

# INTERNATIONAL FUND News



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

The newsletter of the  
International Fund for Ireland  
[www.internationalfundforireland.com](http://www.internationalfundforireland.com)

## International Fund for Ireland celebrates 25 years of peace building

A special event in February marked the 25th anniversary of the International Fund for Ireland's pioneering peace building work across the island of Ireland.

The Belfast event was a celebration of the Fund's achievements since its inception in 1986 and provided an opportunity to acknowledge those that have contributed to and supported the Fund's success. The event also provided an opportunity to look forward to the important work that remains to be done.

Former Chairman, Dr Denis Rooney CBE, was joined at the event by more than 250 representatives of community groups from across the island that have worked, and continue to work, on the ground for peace and reconciliation and a better future for all.

Speaking at the event, Dr Rooney said: "When the Fund first came into existence there was no blue-print for how to proceed and there was no perfect model from elsewhere in the world to copy. Those who led and staffed the Fund in the early years quickly established a clear strategy and operational framework which has become a template and an example for other regions across the globe seeking to recover and re-build from conflict."

Dr Rooney thanked the British and Irish governments for their foresight in establishing the Fund. He also thanked the Fund's donors – the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – for their political and financial support and encouragement.

He said: "The International Fund



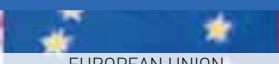
for Ireland continues to be a major force for building lasting peace on the island of Ireland. Over the years the Fund has overcome and helped to break down many barriers. This work is not yet finished, as our society continues to be haunted by its past. Promoting reconciliation, peace building and creating a truly shared future is a long-term process."

ABOVE: Pictured at the special event to mark the International Fund for Ireland's 25th anniversary of pioneering peace building work across the island of Ireland: Dr Denis Rooney CBE, former Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; with Jean Brown and Reneé Crawford of Suffolk & Lenadoun Interface Group (SLIG), one of hundreds of community groups that have received support from the Fund in the last 25 years.

DONORS TO THE FUND ARE:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND



## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to write my first foreword for Fund News in my new position as Chairman of the Fund. It is an honour to accept this prestigious role and to continue working closely with my fellow Board Members.

Since the last edition of Fund News, we have welcomed three new additions to the Board: Ms Dorothy Clarke; Mrs Siobhan Fitzpatrick and Mr Billy Gamble. They join us at an exciting and important phase in the Fund's history and we welcome their valuable input to our work.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my predecessor, Dr Denis Rooney CBE, for his leadership; particularly in terms of setting a very clear strategic direction for the Fund. Dr Rooney was instrumental in the development of the Fund's Sharing this Space Strategy which included many very significant interventions, such as: the Sharing in Education Programme; the Shared Neighbourhood Programme; and the Integrating Community Organisations Programme. Dr Rooney was also at the forefront of the Fund's most recent intervention in relation to peace walls in Northern Ireland.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to outgoing Board Members Mrs Anne Henderson and Ms Mary Southwell for their enthusiasm, energy and tireless

service to the International Fund for Ireland. In February we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Fund's pioneering peace building work across the island of Ireland. We were fortunate to be joined at the celebration event by many of the people and organisations that have contributed to the enormous success of the Fund since its inception in 1986 – the real success of the Fund is its ability to empower local communities to deliver meaningful peace building and reconciliation initiatives within and between local communities. The event also served as an opportunity to look forward to the challenges that remain and many of the stories in this edition highlight how they are being, and will be, tackled.

The Fund continues to make great strides towards the goal of a more shared and peaceful society. However, we recognise we all have some way to go before the divisions within our society are fully overcome.

The Peace Walls Programme, which has secured £2m funding, is an exciting

example of the efforts that are underway to reduce physical and mental barriers that prevent inclusivity and reconciliation. The programme is designed to be the first stage in a process leading to the physical removal of barriers. It aims to deliver a range of confidence and relationship building initiatives within and between interface communities to help them arrive at a position where residents feel it is safe and appropriate for peace walls to come down.

This type of ground-breaking work is only possible because of the support from our overseas donors and it has been encouraging for us to welcome a number of international visitors in recent months to see the efforts underway. The Fund is in a new period of its history and we thank you for continuing on the journey with us.

Dr Adrian Johnston  
CHAIRMAN

## Fund commits £3.1m / €3.8m towards peace building projects

In February the International Fund for Ireland confirmed further investments that will support reconciliation and integration projects that are working towards achieving a shared and sustainable future for all on the island of Ireland.

