



Building Capacity and Communities

2022-2023



**BELFAST SOUTH  
COMMUNITY RESOURCES.**

## Foreword

This has also been a strange year, we seem to have seen off Covid only to have it replaced by a cost of living crises, and who can tell what the coming year will bring. Sandy Row has and continues to face major economic, social, physical and cultural challenges. Job losses, lower incomes, rising prices and lack of job opportunities for young people are all continuing to have an impact on local people, posing a strain on individuals, families and communities. BSCR remains committed to finding ways to support the community in this time of deeping economic crises, by both short term measures such as the fuel voucher scheme but also by expanding our educational programmes to aid our young people gain the qualifications they need to succeed in this increasing complex and technical world.

In the past year we have developed and delivered exceptional programmes across the fields of education, physical and economic regeneration, employment and training, community confidence and safety. Working in partnership with a range of local people, business leaders, elected representatives, community organisations, statutory and public agencies we have delivered programmes and projects which have resulted in positive change in our community. Some of these projects are set out it the report which follows and I urage all to read it and to come in to meet with the team any time if they feel we could be doing more.

It is difficult in a short introduction to capture all the detail of our work in the past year, so I invite you to visit our website [www.bscr.co.uk](http://www.bscr.co.uk), where you will meet our staff and read about our work and view the many photos, short films etc., we have developed which will hopefully give you an insight into our achievements and partnership working. Quite simply, we would accomplish little without the professionalism of our small but highly dedicated staff team and Board members. I wholeheartedly acknowledge the commitment made by them over the past year. All of this work would be impossible without the support of our funders and donors who continue to invest in making Sandy Row a better place, in particular DFC and BCC who provide core funding to the group. It is this core funding provided via the neighbourhood Renewal Program and BCC's revenue program which has made everything else you read about in this report possible.

The ethos of BSCR is all about the community and the great people who make it what it is. I hope we can continue to ensure people are looked after right through this crisis and that our community, (indeed communities throughout Belfast) become even stronger and closer than ever before.

Garnet Busby  
General Manager

<b>staff</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>
Jamie-Lee	Connect all Parents South	Jamie manages the Connect all Parents program
Chloe wilson	STEP/Moving up/transitions	Chloe has been with us for 5 years, she is a qualified teacher and until December managed the transitions program. She has now moved jobs within BSCR and manages the education and youth programs.
Aimee Miller	STEP/Moving up/transitions	Aimee started in the BSCR REACH as a NEETs student and is a product of our desire to train and employ local people. Aimee has now taken Chloe's place on the transitions program.
Nicki Sproule	Co-Ment GCSE Study support DFA	Nicki, has been with us for 5 years, she is a local mother and also works part time in the Charter Youth Club. She manages a number of programs, including Coment and GCSE support.
Jonny Simms	LADS project Digital Connect South	Jonny has been with us for 5 years he is a qualified school teacher and manages our digital programs.
Sophie	Education and youth	Sophie, left BSCR in November for personal reasons.
Carla Dickson	Community safety	Carla started with BSCR this year and works part-time on the community safety initiative.
Jim	Exam Centre	Jim has been with us for over 22 years and now manages the On-line testing centre, which BSCR runs as a social enterprise. We have the contracts to deliver on-line testing for 5 of the biggest on-line testing bodies in the world, including the new UKVI tests for the Home office
Savanah Jackson	Reception, administration and test centre tech	Savanah has been with us for 5 years, she is also a product of our reach program for NEETs. She manages reception and is developing as an exam tech for the online exam centre.
Dessie Graham	Care taker	Dessie has been with us for 8 years, he started in a government supported employment scheme and made himself so invaluable that he was kept on when the scheme finished.
Luke	Digital Trainee	Digital trainee is a new post which we set up this year to expand on the work Jonny has been doing in the digital fabrication centre.
Cane	Digital Trainee	This was also a part time post set up and funded by BSCR to expand the digital program.
Nikki Johnston	Operations manager	Nikki has also been with us for over 20 years and was promoted this year to operations manager. Nikki started as a IT student, got a job as receptionist and

		is now in charge of the day to day running of BSCR and its programs
Garnet	General manager	I started as a volunteer over 25 years ago when we did not have an office any funding or paid staff. We now have the resource Centre, which we own, 14 paid staff and my role is now one of overall strategic management.

