the provision of information;
- establish monitoring systems to ensure that such information reaches its target audience and is being understood and that uptake of service is increased;
- provide a translated “First Steps into Health” leaflet for Ethnic Minority Residents coming into the area sign-posting them to the Health and Social Services that they are entitled to.
- review the current interpreting service, with the ethnic community groups, to ensure that interpreters are trained to a particular standard, that people from ethnic communities are aware of how to access the service and that staff are advised and trained on how to use the interpreting service.
- ensure all staff are made aware that the practice of using ethnic community children as interpreters should cease immediately, due to the negative impact this may have on children and clients alike and the risk of misdiagnosis.
- ensure complaint forms are available in different languages.
- provide access to all staff on information in relation to the needs of people from an ethnic community background
- hold cultural diversity days for staff organised by the local ethnic communities
- all staff to undertake mandatory anti-discriminatory training
- undertake a needs assessment in the Craigavon and Banbridge area in consultation with the local ethnic communities.
- give urgent consideration to providing longer term contracts to those employed as interpreters; review their role with ethnic community groups and give consideration to interpreters developing into Health Advocates.
- give consideration to the appointment of a Lay Health Worker for each of the community groups.
- record information on diet and religious needs of patients on care plans so that all workers can follow and respect such needs.
- collate an accessible list of religious leaders, so that religious ceremonies can be arranged when a patient is terminally ill.
- in the event of death, consult with the patients relatives, through the use of interpreters, so that their preference can be met in relation to the preparation of the body and other religious requirements.
- provide specific training, in partnership with the Travelling Community representatives, to mitigate the negative perception that staff have of that community; organise a ‘Health Fair’ targeted specifically at the Travelling community, to promote the range of services the Trust has to offer.”

“The Trust assisted the Craigavon Travellers Support Group in two Health Information days for Travellers in March 2003.

“The Trust has recently established an Ethnic Minority Nursing Forum and hope to involve other local Trust representatives in partnership with this initiative.

“The Trust’s Community Development Unit (CDU) is involved with TASSK, Healthy Living Centre. This will include provision of Lay Health Workers with the Chinese, Asian and Traveller Communities, support for the development of a mental health users forum, work with Young Carers. CDU is also engaged with Banbridge Local Strategic Partnership (Quality of Life Action Group) and Banbridge Community Safety Partnership. These latter two will, eventually, begin to produce activities that will have a positive impact on the local minority communities.”

The Trust hosted a Multi-Cultural Health Fair during European Week Against Racism, which focused on the health and social services needs of the ethnic minority population living within the Craigavon and Banbridge area, particularly South Asian, Chinese, Portuguese and the Traveller community. The Fair Organising Committee comprised Trust representatives from the Community Development Unit, Health Promotion, Equality, Health and Safety and Public Relations, as well as representatives from the Wah-Hep Chinese Community, Al-Nur Asian Association, Craigavon Travellers Support Committee and the NI Multi-Cultural Resource Centre. Over 40 exhibitors attended the Fair, including NICEM, MCRC, Barnardos, SSA, the NI Fire Brigade and the SELB.

CRAIGAVON AREA HOSPITAL GROUP HSS TRUST

The Trust has reviewed its Equal Opportunities Policy and the duty to promote good relations “is now a central tenet of this policy.” The duty to have regard to the promotion of good relations is incorporated in the Trust’s training.

In 2002 the Trust was in the process of drawing up a good relations audit and was “liaising with the relevant agencies in the development of this tool.”

WESTERN HEALTH BOARD AREA

In addition to the Health and Social Services Board and Council, there are three Trusts in the Western Health Board area: Altnagelvin Hospitals Trust, Foyle Health and Social Services Trust and Sperrin Lakeland Health and Social Care Trust.

These public authorities have formed the Western Equality and Human Rights Forum (WEHRF) in order to share experiences and act consistently.

In 2001-02 all staff received awareness training on the Section 75 duties, including the good relations duty. Provision continued in 2002-03.

“Across the HPSS in the Western area, WEHRF recognises that other initiatives are being progressed which contribute to the promotion of good relations. WEHRF developed a ‘Good Relations Starter Paper’... which identified some of these initiatives within each of the member organisations which contribute to the promotion of good relations.”

“The Good Practice Review on User Involvement promotes good relations through the cross section of people who are members of the Project Steering Group. It includes WEHRF representatives and local community and voluntary sector representatives across the nine categories and the geographical spread of the WHSSB area. It is hoped that the outcome of the Review recommendations will lead to a positive impact on good relations both between service-user groupings and between the public sector and service users.”

During 2002-03, “WEHRF met with the Community Relations Council on a number of occasions in relation to “Good Relations Framework”. Within the Western Area, Foyle Trust was considering becoming a pilot organisation for implementing the framework, and initial work was in progress on this issue.

“Following the specialist training of two staff on the ‘Equality Diversity and Independence Model’ through the University of Ulster, Sperrin Lakeland Trust agreed to host a pilot of this model within the Directorate of Community Care. Due to changes in staff progress has been limited.

“It is anticipated that both of these pilot initiatives will support the Western Area in taking forward the Good Relations Duty.

“In addition, the Western Health Action Zone has been contributing to the agenda through initiatives such as the Caring for Difference research project, which examined the experiences of black and minority ethnic people living in the Western area in accessing services.”

HPSS Agencies

HEALTH AND PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES (HPSS) AGENCIES:

Authorities included under this heading are as follows: Mental Health Commission; Northern Ireland Practice And Education Council For Nursing And Midwifery; Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service Agency; Northern Ireland Central Services Agency for Health & Social Services; Northern Ireland Council for Post Graduate Medical & Dental Research; Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Service Agency; Northern Ireland Health Promotion Agency; Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

In the implementation of their statutory equality duties, the HPSS agencies and bodies work in partnership within a consortium, convened initially by the Central Services Agency, to work together and share resources on the implementation of equality schemes. This group meets formally on a quarterly basis to share good practice in the implementation of the statutory equality duties and to plan joint work. At a strategic level, this group of bodies is represented on regional steering groups convened and facilitated by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) - particularly in relation to the Equality Steering Group and the Equality Information group.

“The HPSS Agencies have further developed work in the area of good relations during 2002-2003. This work sought to establish a basis for proceeding with good relations. An audit of good relations was completed in May 2002, and the findings discussed both internally and with other HPSS colleagues. Each of the agencies has a relatively small number of staff, which adds a caveat to the staff survey results. The key findings of the Audit) were:

- the organisation had developed little good relations approaches outside work required for Section 75;
- for most good relations was not a problem issue, although it was suggested that the issue might cause more difficulty at different times of the year (e.g. around the ‘marching season’) and in different areas (i.e. mainly associated with one community);
- although there was no major view that any of the agencies, given their limited remits, should initiate any significant work on good relations, it was accepted that more could be done (e.g. more awareness of the issue).”

The HPSS agencies “have agreed to carry forward a plan of good relations work during 2003-2003. The most immediate priority would be to jointly commission pilot training seminars on good relations during 2002-2003 and then review further steps for promoting good relations...”

NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE HSS TRUST

“The Trust actively promotes Good Relations and has appointed a Communications/ Information Officer who has responsibility, among other things, for coordinating and overseeing promotional visits to community events and schools. Work in this area is communicated monthly to the Trust’s Equality Manager. In addition to numerous school visits by ambulance crews, NIAS has also been involved in a Streetwise initiative in collaboration with the local council environmental department, DoE Road Safety, Translink, the NI Fire Service and the PSNI in an effort to educate pupils of local primary schools on road safety. Such events raise the profile of the Service and promote the fact that the Service is available to all sections of the community.

“To further the promotion of equality of access to the Service and to tackle the problem of increasing attacks on Ambulance Service staff, a poster competition was launched in the spring of 2003, where primary schools were asked to design and draw a poster with the message of stopping the attacks on the Ambulance Service. This project was sponsored jointly by the News Letter and the Irish News and involved hundreds of children from local primary schools belonging to both sections of the community.

“The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has had a good working relationship with St John Ambulance over the years, with some NIAS staff actually being registered and insured with St John Ambulance, others giving up their voluntary time to helping others in the form of training. In the past year, due to the increased events like music concerts being held in Northern Ireland, St John Ambulance has assisted NIAS with the provision of first aid cover at such events.

“The Trust has provided contribution to ongoing Black and Minority Ethnic work in the Ambulance Service Association. The Trust’s Equality Manager plans to attend a conference run by the ASA on ‘Equalities and Diversity in UK Ambulance Services’ in October 2003. The specific aim of this conference is to establish and promote networks for Black and minority ethnic staff in Ambulance Services, particularly evaluating difficulties in attracting staff from black and minority ethnic communities to Ambulance Services and mainstreaming of equality and diversity into the core business strategy of the Trust.”

3(iv) Local Government Sector

This section details information on the implementation of the good relations duty provided by the twenty-six local government councils in Northern Ireland, as well as the Local Government Staff Commission and the NI Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee.

NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION (LGSC)

In their 2002 progress report, the LGSC stated that they were conducting a Good Relations Audit in consultation with the Community Relations Council (CRC), Counteract, NI Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), and would subsequently develop a Good Relations Strategy. In 2002-03 the LGSC reported that some Commission staff have received training in good relations from the CRC, Counteract, NICEM and Future Ways, and that it was hoped to make further progress on developing a good relations strategy during the coming year.

NI LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE (NILGOSC)

An internal Good Relations Working Group was set up by NILGOSC in January 2001. In April 2001 it undertook a Good Relations survey which indicated that NILGOSC had "good community relations" amongst its employees. During the year the group drafted a Community Relations Policy which was published to the staff in April 2002 along with further training on Community Relations. In their 2002-03 report, NILGOSC states "the policy was screened for impact assessment in June 2002 and approved by the Committee in October 2002."

ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002, Antrim Borough Council had "recently recruited" a Community Safety Advisor to advance good relations and to complement the work already being undertaken by the Community Relations Unit.

"Council consider that the main thrust of the spirit of the legislation lies with having regard to promoting good relations and to this end a Good Relations group comprising of elected members, the Chief Executive and the Policy Officer has been set up to plan the next major work areas. The remit of this group will be to assist in the development of good relations within the community, oversee the work of the Managing Diversity group and consider policy issues."

In 2003, Council reported that its “major thrust in terms of equality has been the advancement of Good Relations through the creation of a Community Support Plan after lengthy and detailed consultation with the community and voluntary sector ...the Community Support Plan is intended to meet the three strategic challenges for Antrim Borough Council of Capacity Building, Networking, and Resourcing.” These are “underscored by a range of values which include for example Inclusion, Participation, Equality, Mutual Respect, Partnership. This is further advanced by supporting actions in the general community across the Borough.

“In conjunction with the Community Support Plan significant progress has been made on Community Safety which is aimed at targeting the most vulnerable in society but particularly the young and the old. The Community Safety Plan, which was the subject of extensive consultation, resulted in funding from the NIO of some £100k to deliver the plan.

“...Council has also involved the Belfast Education Travellers group to provide cultural awareness training and has driven the creation and training of a Mediation Panel from within the community with the aim of reducing religious tensions and religious discrimination.

“...There is an extensive list of projects being delivered at community level which advance Councils equality and good relations statutory duty. These projects involve each and every group within the section 75 community...

One area that is worthy of mention is the activity and involvement of Elected Members working in conjunction with community activists, the Housing Executive and private house owners in respect of the removal or redesign of paramilitaristic murals and graffiti, and other general improvements aimed at reducing sectarian tensions and making various estates less intimidating.

“A major investment is also being made with young people across the borough in training and counseling them on a cross community basis, providing diversionary work and interests programmes and through the production of a CD, by the young people, to help them understand the motivation behind graffiti with the purpose of reducing it in the borough.