The latest funding package, which amounts to £3.1million /€3.8million, includes specific allocations to a number of key programmes and projects as follows:

- The Fund's Sharing in Education Programme will receive a further £763,127 / €915,752 to support the expansion of three existing and highly successful projects: Fermanagh Trust Shared Education Programme Project; North Eastern Education and Library Board Primary Integrating Enriching Education Project; and Spirit of Enniskillen Trust Sharing Education Together Project. By investing further in established and successful projects the Fund hopes to consolidate their success in shared education and help make them sustainable beyond the available funding.
- The Fund's Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme

will provide £1.9million / €2.3million towards more than a dozen projects, many of which are already contributing to lasting community development and bringing about real and positive change within and between communities. Beneficiaries include the Louth Leader Beyond Beliefs Project which will receive £72,068 / €86,482 towards the cost of extending the cross-border, cross-community project running in the Cox's Demesne and Muirhevnamor estates in Dundalk, in partnership with the Vine Centre in Belfast. The funding will enable the project to reach out to a further 160 participants, over two further cycles of IT training and six additional cross-border, cross-community visits.

- The Fund's Integrating Community Organisations Programme will provide £379,342 / €455,210 towards a range of projects including £57,440 / €68,928 towards the expansion of the cross-

community Understanding Our Space Celebrating Diversity Project, delivered by the Focus on Family Nurturing & Development Centre in Coleraine in association with Creavagh Women's Group in Londonderry/Derry. This expansion will bring the project two new partners - FAB Femme Women's Group from Ballymoney and St Johnston Women's Group.

- £101,442 / €121,730 towards the Fund's Leaving a Legacy Programme. The additional funding will help Youth Initiatives to develop a new youth facility in Poleglass on the border between West Belfast and Lisburn, enabling the organisation to move to permanent fit-for-purpose premises.

Full details of this latest funding package are available at the International Fund for Ireland website: [www.internationalfundforireland.com](http://www.internationalfundforireland.com)

# Youth Work in Lurgan Sets the Agenda for Change

In a pioneering move, youth work providers are coming together, some for the first time, to develop a strategic approach to community relations and leadership development which has the potential to radically change the future of Lurgan.



The new project marks a milestone in peace-building. Youth workers and young people will work collaboratively to build relationships of trust and confidence across the divided town so that the barriers to real and meaningful change can be unlocked.

Lurgan Town Project is a new two-year cross-community project, funded by the International Fund for Ireland's Community Bridges Programme. The project has been

developed in partnership with Craigavon Borough Council and the Southern Education and Library Board Youth Service.

In an unprecedented move, the project will consult on a shared agenda for the town by bringing together key stakeholders across education, politics, and business as well as the community and voluntary sector to create the conditions for positive and meaningful change. It will collectively encourage and facilitate dialogue and contact between the groups and begin the process of building trust and understanding. As part of the project, a team of young ambassadors aged 15-19 have been recruited from both sides of the community to positively promote community relations in the town.

Speaking at the launch of the project, Anne Henderson, former Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The International Fund for Ireland remains focused on creating innovative ways to promote peace building and reconciliation and help Unionists and Nationalists

throughout the Island of Ireland to learn, work and live together in a shared future.

"The town of Lurgan has suffered disproportionately during the decades of conflict and civil unrest in Northern Ireland with the result that neighbours have lived side by side for generations in fear, isolation and violence. This project is a critical step towards bringing these communities together, to work together to create the conditions for reconciliation and build a better future which can be truly shared."

LEFT: Lurgan Town Project puts Young People on the Map. Pictured at the launch of the Lurgan Town Project (from left): Anne Henderson, former Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland; Professor Tony Gallagher, Pro Vice Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast; and Gerard Doran, Head of Youth Services, Southern Education and Library Board. Also pictured is Kirsty Harbinson, one of the Young Ambassadors of the Lurgan Town Project.

# Twin Traditions Initiative gets official launch in Carrick-on-Shannon

A new two-year reconciliation project devised by the Carrick-on-Shannon Heritage Group received its official launch in March at the St. George's Heritage and Visitors Centre in Carrick-on-Shannon.

The Twin Traditions Initiative as it has been titled, has been timed to coincide with the Carrick400 celebrations taking place over the next two years and aims to advance trust and understanding between the people across both communities in the border areas of Leitrim and Fermanagh.

The project will provide opportunities for both communities to gain insights into Carrick-on-Shannon's shared 400 year history and heritage, build new relationships and networks and learn new skills.

Funding of €170,090 has been provided by the International Fund for Ireland, under its Community Based Economic and Social Regeneration Programme (CBESR). Additional funding was also provided by Leitrim County Council, Leitrim County Development Board, and Fermanagh District Council.