### **Connect all Parents South**

Connect all Parents South is a program working across Arellian Nursery School, Blythefield Primary School and engages with the Markets Parents to help parents help their children get the most out of their education. Connecting local and newcomer families to encourage relationships between and within communities. Led by Belfast South Community Resources (BSCR).

#### **Activities Included:**

a number of events were held to develop peer parent relationships and support networks specifically targeting young, isolated and new comer families. Including a Bring your own baby rave, Family trip to Newcastle, Teddy bears picnics and Diversity festa 2022.

**Diversity festa 2022~celebrating togetherness at a shared & safe space** was another example of working collaboratively with BAWA to successfully support good relations within the Sandy Row/South Belfast communities and families from various different cultural backgrounds. 70+ people came together to share food, music and different cultural activities.

**Mindfulness sessions** were delivered to children over the summer who had presented with having worries/anxieties with returning to school after the summer period. To give them a safe space to talk about worries and emotions, as well as activities to help them express how they are feeling. Followed by tools and activities to use to calm the mind and help build resilience.



**Information on free school meals** and uniform allowance was shared on social media and parents were advised to contact me for further support and guidance. 9 parents availed of this support and were assisted with completing the online application.

**Questionnaires** were given to parents of children attending nursery and P1 to determine hopes and fears that the parents may have. I was able to use this information to follow up with phone calls to support and signpost parents to services and online courses that could empower and enable parents and carers to maximise the educational experiences of their children.

**Open days** I attended school open days to share my contact information and to inform parents of my role and support that I can give within the role.

**Tissues and tears** mornings were held at the schools during the settling in periods for parents that needed a listening ear, advice or support.

The nursery asked for a number of **workshops** to be delivered including supporting parents with potty training. (due to an increased number of children attending the nursery this year who are not yet out of nappies) Promoting the benefits of reading at home with children and reducing screen time in a bid to encourage parents to help support their child's speech and language development as for the second year running the nursery has noticed a need for extra support in this area for children and families.

From September 2022 **Parents groups** have been held in both Blythefield Primary and Arellian Nursery school with the number of new parents attending tripled. A number of programmes and workshops have already taken place that facilitate activities to improve parents' mental health and well-being. As well as encouraging good models of parents inclusiveness and supporting parents to develop their own learning and self-confidence.

**Drop in** days have been allocated in both schools where parents can drop in for support.

#### **Numbers Supported**

270 parents and children

#### **STEP/Moving up/transitions program**

The Moving Up programme is part of the Belfast South Early intervention Project and is managed by Aimee. It aims to enhance self-esteem, emotional resilience, wellbeing and confidence amongst children and their parents with the transitions process at key stages in their learning at primary and post primary schools. The Moving Up programme has been designed to help make transition as smooth as possible, providing support covering issues such as how young people can be impacted by transition and the challenges they may face.

The Transitions Moving On Programmes (Big Step and 7UP) is delivered by Aimee

and Nikita. These programmes target 3 - 5 year old children supporting a more seamless and anxiety-free transition from Nursery to Primary School (Nursery and P1 Big Step programmes), and the 7-Up programmes are delivered to P7 children (aged ten and eleven years old) supporting the transition from Primary to Post Primary School. The programmes promote emotional wellbeing and resilience; and increase children's self-esteem and confidence, which in turn results in improved academic attainment. Children report increased confidence and reduced anxiety about the transition from P7 to Y8; and, earlier in the School year, reduced stress about taking examinations and tests.

The Moving Up Programme has been designed to help make transition as smooth as possible, providing support covering social and emotional learning such as how young people can be impacted by transition and the challenges they may face. It aims to equip children with the tools to address challenges, ensuring school readiness; and offering motivational techniques and ways to cope with change to ensure they reach positive milestones. Activities within the Moving-Up Programme include a focus on empowering children to be confident in making their own decisions, gratitude, self-belief and efficacy. The Programmes are also designed to raise the aspirations of children and parents. The Y8 workshops are a follow-up session for children to discuss their transition experiences.

Evaluation of the STEP programme to date has evidenced that the children are less anxious and more prepared for the move to post-primary school; and parents have reported increased emotional wellbeing for their children. Evaluation questionnaires completed by teachers highlight improved emotional wellbeing and reduced anxiety at key transition stages; which directly impacts on children's academic attainment, attitudes towards School, and aspirations.