“Council also funds both cross community Events and Festivals and single cultural events e.g. St Patrick’s and Burns’ nights and young people are given the opportunity to experience sports which are not normally associated with their particular culture.”

ARDS BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002 - 03 the Council stated that “In addition to an annual PIP [Performance Improvement Plan], the Council’s Community Relations Unit produces an annual community relations plan, outlining how community relations concepts and structures are to be progressed in a given year. This plan is a vehicle through which the Council aims to contribute to the fulfillment of its good relations duty in the future. In addition, undertaking a Good Relations Audit is currently under discussion with the Community Relations Unit.”

ARMAGH CITY & DISTRICT COUNCIL

In its 2002 progress report, Armagh reported its membership of a Community Development Reference Group, made up of representatives of statutory agencies - Council, Health Trust, Education and Housing plus voluntary and community group representatives such as rural support networks, Armagh Confederation of Voluntary Groups, CAB, senior citizens’ Forum, Youth Forum, disability groups and tenants’ action project. The Group’s main aim is “working together to address community issues through a common agenda.” It has three sub-groups: Neighbourhood Renewal, Life Long Learning, and Capacity Building.

“The Reference Group agreed that Peace and Reconciliation should permeate through all community development activity...The need for cross-community and single identity work was highlighted and in particular meaningful work which will increase the opportunities for discussion and dialogue which could promote good relations and lead to a better understanding between communities.”

In 2002-03, the Council provided examples of the ‘day-to-day’ activities supported by the Council throughout the year (bulleted below). It states “This pro-active approach not only considers the three categories stipulated in the legislation, ‘Religion, Political Opinion and Racial Status’ but also to meet the theme of an ‘Inclusive Place’ as detailed in the Corporate Plan.

- Contribution towards the cost of a residential project, during which young people from Tandragee would have an opportunity to engage with young people from Palestine and Israel.
- All Set Schools Project towards the cost of organising a cross community cultural programme involving two primary schools in Poyntzpass.
- Contribution to be given to Open Arts (a disability organisation) towards the cost of organising an open arts performance at the launch of the Special Olympics, involving local disability groups from all traditions right across the city and district.
- Financial contribution together with officer and administrative support, to be given to the Charles Wood Summer School, towards organising the above-mentioned event

which has an excellent track record in promoting inter-church co-operation and cross community contact.

- Financial contribution to WAVE, towards the cost of organising two events aimed at providing a safe and non threatening means of introducing people from differing backgrounds.
- Financial contribution to FAIR group, towards the cost of organising a cross community networking evening for senior citizens.
- Financial contribution to Crossfire Trust towards the cost of organising a Halloween cross-border community event.

“The Council also works at the strategic level of acting as a catalyst for improvement of good community relations. Examples of this are:

- Establishment and support of the Community Development Reference Group.
- Ongoing support and the development of Armagh Youth Partnership. This partnership has now successfully received funding under the Local Strategy Partnership to establish various cross-community projects.
- Under the Blackwater Partnership Scheme work with Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council and Monaghan County Council in promoting cross community and cross border links in addition to developing the tourist, business and agricultural infrastructure of the area.”

BALLYMENA BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002, Ballymena Borough Council reported that it had developed a Good Relations Strategy following a Good Relations Audit. The Audit included extensive consultation and resulted in the identification of eight main community relations issues. The Strategy targets the Council’s community relations work on these eight issues: cultural traditions, ethnic minorities, single identity, inter-church, intimidation, territory, councillor relationships, and Community Relations training. As a result of the strategy, the Council decided to target grants (£6k) at projects which address the eight issues identified.

In 2003, the Council reported that good relations training had commenced for Councillors, management and supervisory staff, and was to be cascaded throughout the organization for all staff.

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

In its 2002 progress report, Ballymoney stated:

“In order to progress the Good Relations duties of the legislation, various activities have

been undertaken with community groups in the Borough, and the Good Relations duties are enforced on an ongoing basis within the community...There is currently a proposal under consideration to set up a Good Relations Forum within the Borough.”

In 2003, the Council reported that “the Community Relations Officer has responsibility for developing and delivering programmes to establish good relations, strengthen understanding of cultural diversity and provide community benefit.” A Community Relations Sub-Committee “comprises representatives from the borough council, schools, churches, voluntary/community groups and statutory organisations. It meets every two months and its aims are to encourage:

- Greater contact between communities in the Ballymoney Borough area;
- Programmes and events which promote greater mutual understanding
- Interest, appreciation and tolerance of cultural diversity.”

The Council “has recently initiated steps to set up a Good Relations Forum within the Borough. A Steering Group is meeting in October 2003 to progress this initiative. The Council is being assisted in this initiative by Mediation Northern Ireland. The Personnel Officer is part of the Steering Group for this Forum.”

“As part of its Investors in People Initiative the Council is currently working on developing business plans for each of its departments/sections in line with the overall Corporate Plan which is currently under review. Equality, good relations and targeting social needs objectives will be included within departmental plans.

“The Council also produces a 3-year strategic plan for community relations. This strategy is currently being reviewed and developed. Specific good relations objectives will be included in the strategy.”

“In order to progress “good relations” duties of the legislation, various activities have been undertaken with community groups in the Borough and the Good Relations duties are enforced on an on-going basis within the community.”

BANBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

In 2000-2002, Council provided workshops on: Facilitating political discussion, History and Identity, and Learn to mediate. These were not well attended, and the Council concluded that it is better to promote good relations with the community sector rather than for it. It found that ‘Utilising the principles and practices of a community development approach has been a much more successful means of promoting ...good relations.’

Subsequently, the direct provision of the workshops was supplied in association with Banbridge District Community Network. Attendance at these was greater “due to a sense of ownership by the community.”

The recent Community Development Strategy (funded by the Banbridge Partnership and developed with the community sector) contains significant reference to promoting community and good relations. Its aims include ‘to address social inclusion and isolation’ and ‘to actively promote community cohesiveness through greater understanding and tolerance of different cultures,’ accompanied by more detailed objectives.

In 2002-03 Banbridge reported that “Council continues to adopt an enabling role in the promotion of good relations, facilitating, advising, supporting and signposting to other agencies if we are unable to assist or if there are other agencies who specialise in a particular area i.e. Mediation Network NI, Counteract NI, Community Relations Council.

“Although the Council promotes good relations mainly through its community relations section, it promotes an integrated approach by working closely with other sections of the council towards developing partnerships with other organizations and agencies. This approach ensures that resources available can be used to their full potential and that the various groupings work in tandem.

“...The Programme for Government, equality legislation, New TSN, Peace II, and the establishment of a Local Strategy Partnership are all contributing factors to necessitating the development of an all embracing Community Strategy that ... target[s] resources, maximising opportunities for partnership working and development over the next few years.”

The Council drew up a Community Relations Action Plan for 2003-4, based on extensive consultation, including the formulation of an “Integrated Local Strategy”, a comprehensive Community Development Strategy, “The Way Forward”, and a “Community Support Plan”.

“The Integrated Local Strategy, the Community Development Strategy and [the] Community Support Plan, have been built on a well-grounded Community consultation process. Over 300 people attended workshops and consultation events at which they expressed their views on the future development of the district. Their ideas were drawn together into a draft plan that was presented to a round table workshop for review. Over 130 people took part in this event.

The following vision statement was drawn up as part of the consultation process;

‘Banbridge town and district will be a good place to live where people have a sense of pride and belonging. It will be a safe environment with healthy sustainable communities where diversity and human rights are respected.’

“The ‘Integrated Local Strategy’ (initiated by the LSP) ... sets out a detailed plan, which addresses the needs of local communities, “especially those in greatest disadvantage”, thus adhering to the core principles of equity and equality.

“A range of issues which need to be addressed in the area was identified through the consultation process with over 55 groups, networks, resource and support services and statutory and local government agencies. Key among these were:

- A lack of identity within the area - ‘there is an identity crisis within this area, with little sense of pride or identity in the town and the whole district’.
- Social isolation, particularly affecting women and the elderly, and exacerbated by inadequate transport facilities
- Sectarianism which is not openly acknowledged and/or addressed
- A lack of capacity building skills among groups and not enough skilled community development workers
- The absence of a strong collective voice for communities
- The need for increased awareness and promotion of community development and acknowledgement of what can be achieved through it
- A range of issues particularly affecting young people including anti-social behaviour, abuse of alcohol and hard drugs, and underdeveloped youth / youth work infrastructure.”

Core values underpinning the plan include Respect, Equity, Inclusiveness, Openness, Support, Ownership and Interdependence.

As part of the consultation process on the community strategy, a number of aims and objectives were identified, and these form the basis of the Community Relations Action Plan. The identified aims are:

- To develop and enhance community spirit and civic pride
- To build and support healthy, safe and active communities
- To address social inclusion and isolation
- To actively promote community cohesiveness through greater understanding and tolerance of different cultures.

Objectives include:

- Encouraging communities to develop and implement initiatives and projects to enhance community spirit,
- Promoting greater participation in civic, cultural and sporting events and activities
- To address the needs of young people and in particular establish and support a Youth Forum
- To address the needs of elderly people through the establishment of a forum
- To develop opportunities for the greater participation of minority and other socially excluded and/or isolated groups in community life

- To enhance the ability of groups to develop self-esteem and reliance through support, community education, training and capacity building
- To develop the lobbying skills of communities to protect and develop local services and infrastructures
- To encourage and support community participation in the exploration of diversity
- To develop prejudice awareness programmes
- To enable cross fertilisation of ideas between communities when they are ready to explore issues further
- To support the celebration of cultural diversity

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

In the first two years of the implementation of their equality scheme, Belfast City Council established an Inter-Departmental Working Group which conducted an Internal Audit of Good Relations and drafted a Good Relations Strategy. The draft Good Relations Strategy established a number of activities to be achieved over the forthcoming few years and work was continuing on the development of more specific indicators and targets.

“The Council unanimously adopted the Good Relations Strategy at its meeting in February 2003 and an extended Good Relations Steering Panel now has responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Good Relations Strategy.

“The Good Relations Strategy encompasses all of the work the Council proposes to carry out in the areas of equality and good relations and has four main inter-related strands:

- to promote good community relations
- to celebrate cultural diversity
- to promote equality through service delivery and
- to promote equality through a representative workforce.”

The Council states in its Good Relations Strategy that it “will use its influence as a democratically elected body to promote good relations throughout society.”

“Following a Special Meeting of the Council last summer, at which a resolution condemning sectarianism was passed, the Council’s Good Relations Steering Group was requested to find ways of addressing the issue of sectarianism in the City. A public anti-sectarian rally was organised by the Council at the front of the City Hall. Subsequently, the Steering Group was extended to include representatives from the Churches, Trade Unions, the business sector and the Community Relations Council, since the Council acknowledges that this issue is not one that can be tackled by the Council alone. This broader group is known as the Good Relations Steering Panel and has been meeting at least monthly, and often twice monthly, since September 2002.

“The Good Relations Steering Panel held a series of lunchtime consultation meetings in the autumn of 2002, to discuss the issues of sectarianism and to try to identify some practical ways in which the Council could contribute to the prevention of sectarian violence. Meetings were held with representatives from a wide variety of groups, including churches, faiths and minority ethnic groups; the Trade Unions and business sector; community relations practitioners, advisors and academics; statutory bodies; the community and voluntary sector; women; those working with children, the elderly and with a disability; and cultural groups.

“These consultation meetings were also used to allow the Council to consult informally on the overall content of the Good Relations Strategy; a summary of this had been circulated to all those invited to the meetings.”