Delivering the opening address at the launch, Dr Adrian Johnston, the newly appointed Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "We are very excited about the plans in place for the Twin Traditions Initiative. As a key component of the overall Carrick400 celebrations, the project will give Carrick-on-Shannon Heritage Group an opportunity to share the work they have been doing on a cross-community basis to a much wider audience and ensure the maximum involvement of all sections of the community. The Twin Traditions Initiative has the potential to make real and sustainable impacts on both communities by acknowledging the past through an exploration of a shared history and celebrating the contemporary Leitrim where diversity is encouraged and appreciated."

Speaking at the launch event, John Bredin, Chairperson of Carrick-on-



Shannon Heritage Group, said: "The Twin Traditions Initiative complements the group's aim of preserving and restoring heritage and the cultural fabric for local people, tourists and future generations."

ABOVE: Launching the Twin Traditions Initiative are: Mary Dolan, Secretary, Carrick-on-Shannon Heritage Group; Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Catherine Ryan, Development Officer for the International Fund for Ireland; and Sheilagh McArdle, Twin Traditions Initiative, Carrick-on-Shannon Heritage Group.





## New media community relations project rolled out in schools across Northern Ireland

The International Fund for Ireland has launched an innovative project which aims to promote understanding and reconciliation with school children across Northern Ireland through the use of media.

The Headliners Project, Distinctive Voices Collective Choices, which will run until September 2013, will work with pupils aged 8-19. The project will use media, including creative and interactive activities and discussions to explore issues of sectarianism, to challenge pre-conceptions of other communities and to work towards the goal of a shared vision and future.

Funded by the International Fund for Ireland with financial assistance of £230,100 through its Sharing in Education Programme, the project will operate in Dungannon, Londonderry/Derry, Belfast, Strabane, Castlederg, and Limavady.

The project launch in March took

place at St Columba's Primary School, Londonderry/Derry.

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Distinctive Voices Collective Choices Project is the latest initiative to be launched as part of our Sharing in Education Programme.

"Throughout the project, young people will be encouraged to interview each other and produce stories examining common ground, looking at their own communities and prejudices as well as how they can make a positive impact on division, conflict and reconciliation.

"The project will support teachers to

promote reconciliation by providing valuable opportunities for meaningful contact and discussion among young people in each community. Together students will use digital, audio and video equipment, as a journalist would, to tackle issues of sectarianism and conflict."

ABOVE LEFT: Pictured at the launch of the Headliners Project: Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland; Rachel Holmes from St Columba's Primary School; and Ben Ferguson from Newbuildings Primary School, Londonderry/Derry.

## Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project Launched at Major Conference

A new project which will increase the skills and confidence levels of all post-primary school teachers who are teaching in shared classrooms was launched in March at a conference in Armagh.

The International Fund for Ireland's Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project is a three-year initiative which is being managed by the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) and is designed to help teachers create an inclusive environment in increasingly diverse classrooms.

Over the next three years, NICIE will provide training and support for schools and teachers, to equip them to work creatively, imaginatively and sensitively in the shared classrooms of today and in the future.

The conference launch was attended by more than 100 delegates from across the educational sector and heard keynote speeches from David Graham OBE, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland; Noreen Campbell, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education; and Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA, the then Deputy Chairperson of the Committee for Education.

David Graham OBE, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The

Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project is the latest in a series of ground breaking initiatives to be launched as part of our wider Sharing in Education Programme.

"The Fund along with the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education and others have long been exponents of the virtues of sharing education – not just for the educational benefits that can be derived from such a system of educating our young people together, but also for the wider societal benefits it can bring in helping us to create a truly shared society in Northern Ireland.

"Sharing education can bring its own unique set of challenges – ensuring all pupils involved in the sharing feel welcome, ensuring that where pupils from different schools and different traditions are brought together there is real mixing taking place."

The Fund's Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) seeks to break down barriers from Northern Ireland's historic conflict by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn and work together.

To date over £16m has been invested in the SiEP which was launched in 2008.



ABOVE: Pictured at the launch of the Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project: Lydia Bell (aged 12) and Ben Thompson (aged 12) from Brownlow Integrated College with (from left) Mike Nesbitt, MLA Deputy the then Deputy Chairperson of the Committee for Education; Bernie Kells, Project Manager, Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project; Noreen Campbell, Chief Executive NI Council for Integrated Education; and David Graham OBE, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland.

# Official opening of state-of-the-art Shared Future Centre brings Regeneration to Waterside

A major state-of-the-art cross-community facility designed to promote reconciliation was officially opened in March at Cityview Park, Londonderry/Derry.

The three-story Shared Future Centre is located near the interface between the mainly Nationalist Top of the Hill community and the mainly Unionist Irish Street community and will give access to training services and employment opportunities to both communities to engender physical and economic regeneration in the area.

€602,420 funding for the project was provided by the International Fund for Ireland with an additional €1m coming from the Waterside Development Trust.