At the time of making its report, the Council was “in the process of appointing two full-time Good Relations Officers and establishing a Good Relations Unit to co-ordinate and integrate its work in equality and good relations.” This has now been done and the Strategy has been published and is being implemented.

CARRICKFERGUS BOROUGH COUNCIL

For the 2000-02 period the Council reported that it “has made progress with regard to their Good Relations duty. Council led activities such as bingo, arts classes, special needs groups and sporting activities are all planned in accordance with s75. The Mayor of Carrickfergus also holds a Christmas buffet to improve good relations between members of staff.”

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002 the Council reported that it was “imminently embarking on” a Community Relations Audit, which will be undertaken by consultants (Locus Management)” and that they were currently having discussions about questions to be included “concerning the Good Relations Duty.”

In 2003, the Council reported that it has a Community Relations Strategy for the financial year April 2003 to March 2004 that “includes objectives, performance indicators and targets. The Council’s Community Relations section has also developed partnerships with other regional local authorities, in relation to the objectives outlined in the Community Relations Strategy.”

COLERAINE BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Council's Corporate Plan for 2001-2004 established Social Inclusion, which encompasses the Section 75 Statutory Duties, as a core objective. Directors and their Service Managers have identified the implications of Council's Corporate Plan, and specifically the mainstreaming of social inclusion / equality objectives for their services, with associated performance indicators and reviews.

"In depth anti-harassment councillor training" by Counteract and Future Ways has been provided to a number of staff (15) located in each of Council's main buildings. These core staff act as advisors to anyone who feels harassed. A half day anti-harassment training course was provided by Counteract to all staff (300+) through approximately 18 seminars. Senior Managers have attended a short training course on the Human Rights Act, provided by Local Government Staff Commission.

The foundation for all training is the 'Equity, Diversity and Interdependence - a Framework for Change' (EDI) project, undertaken with Counteract and Future Ways. The project started in April 2000 and identified barriers to good relations and inclusion in relation to Council's responsibilities. In 2002 the project was refocused as the 'Working Together Initiative' (WTI). Action plans for staff and members to help overcome these barriers are being followed.

"The purpose of the Working Together Initiative (WTI) is to help Council in its civic responsibilities, to effectively address social inclusion within the wider community and to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the Borough. The WTI deals with issues such as the relationships between women and men, Catholics and Protestants, disabled and non-disabled, majority and ethnic minority communities. It challenges the prejudices we may carry about those who are 'different' from us. The Working Together Initiative also helps ensure that no one is treated unfairly or with disrespect because they are 'different' from others, either within the Council or in the wider Borough."

The introduction to the WTI Action Plan states:

"As elected representatives and civic leaders, Councillors will endeavour to promote good relations within the wider community and demonstrate this endeavour in their day-to-day responsibilities and actions.

"As an employer, Council's commitment to the Working Together Initiative is through the creation of a workplace culture that values each person's talents and experiences, treats people fairly and promotes good relations in the workplace."

The Working Together Initiative aims:

- To articulate the role of a local council in building community understanding through its elected leadership, management practices and programmes.

- To build the internal capacity of Coleraine Borough Council to make meaningful and practical contributions to the development of a fair, stable and accommodating community.
- To examine, and create an understanding of how the actions of staff and members within Coleraine Borough Council have a direct or indirect effect on the public they serve.
- To enhance the capacity of elected representatives, staff and programmes to build community understanding.
- To develop appropriate and practical ways of understanding, identifying and measuring the effectiveness of this role.

In addition, “Council’s Community Support Plan 2002 addresses a spectrum of Section 75 duties within the wider sphere of social inclusion. Capacity building and Networking for Older people, Youth, Ethnic Minorities and Women are targeted as priority objectives in the Support Plan.

“The Good Relations duty for racial groups is addressed through the development work described above. Council’s efforts to promote social inclusion have led to the founding of a Coleraine Chinese Group. This has resulted in Chinese New Year celebrations and Dragon Boat races being organised with Council support and, for example, the participation of the Mayor in these public events.

“The religious belief duty is addressed more specifically through a Churches Forum supported by Council; this Forum meets on a regular basis.

“The political opinion duty is addressed through Council’s ‘ Working Together Initiative’, which includes a section on what the different parties represented in Council can do to promote good relations. The WTI builds on Council’s equity, diversity and interdependence project, initiated with Futureways and Counteract some 3+ years ago.”

“In summary the Section 75 duty could be said to reinforce, by statute, a general emphasis on greater social inclusion.”

COOKSTOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Council states that the good relations duty is delivered by the Community Relations Officer throughout the District within her strategy. The Council delivers its services “through an integrated local strategy with Cookstown Local Strategy Partnership. The Partnership employs a Community Support Worker and together we actively promote good relations with the District.”

In 2002 the Council stated “Through consultation with different racial groups and those with varying political and religious beliefs, we try to identify the needs of each of the

groups. We then tailor our policy delivery to try and satisfy all of the community's needs. Many groups still want single-identity support from community relations and may not want cross-community contact."

In 2003, it reported "the Local Strategy Partnership networks widely with community/voluntary sector groupings and is presently conducting a community audit. A significant element of this audit addresses community requirements under the umbrella of the nine categories. The Council's consultation process will obviously benefit significantly from this audit."

CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Craigavon Borough Council states that it promotes good relations "chiefly through its community relations work."

"The Council's Community Relations Plan for 2002-2003, which was approved by Council in April 2002, identified six main issues affecting good community relations, and has five main aims, relating to addressing issues of identity, relationships, support etc."

The Council "hosted two major events to promote good relations with the main ethnic communities in the Borough: an Islamic Community Conference, and a Celebration of Chinese Culture and Diversity. It also participated in the Multi-Cultural Health Fair organised by Craigavon & Banbridge Community HSS Trust."

"Considerable work was undertaken during the [2002-03] year on the preparation of the Council's Community Relations Plan 2003-2004, which was approved by Council in April 2003. The Plan's Mission Statement is 'to promote, improve and develop relationships within the Borough using an integrated community development approach.'

"The Plan has identified the main issues affecting good community relations within the Borough as being:

- Inter-community tension due to sectarian division
- Intra-community tension increased by feuding between various paramilitary groups
- Organised crime [in a particular area]. Local people have moved out following intimidation, with those remaining feeling vulnerable and isolated
- Difficulty in developing relationships in the rural community due to a lack of neutral meeting places and anecdotal evidence suggesting that new housing developments may be segregated leading to further polarisation
- Issues relating to the large concentration of ethnic minorities in the Borough - the arrival of Portuguese migrant workers is causing some tension in the Borough
- Community safety.

“The Council regards community relations as a clear process of engagement and developing of understanding in and between communities. Council believes that a project/process led approach to community relations which is focused and strategic will assist in achieving the aim of improving and development relationships within the Borough. The aims of the Plan are:

1. To develop Council’s role as the lead body in the delivery of a Good Relations Programme
2. To initiative, promote and develop projects that increase people’s sense of their own identity and culture, while underlining the need for others’ identity and culture to be recognized as valid.
3. To promote and develop relationships within and between communities using the premise that social needs common to all communities can be a vehicle for addressing community relations issues.
4. To seek ways to contact and provide support for those dealing with hard issues facing communities at particularly sensitive times.
5. To raise awareness of related issues at both Officer and Member level.
6. To contextualise the political transition of Northern Ireland and peace management methods in a global context.

“Each project initiated under the above aims will have its own set of aims and objectives and will be evaluated on the basis of fulfilling these aims and objectives. Participants, project leaders and those who have benefited from the work will be involved in this evaluation.

“In progressing this work, the Borough Council will be working with a range of bodies including the Local Strategy Partnership. The Partnership is responsible for the allocation and distribution of Peace II monies and will be seeking to address similar areas of work as Council. It is important that the Community Relations Plan complements the Integrated Local Strategy to avoid duplication of resources and to maximise development of relationships within the Borough.”

The Mid-Term Review of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2001-2005 places “emphasis on social inclusion...which is based on five vision themes identified through extensive public consultation as part of the Shaping Craigavon’s Future exercise. Corporate Aim 2 - An Inclusive Place for All - includes the following objectives: to encourage participation in community life, to address community divisions, to improve access for all to services and information.”

“The Community Relations Section has recently completed two large pieces of research: an attitudinal survey with regard to perceptions of community relations in the Borough and an examination of the nature and perceptions of conflict. The results of this research will be published shortly and the Community Relations Plan may then be

subject to adaptation. A community audit is also being undertaken in the North Lurgan area.”

The Council undertook two focus group exercises to assist in informing its response to the “Shared Future” consultation exercise.

“Mainstreaming: the roles and duties of the former Community Relations Development Officer post have been incorporated into the roles and duties of the Community Development Officer posts. The rationale for this is that community conflict, division and equality issues are intrinsic in the concept of community development. A process-led approach to community development is considered essential and officers, in conjunction with the community, will map issues affecting specific areas and then work with the communities to address these problems. These officers will also be working alongside the Community Safety Officer, ensuring greater co-ordination and cohesion between programmes.

“Good Relations - Ethnic Communities: work is being undertaken by the Council’s Access to Information and Services Working Group, including meeting with community representatives, to assist local ethnic minorities access Council’s services.

“The arrival of Portuguese migrant workers is causing some tension in the community and Council has given support in principle to an application by Dungannon District Council and other partners to Executive Programme Funds which aims to employ a key worker looking at related issues on a tri-Council basis. During the year there was some unfortunate and unwarranted publicity with regard to a local planning application for the building of a mosque. It is hoped that the media reporting of this has not unduly affected relations with the Muslim community.”

DERRY CITY COUNCIL

In 2002, Derry City Council reported that it had developed a Strategic Action Plan which includes the production of a Community Support Plan and the implementation of a Cultural Strategy. The progress report also refers to a Community Relations and Reconciliation Programme, and a Community Relations Strategic Plan for 2002 - 2005. The Community Relations Strategic Plan, which was informed by consultation, promotes good relations not only in relation to the three s75 grounds, but also between people of different gender and sexual orientation. This document identifies the issues and strategies to be adopted along with the time scales for action, outcomes and performance indicators.

Derry City Council’s 2002-03 report states that it employs a Community Relations Officer and, in 2002, developed a Community Relations Strategy which was subject to a full

Equality Impact Assessment. The strategy was provided as an Appendix to the progress report.

“Work was also initiated in respect of a ‘Charter for Inclusion’ - a public declaration which can be signed up to by individuals and organisations to show commitment to the objective of ensuring “all citizens enjoy equality of opportunity, access to facilities and resources on an equal basis, equality of esteem and civil, political and religious rights”. The Charter identifies five principles: equality, diversity, interdependence, responsibility and non-violence, which were derived from the theme of ‘Political Inclusion’ set out in the City Vision 2020 - First Plan for Progress 2005.

“The Council took a lead role in securing funding for an initial three year project ‘The Junction’ which aims to promote Human Rights, Equality and Good Relations as an interlinked and interdependent strategy. This project will develop training to raise awareness in these three areas for Council staff and the local community.

“In 2002-3, the Council also developed the Good Relations and Anti-sectarianism Programme under the Mayor’s Initiative. This Programme was targeted at post-primary schools and involved approximately 350 pupils. The Programme is currently working towards developing a Good Relations and Anti-sectarianism Charter.

“The Council made a concerted effort to secure funding for the ‘Seeing Sense Project’ which aimed to raise awareness of Good Relations / Equality through an interactive CD Rom. The funders were positive about the project, but unfortunately they were unable to meet the funding requirements.

“The Council’s Women’s Programme developed a cross community project called The Women Into Irish History Project. This project consists of twenty-four women, Protestant and Catholic. The women researched and wrote an informative book in such a way that the stories are personal and full of information. The book is also presented in a way which is a good mixture of factual and oral history. The women in the group now have a better understanding of each others’ culture and heritage, and look forward to continuing their journey researching together and building a better future for everyone.

“The involvement of the Chinese and Traveller community in designing and delivering awareness training to Council staff is also viewed as a positive action in terms of promoting the good relations duty.

“In the year 2002/3, all grant aid applications were subject to the criterion that they ‘Demonstrate that they promote equality of opportunity and good relations’ and in particular regard to the Community Relations Sub-Programme, consideration was only given to projects that will:

‘Provide opportunities for groups to explore cultural, political and religious traditions in their communities as part of a programme that increases their capacity to develop inter-community contact; develop programmes of reflection aimed at identifying similarities and differences between communities and which promote an understanding and acceptance of those differences; provide skills training which enables people to understand and deal with cultural differences, prejudice, conflict and other issues related to cross community projects; create new models of good practice in community relations work.’

“Additionally under the Festivals and Events Sub-Programme, projects were considered which ‘encourage cultural understanding and acceptance of diversity’, and under the Arts and Cultural Sub-programme consideration was given to projects and programmes that contribute to...encourag[ing] the appreciation of cultural diversity by widening opportunities for each citizen to become aware of other cultural identities and traditions; initiatives that encourage access to and encounter between diverse cultures; promote, develop and encourage greater participation of everyone in cultural activities; support activities and programmes that allow for the expression of different cultural identities; encourage a lively relationship between cultural activity and those who live, work and visit the Derry City Council area; encourage debate relating to issues of cultural identity.”

“The Women’s Development Sub-Programme also targeted projects which ‘promote good relations between communities and neighbourhoods’.”

DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

In 2002, Down District Council stated that “Council has committed itself to an extensive programme of initiatives to foster better relations throughout the community. Many of the targets set are included within the Community Relations & Development Business Plan” and “Council’s Community Relations and Community Development Work Programme 2001/02 seeks to address issues of diversity, interdependence and equity.”

It was felt that the definition of good relations was proving problematic, but Council adopted an ‘operational definition’ of good relations.

Extensive training was organised for staff to ensure that good relations forms part of the work of all sections of the Council. Also, as part of Down 2010, Council identified tackling disadvantage as a crucial element of the development of the District. Down 2010 includes aims, objectives and desired outcomes relating to NTSN, PSI and promoting good relations.

In 2003 the Council stated that it puts “significant emphasis on the Good Relations duty under Section 75.” A good relations audit was to be considered at a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

The Council advised that it had undertaken an extensive programme of initiatives to foster better relations throughout the community. Many of the targets set are included within Economic Development, the Clerk's Department and Community Relations and Development Business Plans.

The Community Relations and Development Section provided additional information as an appendix to the progress report, from which the following extracts are taken:

"During 2002/03 the Council's Community Relations and Development Section organised, facilitated and contributed to a range of events and activities throughout the District to promote community relations and community development.

"In terms of community relations issues, the Section seeks to raise awareness... among voluntary, community, business and statutory organisations. During the year the Section encouraged a wide range of organisations to address community relations issues whenever they arose. This work is important so that understanding diversity and promoting mutual respect become a natural and central feature of the work of all institutions and organizations in Down District.

"Liaison with representatives of committees and associations continued to be a priority and so emphasis was placed on encouraging and enabling local voluntary, community and statutory organisations to engage in community relations and community development activities.

"Assistance was given to 38 voluntary and community groups through the Section's Inter-Community Grant Scheme to organise activities for the purpose of developing relationships of trust and understanding and the confidence to address issues of differences between people of different backgrounds."

"Monitoring data for the period under review indicates that approximately 30,000 people engaged in the Programme of which it is estimated that (62%) were from the Catholic community, and (38%) from the Protestant community.

"Organisation of the St Patrick's Festival and Cross Community Carnival Parade continued to be a major undertaking for the Section. The Festival was organised in association with local voluntary, community, statutory, commercial organisations and relevant Council departments, with the Section acting as co-ordinator. This year's District wide programme contained over 80 events organised by 40 different local bodies...The cross-community composition of the parade is going from strength to strength each year and is an indicator that the Council's approach to the organisation of the event is continuing to garner trust and confidence."

“As part of its programme of activity to promote better co-operation and understanding between people from different backgrounds, the Section organised a very popular eight week programme of Soccer Funweeks throughout the District during July and August for children aged 6-14 years. A total of 585 children attended.

“In conjunction with NICVA the Section organised nine one day training courses for local voluntary and community groups designed to provide practical information, advice and ideas on community relations and community development matters. Over 80 people attended the programme which included a course on Equality Awareness.”

“The Council continues to be committed to improving community services within the District through a process of community development, whereby it encourages and enables communities to identify the need for, and to provide for themselves, a range of services, facilities and activities. The Section has a number of grant schemes in place to encourage and assist groups to address a wide range of issues of a social, environmental, or other nature. Over 35 organisations and projects benefited from these grant schemes during 2002/2003.”

“The Section continued to represent the Council on and contributed to the work of a number of bodies. The primary purpose of this representation was to mainstream community relations and community development work.

“Finally, the Community Relations Officer contributed to the development of various policies, strategies and action plans which should help to shape community relations and community development in the District in future years. These included the Council’s new Corporate Plan and the Down 2010 Plan.”

DUNGANNON & SOUTH TYRONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Council reports that “in promoting the good relations duty the Council is delivering a pro-active approach to Community Relations through the Community Relations advisor who has targeted the needs of groups representative of the nine categories.” The Equality Training Programme has also targeted the Good Relations Duty. A proposal and recommendation to establish a Good Relations Forum based on Belfast City Council’s model and structure was to be put to the August 2003 meeting of Council’s Development Committee.

FERMANAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Council’s 2002 progress report states that “the Council has prepared an operational plan which addresses community relations and good relations in the county on a number

of levels.” It was developing a Community Support Plan, and reviewing its policies and practice in relation to the display of flags and emblems.

As part of a project to address more difficult issues, the Council initiated the development of “an educational video programme to examine issues of expression of identity and human rights as pertaining to rural communities.”

In 2003, the Council referred to its Community Relations Policy, which operated “to encourage contact, co-operation and understanding between different religious, political and cultural traditions and to promote relationship building within and across communities”. The Council states that “it is within the remit of this policy to encourage good relations not only between the two main traditions but also across all traditions including ethnic minority and minority faith groupings.”

In furtherance of this policy, the Council agreed a number of Actions for Implementation for 2002 - 2003. An appendix to the progress report detailed “the more significant” actions as follows:

1. To produce a Community Support Plan - to develop structures and processes which involve public participation in the formalisation of a 3-year plan. Outcome: Following a baselining and community consultation exercise, the Draft Community Support Plan has now been submitted for approval to the DSD.
2. Production of clear grant programme guidelines and policies - to develop clear selection criteria which reflect equality requirements.
Outcome - Achieved.
3. To develop effective integration of actions in addressing local needs - to establish an inter agency integrated local strategy working group in order to achieve complimentary and strategic direction in service provision.
Outcome - Underway.
4. To initiate a pilot urban neighbourhood Community Development Programme - to produce an urban neighbourhood development strategy in conjunction with NITAP, The Fermanagh Trust, NIHE and Enniskillen Community Forum. Outcome - In progress; Consortium funding received and Worker appointed.
5. To increase levels of communication and awareness of Council’s Community Development role.
Outcome - Monthly Community Development newsheet produced.
6. To develop a greater awareness of ethnic diversity within the County - to conduct a baseline audit and needs assessment of an emerging culturally diverse population.
Outcome - Initial Research completed by Women of the World and NICEM.
7. To provide learning/training opportunities for local community/voluntary groups - in partnership with Fermanagh College and Mediation NI.
Outcome - 1 Community Relations course run with 19 participants.

8. To organise a family orientated Cultural Traditions/Diversity event.
Outcome: Event organised at Enniskillen Castle in partnership with Environmental Services.
9. To facilitate a greater level of civic leadership and participation. Outcome - A Civic Leadership Course for Elected Members was organised in partnership with Western Routes.
10. To design a video cover and reproduce 300 copies of an educational video on Human Rights and Commemorations.
Outcome - Ongoing.
11. To discuss with Councils in the Western Forum appropriate regional approaches and projects.
Outcome - production of an Educational Video entitled "This Part of the World" for use by Youth and Community Workers addressing issues of division, public displays of identity etc.
12. To assist with the inter-departmental mainstreaming of equality.
Outcome - Cross-Community Summer Sports Schemes partially funded.
13. To facilitate a greater level of meaningful inclusions, participation and cross community contact amongst young people.
Outcome - Provision of ongoing support to the Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council.
14. To promote greater understanding for cultural identity/diversity issues. Outcome - Officer support provided to a number of Enniskillen based Estate Groups in addressing the issue of flag flying, kerb painting, and looking at the promotion of expressions of identity."

LARNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002, Larne Borough Council stated that "Good Relations is an integral part of the post of the Community Relations Officer...The Council has a Community Relations Plan which is reviewed annually to focus on the promotion of good relations and equality for all across the full range of Council services."

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002 the Council stated "In order to progress the 'Good Relations' duties of the legislation, various training activities have been undertaken with community groups in the Borough, and the Good Relations duties are enforced on an ongoing basis within the community."

LISBURN CITY COUNCIL

In 2002, Lisburn reported that “recent progress has been made to further the role of Good Relations by implementing a Community Relations Audit to identify relevant needs and requirements. The audit will aid production of an EQIA on Community Relations in line with the council’s Year 1 programme.”

In 2003, the Council stated that it “continues to build objectives and targets relating to the statutory duty into all aspects of its work at both the strategic and operational levels. For example, in February 2003 the Community Relations Strategy and Operational Plan for 2003 - 2006 was launched which contained objectives and performance indicators for six strategic aims - a city for everyone, council and community, key client groups, “hard issues”, mainstreaming and image, and inclusive strategy development.”

MAGHERAFELT DISTRICT COUNCIL

In 2002 the Council stated that the “Community Relations Officer has actively targeted the needs of ethnic minority groups in the delivery of the Council’s Community Relations Programme.” It also committed to “consider the progression of its Good Relations duty while conducting its Equality Impact Assessments” and said “the Good Relations duty will be included in the Council’s equality training programme.”

In 2003, the Council stated that “although the Leisure Services Impact Assessment confirmed that many of the Council’s Leisure policies did promote good relations, it has become apparent that the Council is in fact progressing Good Relations through a number of mainstream activities. Specifically the Council has continued to provide financial and other support to individuals and groups involved in appropriate projects, e.g. it has funded both cross community projects and those single identity projects which are deemed to have the potential to reach out to the wider community. It has also supported the preservation and development of various cultural traditions and sought to work with local ethnic minority groupings on relevant issues. Increasingly the Council has, through its Membership, been at the forefront of dialogue regarding social community issues such as perceived intimidation and territory marking. The Council is also corporately taking an active role in the promotion of Community Safety and participation in the local District Policing Partnership. It is envisaged that the local Community Support Plan, when approved by the Department of Social Development, will provide an important platform on which to build Good Relations. The Community Support Plan together with the Council’s Local Economic Development Plan form an important part of the overall Magherafelt Community Plan which aims to be the overarching strategy or plan for Magherafelt District. The development of the Community Support Plan took cognisance of Equality issues.”

MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL

In their 2002 annual progress report, Moyle District Council advised that it was planning to conduct equality impact assessments on Community Services and Community Relations in the year June 2002 - May 2003, after the development of a Community Support Plan and the review of the District Council Community Relations programme.