The Centre already enjoys 80% occupancy with a diverse range of tenants including: Derry City Council Good Relations and Sports Development departments; Foyle Downs Syndrome Trust; Waterside Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership; and Customised Training Services.

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund's investment is designed to provide the opportunity for people to

come together in a shared space which nurtures respect, encourages openness and breaks down physical and mental barriers so that they can move forward with shared purpose and understanding.

"It brings together the key components of employment, job creation and cross-community collaboration. These are three very important ingredients in the peace making process and, in the long-term, will ensure sustainability. Only then will we see real and lasting change in the community that will benefit both the current and future generations."

Speaking at the official opening The Right Reverend Dr James Mehaffey, retired Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe and Chairman of the Derry Inner City Trust, said: "We see the Peace Bridge, the greatest physical change the City has seen in decades. It is more, much more than just a bridge. Like this building, it is shared space, bringing people together, narrowing the divide that has traditionally been Us and Them. It is my hope that this Centre

will become a unifying force, a physical structure that yields social and economic benefits for the local community."



ABOVE: Mayor of Derry Maurice Devenney and Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman, International Fund for Ireland, cut the tape to officially open the new Shared Future Centre in Londonderry/Derry. Included, from left, are: Right Rev Dr James Mehaffey, retired Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe and Chairman, Inner City Trust; Junior Ministers Martina Anderson MLA and Jonathan Bell MLA; Pat Walsh, Chairman, Waterside Development Trust; and Helen Quigley, Derry Inner City Trust.



## Reconciliation Through the Riverine Project

The Reconciliation Through the Riverine Project had its official launch in April at an event jointly hosted by Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council and the Riverine Forum in the Alley Theatre, Strabane.

The project, strands two and three of which are funded by the International Fund for Ireland, seeks to address the impact of the conflict on the Strabane/Lifford area and its hinterlands by regenerating the border riverside area.

Speaking at the launch event Mr Winston Patterson, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, said:

"This major project to develop a shared space for the people of Strabane and Lifford, on a site that has been for so long associated with division, will be a lasting legacy to the peace process and, in a way, a tribute to all those who have worked over the years to bring us to this stage.

"The Fund is delighted to be involved in the project by providing €1 million towards

youth and community participation in the project so that it truly becomes a shared space where all of the people feel a sense of ownership and belonging."

ABOVE LEFT: Winston Patterson, Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland, and Paddy Harte at the launch of the Reconciliation Through the Riverine Project in the Alley Theatre.

## International Fund for Ireland announces £2m Peace Walls Programme



In January, the International Fund for Ireland announced a £2m programme directed towards interface communities to help bring about the conditions that would allow for the removal of peace walls and barriers in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland.

The Peace Walls Programme is designed to be the first stage in a process leading to the physical removal of barriers. It aims to deliver a range of confidence and relationship building initiatives within and between interface communities to help them arrive at a position where residents feel it is safe and appropriate for peace walls to come down.

Dr Denis Rooney CBE, former Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "There are some 88 peace walls/barriers, mainly in Belfast, stretching over 21 kilometres in total. Since the

1994 ceasefires, the number of barriers has grown. However, many community groups, some with the support of the Fund, are doing courageous work across interfaces and in the past few years their conversations have moved towards when, rather than if, the barriers will come down.

"The physical removal of these barriers is a matter for the Department of Justice and other statutory bodies but the Fund believes that its Peace Walls Programme, which is complementary to other initiatives that are underway,

will help create dialogue, build trust and confidence and develop greater cross-community cohesion with a view to communities reaching agreement that it is time to start removing the barriers.

Dr Rooney said that while there was a growing momentum and desire to move to a position where physical barriers could be removed, it was clear that local communities need help – particularly funding and local political leadership – to remove the mental barriers which will ultimately lead to the removal of physical barriers.

## New Board appointed to the International Fund for Ireland

Dr Adrian Johnston was appointed Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland on 1 March 2012.

With effect from 1 March 2012 Dr Johnston, who was first appointed to the Board on 1 March 2009, was joined by three new Board Members: Ms Dorothy Clarke who is a graduate of NUI Galway and is a former CEO of Leitrim County Enterprise Board; Mrs Siobhan Fitzpatrick who is the Chief Executive of Early Years and

previously worked in Health and Social Services; and Mr Billy Gamble who is a former senior civil servant who was responsible for developing a number of key government policies in community relations. Ms Rose-Mary Farrell, Mr David Graham OBE, and Mr Winston Patterson will continue as Board Members for a second three-year term.

The full Board of the International Fund for Ireland is:

- Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairman
- Ms Rose-Mary Farrell
- Mr David Graham OBE
- Mr Winston Patterson
- Ms Dorothy Clarke
- Mrs Siobhan Fitzpatrick
- Mr Billy Gamble