The Council held a Good Relations and Civic Responsibility conference in March 2002 in conjunction with Future Ways, which Councillors and management attended. Council then agreed to continue this work in the form of regular training to look at working practices by developing a bi-monthly half-day seminar for senior managers and Councillors facilitated by Future Ways, and a bi-monthly half-day Civic Leadership Seminar with Councillors. The Council states "the Civic Leadership task is best served by Councils and Councillors developing their capacity to learn and discern their local community needs." In the 2002 - 2003 reporting period, a number of follow up workshops were held with staff and a plan of implementation for 2003/2004 was agreed within Council.

Moyle also reports that "the award criteria for the Community Relations grant scheme has been reviewed to ensure no unnecessary deterrents prevent community groups from applying and taking part in this programme" and in 2003 the Council set up a partnership with the Chinese community within the District to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

NEWRY & MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Newry & Mourne District Council's 2002 progress report states that the Council "has been actively committed to exploring these issues [good relations] and developing practical ways in which issues of controversy and difficulty can be openly explored. Through the 3 year REDI (Relationships in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence) programme with staff, private sessions with elected members within the Council under the auspices of Community Relations and through sponsorship and facilitation of the Newry Community Relationships Forum, the Council has undertaken a series of potentially groundbreaking initiatives" including a REDI Declaration, REDI Training, Leadership Development Programme, Councillor Seminar Programme, Harassment Advisor Training, Identification of Need for Community Relations Audit, Community Relations Annual Strategic Plan.

In 2003 the Council reported that "the REDI initiative, with its Declaration of Principles, had moved into a new phase and a Good Relations Group had been established" which has a remit "to encourage positive civic leadership, good relations and improved service delivery through developing sustainable relationships based upon the need for equity,

respect for diversity and recognising the interdependent nature of the society in which we live.”

In addition, the Community Relations Section, containing the Community Relations Officer and Community Relations Assistant, is situated within the Equality Unit, and produces an annual strategic plan which is approved both by Newry and Mourne District Council and the Community Relations Unit, OFMDFM. The Community Relations Section has identified the need for a Community Relations audit to identify the issues and priorities for community relations in the Newry and Mourne area.

Other measures described in the progress report by the Council addressing and exploring good relations and developing innovative and practical solutions to issues of division include:

- The establishment of a new voluntary contributions process, by which all applications for financial assistance are equality screened to ensure the Council has a targeted and focused funding programme. This has assisted in mainstreaming equality into decision-making and service delivery.
- Community Relations training seminars for Elected Members
- Administering and facilitating community dialogue through the Newry Good Relations Forum which brings together key influencers from within the unionist, nationalist and republican community.
- Lunchtime seminars for employees exploring diversity issues such as Travellers, and sport and politics.
- Initial diversity training for all employees.
- The ongoing implementation of the Dignity at Work policy.

NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

In 2002, the Council reported that the Community Relations Officer met with the Community Relations Council to discuss carrying out an internal and external audit of community relations, and that they were awaiting costings from the CRC.

In September 2002, the Council “held a workshop, facilitated by the Community Relations Council, to consider a framework for promoting good relations. The workshop was attended by elected members and key staff. A draft statement covering religious belief, political opinion and racial group was prepared and was then approved by Council.”

NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Council states that “the promotion of good relations...is an integral part of the post of [the] Community Relations Officer. The Council has a Community Relations Plan, which

is reviewed annually to focus on the promotion of good relations and equality for all across the full range of Council services. The Council has committed itself to further develop the role of Community Relations within the Council by making it more proactive and interfacing with the community more through promotion of its purpose and having focus groups representing the range of interests the Council is available to serve.

“The good relations duty is being developed within the Council through the integration of the Community Relations section and the possibility of adopting a Community Relations Strategy. The outcome of this area of work will be reported on in next year’s Annual Progress Report to the Commission.”

The Council says that the Community Relations Programme is designed to facilitate and support initiatives that enhance mutual understanding, respect and positive community relations.

OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Omagh Council takes the view that its Community Relations programme “addressed many external issues within the District relating to the promotion of good relations...Good Relations issues were also highlighted and progressed internally within Council with discussion taking place on the possibility of setting up a Good Relations Forum. This will be investigated further...”

In the 2002-03 reporting period, “a Good Relations Forum was established and [was] in its formative stage.” At the time of reporting, “the Forum had concentrated on exploring internal relationships within the Council but intended to develop its strategic focus, and it was anticipated that it would expand and embrace external representation from the Section 75 groups. Undertaking a good relations audit may be considered by the Forum as a necessary action when determining their future role and remit (for example, the need to establish a good relations strategy).

“The promotion of good relations was also considered in the arrangements for events organised by Council during the period. For example, use was made of a list of artists when arranging Arts events to ensure that representation came from as many of the different sections of our community as possible.

“Consideration will be given to the provision of training on good relations as part of the Council’s new Training Plan.”

STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL

In its 2002 progress report, the Council notes that it gave a commitment in its Equality

Scheme to carry out a good relations audit, but no further information is provided in relation to this commitment.

The Council produces a strategic plan for Community Relations on a yearly basis. Specific good relations objectives were included in the 2001 plan. These objectives were based on five main themes: Cross Community Contact, Cultural Identity, Community Relations Resource Training, Mainstreaming, Community Relations Partnerships.

The Community Relations department undertook specific good relations training during the 2001 year, including Alpha Course (with Strabane & District Church Forum), Building Community Relations, Handling Conflict, and Foundation Training in Mediation. The latter three were provided in conjunction with the Mediation Network.

In 2002-03 “a programming budget of £59,000 was allocated by the Community Relations Department for Community Relations work within the district.

“Funded projects include cross-community school projects, a cultural heritage evening, workshops for victims’ groups, and an Inter Church Networking Conference - as part of the Western Forum. The conference provided an opportunity to bring together Church Leaders and Community/Voluntary groups from Cookstown, Dungannon, Fermanagh, Omagh and Strabane as a means of developing inter-church groups.”

3(v) Other Northern Ireland, Cross-Border and UK Public Bodies

This section includes information on the implementation of the good relations duty by any other public authority not falling into the categories of central government, education, health or local government. The section is organised by public authority name, in alphabetical order. Only those bodies which reported taking some action on the good relations duty are included here.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NATIONAL MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

“MAGNI considers the strategic implementation of its statutory duty as being central to its planning process. The MAGNI 2003/04 Business Plan includes [amongst others] the following goals and objectives:

- To increase participation in culture, arts and leisure through enhancing access and the quality of facilities and services.
- To promote and celebrate cultural diversity and individual creativity
- To promote and raise awareness of the vast cultural legacy and cultural diversity of the people of Northern Ireland.
- Through our foundation and creative programmes to provide a range of excellent experiences in support of the cultural, economic and social regeneration of the region
- To contribute to the economy of Northern Ireland both indirectly and directly supporting the tourism industry and helping to foster creativity.

“**Work With Other Public Bodies and the Voluntary/Community Sector** - ...our main work with public bodies and the voluntary/community sector is in terms of our learning and access agenda. This is a major element of the MAGNI strategy and, in summary, means that we must strive to make our museums as accessible as possible to all members of our community and in particular to those people who have not traditionally used our facilities and services. This work includes developing specific workshops & programmes for cross-community groups, special schools, reminiscence groups etc.”

“**Good Relations Duty** - MAGNI does not have a specific good relations policy but, in practice, has played a significant role in promoting good relations through its learning and access work. This encompasses a range of museum activities and includes:

- Developing cross-community education and learning programmes aimed at primary schools, secondary schools and other groups.
- Working with relevant organisations in planning and delivering the above programmes including schools, youth organisations, community groups and representative organisations [eg Forum on Community Understanding and Schools]

- Developing and presenting exhibitions that address political, religious and ethnic issues locally [eg 'Conflict' exhibition in the Ulster Museum]
- Working with advisory organisations such as the Community Relations Council in creating recurrent events and programmes aimed at promoting good relations [the CRC have given financial and practical assistance in respect of a range of events/programmes in recent years].
- Working with OFMDFM Victims Unit to stage an exhibition which will explore areas of division and diversity in Northern Ireland.”

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

BRITISH COUNCIL CORPORATE - “A specific good relations audit has not been conducted but a comprehensive global staff survey has, the findings of which have been discussed with staff in an open forum by members of the Senior Management Team. Corporate-wide and location-specific solutions are being formulated and rolled out. This, plus initiatives such as ‘Connecting Futures’ has contributed to strategic planning, in opening dialogue with staff and engaging further with ‘customers’.”

BRITISH COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND - “As an international cultural relations organisation there are many examples from across our activity streams to demonstrate our commitment to the promotion of good relations:

“A **Symposium on Languages and Law in Northern Ireland** ran in February 2003 and focused upon the English, Irish and Ulster Scots languages translation services from Irish to English were provided for the event, all 3 languages featured in the relevant literature such as invitations...”

An **Engendering Democracy seminar** also ran in February 2003. The seminar “was run in partnership with the Centre of the Advancement of Women into Politics at Queens University Belfast. The concern of the 30 participants from the UK, the Republic of Ireland and overseas was how to bring women’s perspectives and voices into senior decision-making in public and political arenas.”

Social and Economic Rights: beyond the rhetoric: in May 2002, this seminar “was run in partnership with the Human Rights Commission. The aim was to debate strategies and best practice in areas of mutual concern to the 80 participants (human rights activists, senior government officials, legal practitioners, NGO’s and media organisations) from over 35 countries. The event culminated in the identification and sharing of best practice and a Conference Declaration.”

“**‘Making Space’** - on our Arts side in partnership with DCAL, Stranmillis University College and Young at Art, we had delegates from 60 countries ‘advancing the project of

creative dialogue, to transform our personal and social identity and to enfranchise children and young people in a post September 11 world’.”

EU SOCRATES Gruntvig programme: “aimed at life long learning, among the many current projects two are of particular note:

1. HMP Maghaberry, ‘Multi-disciplinary Approach to Adult Basic Education and Learning’ (MABEL). Among the achievements is the production of magazines, in paper format and audiotape, on topics such as ‘Isolation’ and ‘Society.
2. Multicultural Resource Centre, ‘The Arts as a Catalyst for Social Inclusion and Intercultural Shared Learning.’

“On the Education and Training Group side the European Resource Centre (ERC) has strengthened its outreach activity.

1. A roadshow on Europe has resulted in us actively engaging with many schools, mainstream and special, who previously had little or no contact with BCNI.
2. The ERC organised outreach to the non-formal education sector by bringing them together with the formal education sector to discuss how to engage young people in the topic of Europe.
3. Traditionally more girls than boys tend to have an interest in languages and European studies. In an attempt to appeal to the broadest possible audience the ERC organised a competition with Bombardier Aerospace and the European Studies Programme ‘Tails of Europe’. It was a girl who won.

“We opened up work experience opportunities to students from the Social Inclusion Unit - University of Ulster, St Mary’s University College, Belfast High School and Liverpool University.”

BRITISH LIBRARY

In respect of the good relations duty, the British Library Board has “set up a corporate group to develop a Social Inclusion strategy and action plan.”

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

In 2001-02 the Civil Service Commission reported that the forthcoming consultation exercise on the Recruitment Code would involve conveying the Commissioners’ role and remit to the umbrella groups representing the s75 categories. Many other individuals and organisations will also be consulted. The [Civil Service] Commissioners view this exercise as being “a major element in promoting good relations.” They are hopeful that good working relations can be developed and that they will be able to perform their statutory functions through mutual understanding and agreement.

COMMUNITY FUND

The Community Fund (CF) states it is “committed to the promotion of good relations between persons of differing religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups” and that its Equality Scheme contains “a number of arrangements for promoting good relations.”

“In year one of the Scheme, which commenced in November 2001, [CF] agreed to liaise and consult with a number of bodies, “including statutory agencies and groups representing/being supported by people of differing religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups with the purpose of building relationships/rapport with those groups and of better understanding ‘good relations’ issues.”

“Since November 2001 it has liaised and consulted with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on a number of occasions to discuss issues relating to the implementation of the s75 duties, including good relations; with the Community Relations Council (NI) for the purpose of information sharing and developing relationships, and to discuss the findings of the Community Relations Audit and ideas for taking forward some of the recommendations arising from this; with the Multi Cultural Resource Centre to discuss issues around minority languages/accessibility for BME communities; and with the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) who agreed to translate a welcoming statement for our first EQIA. Unfortunately due to resource difficulties, NICEM were ultimately unable to complete this work within the agreed timeframe.

“[CF] also met with a representative from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) to build relations and share information on many issues including good practice in consultation. Community Fund saw this meeting both as a valuable opportunity to build relations with the NIHRC and to discuss effective approaches used by NIHRC when consulting on the Bill of Rights, to learn from their consultation experiences. NIHRC are keen to broaden their information/dissemination networks and have asked Community Fund to distribute information/updates from the NIHRC to the other Lottery Distributors represented on the Cross Lottery Distributors Equalities Officers Group.

In December 2002 the Fund’s NI Communications Officer “developed an outreach and development plan for BME groups. [The] Equalities Officer worked with the Communications Officer to include s75 considerations within the Plan, which aimed to increase participation/success rates of BME groups across all grant programmes. The Plan also aimed to identify effective information strategies to keep BME groups informed of the availability of Community Fund services and to consider effective ways to address barriers to BME groups. Community Fund believes this Plan also plays a key role in promoting good relations between people of different racial backgrounds. The Fund consulted with key organisations representing BME groups when developing the Plan, which supports a partnership approach to outreach and development. The Plan will be reviewed quarterly at NI Grant making Committee meetings.

“In line with the Plan a number of targeted information events were carried out with BME groups throughout NI. The Equalities Officer attended one of these meetings to discuss issues around access and opportunities to promote good relations with BME communities.”

“CF has also been undertaking work at corporate level to support/promote good relations. A number of regional and country offices are undertaking operational work locally to increase funding to BME organisations. Many offices are engaging in targeted publicity, outreach sessions and networking with key organisations and umbrella bodies. A BME Outreach Officer has been appointed in London and a project developed to research and develop strategies for improving grant making to the BME sector. CF believes that there are many lessons from this work to be learned for promoting good relations in NI. Community Fund, at corporate level have also been working on issues around community cohesion.”

A Community Relations Audit “was carried out of [the] NI staff and grant making committee’s knowledge, skills and confidence in forming and promoting good relations between people of differing religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups. Interviews were held with twenty-three staff members at the Office for Northern Ireland on a one to one basis. A group interview was also carried out involving the Chair of Community Fund and members of the NI grant making committee. An external consultant conducted these interviews. A number of recommendations were made following this audit, some of which have been progressed. There was a recommendation that Community Fund engage in outreach to better communicate its commitment to promoting good relations. The development of the BME outreach plan supports this recommendation. There was also a recommendation that Community Fund considers targeting information about vacancies on the NI Committee to particular minority ethnic networks and contacts. Minority press has been used to advertise Committee vacancies in the past year. There was a recommendation that Community Fund improves on its internal communication systems in relation to information on equal opportunity issues. There is now an equalities section on the Intranet (internal internet system), and minutes of Equalities Action Team meetings are distributed to all staff.” A timetable to progress the other recommendations from the audit in 2003/04 is being developed.

A training needs analysis was carried out in tandem with the audit to identify how people felt they could contribute to the promotion of good relations. As a result, a two-day training programme was developed, including training on race awareness and intercultural communication for both the Committee and for all staff within the CF in NI. The first of these sessions was organised in conjunction with NICEM for Year One.

“**Fairshare:** in February 2003, CF attended a Race Equality Forum meeting in partnership with NOF to discuss the s75 issues arising from the joint Fairshare Initiative for BME communities and also to provide information to the Forum on the services of both Community Fund and New Opportunities Fund (NOF).

“Fairshare is a joint initiative by the NOF and Community Fund. Resources from each distributor are targeted at disadvantaged areas across the UK that have so far received less than their fair share of proceeds from the National Lottery. A number of wards in NI are identified as Fairshare areas. A consultation exercise was carried out in September 2002 on how best the funding available for fair share areas could be delivered. The consultation included a question on adverse impacts/better opportunities to promote good relations.

“As a result of consultee responses a number of issues were raised in relation to s75 considerations. Community Fund and NOF developed a framework to mitigate/remove adverse impacts arising from the Fairshare Initiative. A meeting was also held with the Equality Commission to discuss the s75 issues arising from Fairshare and a further meeting was organised with the Race Equality Forum to discuss these issues and Community Fund/NOF measures to mitigate/remove adverse impacts.”

Fairshare - Equality Issues for BME Communities: “Community Fund recognises the dispersal of smaller BME communities across N. Ireland. We recognise that targeting on a geographic basis only can have adverse impacts for those communities which fall outside target areas. We also recognise that within BME communities there are groups such as Irish Travellers that are particularly marginalized and disadvantaged, and that communities are spread across various locations in Northern Ireland and not solely located in Belfast and Derry and Craigavon.

“Community Fund recognises that position alone is not a sole indicator of deprivation or exclusion in the black and minority ethnic sector, and that there are other significant factors affecting the social and economic well being of minority ethnic communities and Travellers.

“CF recognises that an ‘open door’ approach does not necessarily result in equality of access, participation and/or outcome for black and minority ethnic and Traveller groups.

“CF is aware of the issues around relying on disadvantaged ward areas to target funding in the Fairshare initiative and how this may impact upon BME groups. This is illustrated by the fact that in Craigavon for example there are no identified Fairshare wards and there are six wards in Craigavon which have a BME population greater than 1.5% of the total ward population, including two wards with a high population of Irish Travellers.

“Community Fund has a number of measures in place which mitigate any adverse impact arising from Fairshare. CF has a number of funding programmes and does not solely target on a geographical basis. We recognise that such an action can have particular adverse impact on smaller population groups outside priority wards such as Irish Travellers. Fairshare wards will be allocated £300,000 over the next three years. Community Fund’s Strategic Plan identifies thematic priority groups for grant making as well as 118 geographic wards. A key priority group for Community Fund is BME

(including Irish Travellers). Over three years we will be spending in the region of £2m in this sector.

“As the BME sector is a strategic priority group this carries a number of benefits which we feel are key to promoting access and participation for this sector:

- Targeted marketing and communication - Community Fund has developed a Marketing and Communications Strategy to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This Plan specifically considers the communicating and marketing of Community Fund’s programmes to the BME sector. This Plan makes clear the need to provide a range of information events/targeted mailing etc to BME groups making use of existing channels of communication.
- Outreach and Development Work - Community Fund’s Communications Officer has recently developed a framework for Outreach and Development to the BME sector. This framework will be developed further in consultation with organisations working in support of BME communities in N. Ireland to consider how best to promote access and participation.
- From this a series of information workshops are being planned to specifically target BME groups. These are planned for Derry, Craigavon and Belfast the choice of these venues having been informed by the newly available census data on BME populations in N. Ireland.
- Applications which support BME projects are given priority points in assessment.
- CF and NOF, in recognition of the barriers that can face the sector, recently carried out a consultation with the BME sector on issues with respect to grant making.

“Other factors to note when considering measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of Fairshare and how generally Community Fund is promoting access and participation for the BME sector:

- Awards for All is a small grants programme which support groups applying for small amounts of funding. These are often groups new to the funding process and those experiencing particular access issues because they are smaller, less experienced in community development and very often at an early stage of capacity/development. Awards for All also targets the BME sector and this funding programme has been described by previous applicants as very accessible, the process being more straightforward for groups experiencing barriers. Awards for All will play a key role in the planned information workshops being organised by Community Fund.
- Fairshare funding includes projects where the beneficiaries are from the target wards even if the organisation is based elsewhere. Thus there is nothing to stop an organisation that is based outside the designated wards applying for Fairshare funds for beneficiaries in the target wards.
- We recognise that ‘Access’ is a key issue for BME groups and we have completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on policies relating to ‘Access’. Public

consultation included one to one interviews and focus group work with groups represented on the Race Equality Forum.

- We recognise that there are access barriers for BME groups around information provision and making an application and we are currently working on how best we can streamline the application process and support groups make an application to Community Fund.”

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD

Some members of staff have attended equality and community relations training including the promotion of good relations and race relations.

“In order to progress the good relations duty, CITB developed the following strategies during 2002-03:

- all literature promoting training programmes, careers opportunities and training advice to display, when appropriate, role models from different ethnic backgrounds
- the careers service to continue to offer job sampling opportunities for young school children from different schools and from different religious communities to work together on sampling the different trades and skills required in the construction industry.”

ENTERPRISE ULSTER

“Progress in the Good Relations Duty continues to be made through the creation of Good Relations Networks within our outreach work, better positioning and presentation of Enterprise Ulster premises to encourage cross-community use, including use of initiatives such as Irish language signage and disabled friendly premises. Press releases and a public presentation of certificates to successful trainees highlighted...the practical output of Enterprise Ulster’s commitment to equality by demonstrating that this programme targeted social need by attracting a group of clients from deprived cross-border areas, and promoted good relations. The Scheme participants undertook a course in community relations facilitated by the Mediation Network and local community relations officers to examine and reconcile cultural differences.

“Enterprise Ulster has established a pool of staff who can answer queries in Irish and deal with clients in their desired format.

“In support of the Programme for Government aim to pay special attention to the difficulties faced by victims of “The Troubles”, Enterprise Ulster has established working relationships providing training places and support to the Survivors of Trauma organization in North Belfast. This organization promotes therapies and counselling to

victims of sectarian violence and brings together resources from OFMDFM, New Opportunities Fund, CRC and the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, while providing complementary training opportunities for unemployed through Enterprise Ulster.

“In policy terms Enterprise Ulster has contributed to consultation exercises with the Community Relations Council in the development of their draft Good Relations framework and looks forward to implementing internal structures to support, manage and maintain good relations programmes and approaches.”

Enterprise Ulster has contacted the CRC for advice on conducting a good relations audit.

ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NI

“Great emphasis is placed by the Chief Electoral Officer, in training his staff at all levels, on the importance of equal treatment for all of the Northern Ireland electorate whatever their political opinion, religious belief or racial or ethnic group.”

FIRE AUTHORITY FOR NI

“Steps taken to actively progress the Good Relations duty included the attendance of the Brigade at community festivals in West Belfast and Londonderry and participation in job fairs in the Greater Belfast area and throughout the Province. The festivals were particularly important as a means of ‘targeting’ specific cultural groups.”

In 2002-03, the Brigade “worked closely with Counteract in dealing with specific sectarian issues and availed of their expertise on induction training courses for new recruits. In addition, training in cultural awareness was provided for all ranks up to Chief Fire Officer level in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum... A member of the Human Resources senior staff is now trained as a Religious Diversity Trainer in order to conduct the Interfaith Forum Training Package in-house. A Handbook of Faiths is included in the “Fairness at Work” folders issued throughout the Brigade. These are also available to staff on request.” Members of Human Resources senior staff also attended training by the Community Relations Council on the Promotion of Good Relations.

“The Brigade is represented regularly at national events for the Fire Service where the focus is on a national initiative “Towards Diversity” and this has been a valuable source of benchmarking on issues related to race and gender in particular. We were also represented on the Human Rights Liaison Group for the DHSS/PS business family.”

“In relation to specific outreach for young people, we currently operate a successful cadet

scheme - underpinned by equality objectives - and we have been liaising with the Inter-Faith Forum on specific youth objectives.”

FISHERIES CONSERVANCY BOARD

“The Board has consulted with the Community Relations Council and Counteract to identify ways in which it could progress its good relations duty. Few, if any, opportunities have been identified (see below). The Board is however, considering the development of “prejudice reduction” training for its staff.

“The Board is fully committed to its Section 75 duties and to the implementation of its Equality Scheme. The Board is on course to complete the 5-year timetable for the implementation of the Scheme. However the work involved in bringing the Scheme to approval stage and its on-going implementation placed, and continues to place, considerable demands on the limited resources available to the Board. The area of implementation which is proving most difficult is that of the promotion of good relations. The statutory responsibility of the Board under the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966 is the conservation and protection of salmon and inland fisheries within its jurisdiction. It is effectively a law enforcement agency - i.e. enforcing the provisions of the 1966 Act and associated byelaws. It has no authority to function in such fields as angling development, tourism or promotion. This is therefore very little, if any, scope for the Board to promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.”

HM CUSTOMS & EXCISE

“We have progressed our good relations duties by reinforcing our links with Counteract, the Community Relations Council and NICEM.

“As a result of our ongoing contact with the CRC, we have agreed to be added to their consultation list for their good relations strategy paper. Further, we have agreed to act as the central government pilot of their good relations internal and external audits.”

HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

“Through DETI, HSENI will work closely with OFM/DFM in taking forward the outcomes of [OFM/DFM’s] review [of community relations policy - “A Shared Future], as they relate to HSENI’s remit. DETI has undertaken research into good relations in the past year with a view to developing a DETI “Good Relations” strategy and a specific “good relations” initiative during 2003/2004. DETI is also considering, with a number of interested parties,

a major conference on bullying in the workplace during 2003/2004. As a sponsor body of DETI, HSENI will be guided by the outcomes of this work and will participate in the proposed conference.”

HERITAGE LOTTERY / NATIONAL HERITAGE MEMORIAL FUND (NHMF)

NHMF proposes to look at the good relations duty of the NI Act as part of the screening process, which was to be completed by the end of November 2002, and would enable each section and/or department “to determine how and where they can best deliver the good relations duty.” This may include the development of performance measures and targets for 2002-03.

INLAND REVENUE

“Inland Revenue (IR) has continued to develop effective mechanisms through which to build good relations with representative groups. It appointed two Area Customer Relations Managers (ACRM) in June 2001, both of whom have been proactive in developing links with local communities and groups representing all of the nine categories.”

In the period April 2001 to March 2002 the Inland Revenue “endeavoured to promote equality and good relations through the implementation of both national and local Diversity and Equality action plans... Inland Revenue NI’s (IRNI) Diversity and Equality Plan reflects and supports the department’s national IR strategy on diversity, but also reflects those items specific to IRNI.”

“IR has launched a new Diversity & Equality website to inform all staff on diversity initiatives throughout the department as well as details on the Departmental Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Scheme. The site provides staff throughout the department with the latest diversity news on initiatives within the department.

“The IR conducts a good practice review of Diversity and Equality measures on an annual basis in order to improve upon existing practice and policies within the department. The Department has put in place a Diversity and Equality national plan for 2000/02. A second plan is to be implemented for 2002/03.”

The Inland Revenue’s “strategic approach is to make equality and diversity a direct means of delivering quality customer service and creating a positive working environment for our people. It has created a framework for taking this forward that includes training for managers at all levels, and developing a range of tools designed to help them to mainstream equality and diversity in their own areas of responsibility.

“We have published on our intranet site a set of performance objectives for all staff specifically designed to support our commitments under the Scheme. These apply to all staff whatever their post or grade. The equality objectives are a fundamental part of individual performance agreements and the performance appraisal process.

“We are including indicators and objectives in support of the Department’s programme of diversity and equality programme as a key aspect of all our departmental and local business plans. The plans map out the commitment of the Department to ensuring that both staff and customers from all of the nine categories are valued and have influence upon the changing face of the Department as part of the way we do our business. Inland Revenue has set targets aimed at making the organisation more representative of the communities it serves. Targets have been set across the whole of the Department for gender, ethnicity and people with disabilities.

“To help to progress the statutory duties the Equality Co-ordinator has joined an interdepartmental group of UK wide bodies with a remit aimed at communicating and reviewing best practice on diversity and equality across a number of UK wide government departments. Inland Revenue is also a member, both at national and local level, of Business in the Community and Opportunity Now. Both organisations provide an opportunity to develop relations with voluntary groups and to identify areas of best practice in the performance of the good relations’ duties.”

“Inland Revenue has worked in partnership with voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland by using a number of methods including consultation forums and secondments.”

“Senior managers from across the Department with a particular role in the promotion of Diversity, meet quarterly as the Panel of Diversity Champions (PoDC)...which has a remit to:

- Generate and share new and innovative approaches to embedding diversity
- Ensure diversity activities are kept on track by evaluating progress and influencing others to take action, as appropriate, to maintain momentum
- Provide opportunities for all parts of the organisation to learn together and share success by building on and extending feedback links throughout the organisation
- Meet with the Board regularly to review direction and progress and make recommendations that will ensure that they are consistent with the Board’s aims on diversity
- Influence the departmental planning process to ensure that diversity is impacted in all areas of our business planning.

“The Equality Scheme is a regular agenda item for the PoDC and members of that group are part of a steering group to drive the implementation forward.

“Given the importance of the Scheme to the Revenue, effective communication is a key priority. Staff in Northern Ireland have received awareness training. In 2001 - 02, IR undertook a training programme of frontline managers on diversity and equality. The Chairman of the Board of the Inland Revenue, Nick Montague, is the UK Civil Service Diversity Champion. IR is developing a training programme to raise awareness of the Scheme across the whole Department, particularly steps to progress the Good Relations duty. The aim is to embed the best practice contained in the Scheme across all areas. Beginning in September [2003], we will be training staff who are responsible for screening, outreach, and customer focused activities. Advice and guidance will be available on our diversity and equality Intranet site.”

“Inland Revenue has taken steps to progress the Good Relations duty with the use of departmental staff questionnaires on disability and ethnicity. All such steps have been undertaken in support of the Scheme and within the departments overall strategy on diversity and equality.”

INTERTRADEIRELAND

“In May 2002, InterTradeIreland invited the Committee on the Administration of Justice, on behalf of the Equality Coalition, to arrange a consultation meeting devoted to the topic of Implementing Section 75.” Representatives from a range of organisations representing the s75 groups were invited. “In addition there were 17 representatives from InterTradeIreland, including Board Members, Directors, Managers and Executives. Presentations were made by a number of the Section 75 constituencies outlining the barriers faced by their groups. These included the Age Sector Reference Group, the NI Council of Ethnic Minorities, the Falls Community Council, Coiste na n’Iarchimi, Lisburn Prisoners Support Group and the Forum of People with Disabilities... The event proved very successful and provided a forum for sharing of ideas.”

“InterTradeIreland hope to build on the benefits gained from this session and the recommendations will be incorporated within the assessment of policies and programmes under forthcoming EQIAs.

“The Body has developed partnerships with the Churches’ Commission for Racial Justice to whom we provide the use of our premises and facilities. We have also a firm relationship with the William Keown Trust, winning an award for the accessibility of our premises in 2002. We also provide ongoing support to the group in whatever way we can.”

“We will be considering how to take forward our duty of good relations in the light of the findings of our screening exercise which is scheduled for completion by December 2003. As part of training on the general equality duty, all staff have been made aware of the importance of good relations within the equality framework.”

LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY

The Agency has promoted good relations through a training initiative for all staff. All staff attended a seminar on religious diversity. Training on “perspectives on discrimination and Anger Management” training, by Counteract, was also provided.

LAGANSIDE CORPORATION

“The Corporate Plan 2000-2004 enumerates the principles and reflects the commitments and targets set out in the Equality Scheme and commits the Corporation to achieving these...Good Relations baseline measures, relating to the obligations set out in the Equality Scheme and within a Corporation context, have been determined through the Laganside Corporation Resident and Business Attitude Survey..”

The survey asked people about the importance of and their satisfaction with the ‘area of neutral City Centre’, ‘places both communities can mix’, and ‘bringing communities together.’

“The Corporation is conscious of the need for inclusiveness when carrying out its core tasks and seeks to ensure that its designated area remains a ‘neutral’ area where all groups will feel comfortable.

“Although the Corporation is primarily concerned with physical regeneration, it recognises the importance of social and economic cohesion, and regional integration in achieving its goals. Laganside strives to develop its designated area with a strong commitment to the principles of equality, human rights, cultural diversity, targeting social need and partnership and thereby create an environment in which the Laganside community can have a better quality of life and realise its full potential.”

LOUGHS AGENCY

“During consultation on its draft Equality Scheme, the Loughs Agency took steps to consult with the Community Relations Council (NI) in relation to how the Agency can better promote good relations. As a result, the Agency has committed itself to:

- undertaking to consult with the Multicultural Resource Centre, the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and other relevant groups representing/being supported by people of differing religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups with the purpose of building relationships/rapproach with those groups and in order to better understand ‘good relations’ issues;
- carrying out an organisational audit of staff knowledge, skills and confidence in forming and promoting good relations between people of differing religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups; and

- utilising the audit outcomes to influence the Agency's outreach strategy as well as its training and communication programme.

"To further promote good relations, the Agency has taken steps to offer its training room facilities at its Headquarters in Londonderry to community and voluntary groups and to Section 75 equality target groups located in the North West region as well as to the Agency's specific interest groups. This offer has been accepted gladly by all groups and it has been taken up by a range of groups from different sections of the community, including the Chinese Community in Derry, local Angling clubs and associations (junior and adult), PROBAS Group, Summer Schemes, Historical and Environmental Groups and the local Women's Circle.

"The Agency has also welcomed a wide range of visitors to its new interpretive centre "Riverwatch" from throughout the community including disadvantaged children and children from areas of conflict. We have also been involved with the Northwest Junior Anglers Association whose aim is to bring together children from differing backgrounds and these visits have received excellent feedback."

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND

During October and November 2001, four "Reaching Communities" events were held in Ballymoney, Newry, Craigavon and Enniskillen. These events included district council briefings where "we solicited opinions on the Fund's Section 75 progress on meeting its obligations."

In 2003 the Fund was "currently reviewing how it will develop its Good Relations duties in line with Community Relations Council recommended practice. It is reviewing existing practice and will report through Equality Steering Group to SMT the outcomes of the work (by end of Dec '03)."

NORTHERN IRELAND COURT SERVICE

"Diversity/Equality objectives have been included in the forward job plans of staff." Organisational wide training on s75 Equality duties, including individual responsibility to promote equality and good relations, was undertaken. For example, all staff and managers attended Diversity Awareness training sessions.

A programme of Customer Service training for front line staff was also planned. "By increasing staff awareness of individual customer needs and providing them with the skills base to meet those needs, the organisation will be encouraging the development of good relations with our customers."

“A Diversity Strategy has been developed and a Diversity Information Pack distributed to all staff after endorsement and launch by the Parliamentary Minister for the Lord Chancellor.

“An Outreach Strategy has been developed for the Northern Ireland Court Service. A significant amount of outreach activity is already taking place and through the development of an Outreach Action Plan, a more co-ordinated and targeted approach to the Good Relations duty will be achieved.”

NORTHERN IRELAND FISHERY HARBOUR AUTHORITY

“The Authority has been progressing its Targeting Social Needs (TSN) policy which does have an overlap with Good Relations and which the Authority sees as complimentary to its Good Relations duty.

“TSN progress reports are supplied to DARD on a quarterly basis along with the targets for the next quarter. Many of the Authority’s capital works projects are consistent with this policy as they are designed to sustain employment in deprived rural areas. As part of the Quality Assessment in tendering projects, contractors are now asked to demonstrate the provision of employment and / or training opportunities for residents previously unemployed for three months immediately prior to the date for return of tenders.”

NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE

“The Housing Executive works in the context of six core values, the first of which is fairness and equity. In developing a three-year rolling Corporate Plan and annual Business Plan, objectives and performance measures were established with due regard to equality issues and New TSN... Objective 7 of the Executive’s 2001/2002 Business Plan relates to the duty to promote good relations:

‘To promote social inclusion by tackling environmental, social and economic problems in co-operation with the communities affected and with other agencies in a co-ordinated programme of urban and rural regeneration and community development.’

Examples of objectives include:

- “to develop and implement an urban and rural regeneration programme in conjunction with other agencies and in line with the Government’s TSN and Neighbourhood Renewal strategies.

“Some 160 estates have been identified within the context of the developing Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which is being prepared to support DSD’s Urban Regeneration Strategy. Baseline documents are being prepared for each of these estates detailing the factors at play, and these will form part of the reference materials in informing local strategic documents for a range of regeneration/renewal programmes and for the Creating Common Ground’s regeneration programme. Multi-agency cross sectional partnerships are in place to deliver them.

- “to encourage and promote community involvement and participation in local housing management issues.

“At the time of the NIHE’s 2002 annual progress report, 19 community participation compacts were in place with district consumer panels and a further 28 agreed with community associations.

- “To support the Government’s initiative of promoting social inclusion
- “Consultation on the Working Group on Travellers report had been completed, and work on the comprehensive needs assessment of current and projected accommodation requirements of all Travellers had commenced. The Housing Executive was represented on the Ethnic Minorities PSI Working Group.”

North Belfast Strategy: “The Housing Executive has developed a housing strategy for North Belfast. The strategy seeks to promote regeneration and social inclusion through partnerships at the inter-agency, inter-departmental level and at community level, because it believes that physical investment programmes can encourage greater community revitalisation and rejuvenation.

“A Housing Strategy for Derry/Londonderry has been developed and published. Further strategies relating to West Belfast and to the Greater Shankill area were being developed at the time of writing. These strategies all incorporate strong elements to promote good relations among the communities.”

In 2002-03 the Housing Executive reported that its “strategy for promoting good relations is pursued through its programme for community development and improvement of community relations. This programme aims to contribute in a meaningful way on two fronts: to help create safer neighbourhoods; and to facilitate the development of better relationships between communities and in some instances within communities.

“In order to achieve this, the Housing Executive is working in partnership with local bodies including consumer panels, community advisory groups, the Northern Ireland Tenants Action Project (NITAP) and the Rural Housing Steering Group.

“A strategic framework is being put in place within which the Housing Executive operates in conjunction with government departments and agencies. Elements of this include the Northern Ireland Community Safety Strategy, the Shared Future Document on Community Relations, the Housing and Health Agenda, and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.”

“Practical elements developed by the Housing Executive include:

- Providing additional local support for residents eg over the past two years 53 Neighbourhood Warden Posts have been established (47 currently in post). Feedback from Community Groups, individual residents and public representatives on this initiative has been very positive.
- A number of “Concierge” Schemes have been established in high rise blocks which have traditionally been the focus of anti-social behaviour.
- The skills and talents of front-line staff are being reviewed through the Modernising Services Agenda to develop ways to assist local people in practical terms.
- A partnership on crime initiative has been introduced in 10 estates through the Creating Common Ground Consortium.
- A Community Safety Team has been established.
- An in-house mediation service has been introduced to help tackle problems of anti-social behaviour.
- A good neighbour competition was held to highlight best practice in the delivery of community safety.

“The Housing Executive is working to expand the level of resident involvement in local communities in a number of ways. These include:

- A Community Involvement Framework to facilitate meaningful dialogue with community representatives at District, Area and Central levels.
- Capacity building through NITAP which specialises in this type of work. NITAP is co-funded by the Housing Executive.
- Direct funding, training and assistance to local community groups (eg the use of premises for community houses).
- A “menu of services” is currently being developed in conjunction with Housing Executive Community Advisory groups and NITAP whereby local community representatives will be paid to carry out specific duties to enhance existing services. These may include assisting elderly or vulnerable tenants where emergency situations arise or doing estate inspections outside normal working hours.

“By working towards safer neighbourhoods and bringing people and communities closer together, the Housing Executive is positively contributing to the promotion of good relations.”

NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

In 2002 - 2003 the HRC stated that “promoting good relations has not been addressed as consciously as we might like. However the Bill of Rights work, and related education and work with children and young people, together with the relatively individual role of the Chief Commissioner, have taken into account good relations work and have made a contribution in this area. How to monitor and measure the Commission’s compliance with its good relations duty requires further thought. The Commission has already met with the Community Relations Council and the CRC’s good relations framework has been circulated to all staff. “It has been agreed that the Commission will undertake training in this area at both Commissioner and staff level and an enhanced working relationship with the Community Relations Council will be developed.”

NORTHERN IRELAND MUSEUMS COUNCIL

“NIMC continues to promote good relations by developing and managing projects in partnership with the Regional, Local and Independent Museums in Northern Ireland.”

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

NIO emphasises in its Progress Reports that it is “unique among the Northern Ireland public authorities in that all of the Department’s key strategies and objectives are directed towards the promotion of good relations between people in Northern Ireland of different religious beliefs and political opinions. This is enshrined in the NIO’s aim as set out in the Public Service Agreement:

“ ‘To secure a lasting peace in Northern Ireland, based on the Good Friday Agreement in which the rights and identities of all traditions in Northern Ireland are fully respected and safeguarded and in which a safe stable, just, open and tolerant society can thrive and prosper.’

“In the sense that the Government’s implementation of the Good Friday Agreement is under continuous scrutiny by the Irish and US governments, political parties at national and local level and the political media, then the NIO’s promotion of its good relations duty is subject to virtually continuous audit. Specific examples of the promotion of good relations during 2002/03 include:

- The NI Prison Service has continued successfully to resist calls to deal with prisoners separately according to their religious beliefs or political affiliations believing that a fully integrated regime in which the prisoners are treated as individuals is not only safer but accords with the NIPS duties under section 75.

- A further example of fostering good relations is the work done in relation to meeting the spiritual needs of prisoners of denominations and faiths other than the five main Christian denominations represented among the prison chaplains.
- To improve understanding and so foster good relations between the two main sides of the prisoner population, a series of plays addressing sectarianism and related issues was presented to prisoners. The plays were well received.
- The Security Policy and Operations Division promotes a shared understanding across the community of the scale and scope of organised crime and is majoring on the need for all sections of the community to play a role in tackling it. During 2002/03, as well as the annual launch of the Organised Crime Threat Assessment and Strategy, a number of roadshows to highlight the work of the Organised Crime Task Force were arranged. Although access to these was by invitation, the roadshows provided an opportunity for a wide range of people and organisations to attend on a regional basis.”

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

“With regard to progressing the good relations duty, we have not yet undertaken a good relations audit or developed a strategy When we do develop a strategy, it is likely that a key issue will be working with the Police Service and District Policing Partnerships to support successful, practical community based policing that encourages participation from all sections of the Northern Ireland community. We do our best to make sure we have effective, inclusive communication with the public and we are committed to partnership working.”

PROBATION BOARD FOR NI

Following the seminar ‘Equality Schemes and Good Relations’ organised by the Community Relations Training and Learning Consortium (CRTLC) in April 2001, PBNI was invited to join a focus group. This was related to a project to write up case studies and was to be followed by a learning set of the same public bodies which had participated in the focus group and the Board indicated its willingness to participate. However, the learning set had not been initiated by the end of the period under review because of funding difficulties.

In its early reports the Probation Board (PBNI) noted that it was difficult to make progress on the good relations duty in the absence of specific guidance. However, in 2002-03, “the Board has taken a major internal initiative in respect of the good relations duty. Although led by the Training Department, this is not a training but a learning project, which it is hoped will benefit the whole organisation.

“The project [called “Building a Learning Model Around Good Relations within PBNI”] is being facilitated by representatives of the Future Ways Programme, University of Ulster. The objectives are:

1. To develop the understanding of the organisation regarding the challenges and possibilities of operating in a politically contested society.
2. To support the organisation define and identify key issues that are impacting on its capacity to deliver quality services.
3. To pilot and implement new ways of working both internally and in relationship with service users and wider communities.
4. To develop innovative ways of auditing the impact of the process on improving operational goals.

“After initial discussion with members of the Senior Management Team, a first phase was carried out, involving interviews with fourteen staff and one Board Member. The report of this phase identified as key themes: internal relationships, relationships with those whom PBNI works with and relationships with the wider community.

“Subsequently a session was held with the Board and a Development Group established to examine the themes of fairness, difference and relationships in the context of the key themes above. Membership of this group was open to all staff and it is composed of eleven employees from a wide mixture of grades and geographical locations.

“The programme is expected to finish in 2003-04 and a full report will be included in the next Annual Review of Progress.”

QUALIFICATIONS AND CURRICULUM AUTHORITY

“QCA has incorporated training on good relations in the training it has already provided to key staff...”

RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

“All RDC staff and Council have undergone an extensive course to develop good relations across differing Northern Ireland communities. The evaluation report indicated a high level of satisfaction with the content and delivery.”

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD.

“USEL has been in contact with the Community Relations Council regarding

methodologies involved in carrying out a community relations audit and is awaiting information on this process. If new strategies or training in this area is required as a result of information received, this will be implemented.

“USEL has developed and maintained excellent contacts with Section 75 groups throughout Northern Ireland, for example NICEM, Craigavon Travellers Support Group, North City Training and Shankill Open Learning Centre. Whilst some of these groups are not directly related to promoting good relations they indirectly impact on this objective as many of the clients and consumers of the organisations fall into such sub-groupings.

“Meetings have been specifically arranged with NICEM to explore race and minority ethnic participation in USEL’s services and to further explore outreach issues. This is ongoing and will be more fully developed in 2003-2004. USEL has requested information from NICEM to assist it carry out a race audit. An exploratory meeting has been arranged for May 2003. It is anticipated that outreach objectives will be set based on the outcomes of this meeting.

“USEL’s Training Manager has contributed to the Equal Diversity Training Project, which is a partnership of representatives of all affected groups. She will participate in the design, development and roll out of this programme and it is anticipated that she will cascade the training throughout USEL in 2003-2004 dependant on programme completion date.

“Close working and partnership relations have been established with a number of groups such as Shankill Open Learning Centre, Worknet Falls Road, North City Training (Ardoyne) Upper Springfield Development Trust, NICRAS, Chinese Community Centre, Craigavon Travellers Support Group, Special Needs Schools through out Northern Ireland, Dunlewey Substance Abuse (Falls area), Forum against Substance Abuse (Shankill) etc.

“Partnerships with voluntary and community organisations have been developed as a consequence of having the same aims i.e., wishing to assist people with health conditions or disabilities enter work. It has been a specific aim to form such partnerships to ensure increased participation in USEL’s services and this work has been additionally beneficial in its S75 compliance duties by generating increased knowledge of the work of the organisation and in obtaining the views of external stakeholders, particularly about gaps in service delivery. USEL is currently seeking funding to run a pilot partnership programme based on an identified gap from an organisation based in the Falls/Andersonstown Road area.”