All the Transitions Programmes delivered put children at the centre, but also support parents; building on home:school:community linkages. BSCR is a community-based organisation, which engages with parents throughout the Transition Programmes, both through the provision of resources, face-to-face workshops and drop-ins, and online supports. These community-based interventions with parents have had a positive impact on parents' understanding of how to support their children's learning, promoting positive attitudes to education and building parents' confidence in this respect. Families may also be referred by Schools or BSCR to other STEP supports.

#### Numbers Supported

528 Children

350 parents

8 schools



## CoMent Program

Delivered by BSCR and lead by Nicki Sproule, coment is a mentoring programme that aims to work with young people between the age of 16 -24 who are not in employment or education. It is a one to one mentoring service that supports young people to make positive steps forward in all aspects of their life but in particular into finding further training, education or work experience.

### Numbers Supported

15

## Study Support and GCSE programs

BSCR Study Support Club, is a free project set up in South Belfast (Sandy Row) that works in conjunction with Queen's University Belfast and Children in Need. We provide young people from the local area, who are of secondary school age (11-18) the opportunity to work 1 on 1 with current Queens University Students on their academic work in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Pupils are matched with a QUB student, who has experience in a subject the pupils feel they need supported in.

The area of Belfast in which we are supporting is in the top 10% of the most deprived and in the top 4% in Northern Ireland of educational underachievement. Our main aim is to positively contribute to the educational lives of school children from the area.

The club starts in October and ends in June. It runs for three hours per day after school on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the academic calendar. During this period there was five hundred and sixty eight individual tutoring sessions.

Young people from fifteen different schools across Northern Ireland attended Study support for a range of subjects. Some young people came for support with everyday homework's, while others wanted support in specific subjects and exam technique to help with their GCSEs or A-levels.

**The GCSE program** is also managed by Nicki Sproul and funded by BCC and consists of targeted classes in both community setting and schools. The program is aimed at pupils who need extra support prior to their GCSE Maths and English exams. The pupils are split into small groups and are taught by a fully qualified teachers who are assisted by a classroom assistant/Mentor.

Belfast South Community Resources (BSCR), Eastside Partnership, Forward South Partnership, Greater Shankill Partnership and West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB), have formed a strong, committed and experienced consortium to deliver the new GCSE Maths and English Revision Support Programme across the city of Belfast. Our consortium is keen to have the opportunity to effectively contribute to delivering transformational change in our neighbourhoods. The Belfast City Council GCSE Maths and English Revision Support Programme not only fits with the current objectives of

the Belfast Agenda, in particular the Working and Learning Board, but is also in direct alignment with the vision, mission, aims and objectives of BSCR and our consortium partners.

Putting education at the heart of regeneration and transformational change has been a long term objective of BSCR and consortium partners, all of whom have unrivalled experience in delivering results-orientated and outcome-driven educational programmes that make an evidenced positive impact on the lives of people in the Belfast area, including the achievement of increased numeracy and literacy levels for young people at GCSE level. In essence, our proposal creates the best opportunity for this project to succeed.

### Numbers involved.

- GCSE – 150
- Study support – 47

### **Home work Club**

The homework club has been running for 30 years and provides invaluable support to local children many of which lack confidence in their abilities. One of the main strengths of having this club in the community is that the support provided is immediate, there is no need for an appointment or waiting list.



### **Impact stories:**

Child A from a foster family attended homework club and progressed really well, the wanted to go to a particular grammar school in the area. Billy had advised this child's

family that this school usually had a very high cut off point and advised another grammar school that he felt they would be more likely to get a place if they used them as their 1st or 2nd choices. The family chose to put the school child A wanted as their 1st choice and the child's results did not make their the threshold for this school or their other choices. After receiving their results this child was not given a place a grammar school and came to Billy for advice, they discussed their options and Billy advised for the family to contact the school he had previously mentioned. Billy contacted this school and spoke with the principal who was able to advise the family. After a few weeks this child was given a place at the grammar school.

Child B had very bad behaviour at school, he attended homework club and after a number of weeks working on developing his confidence his behaviour began to improve. He has now been described by many as a 'model pupil'

Numbers Supported

38

### Digital Connect South

Digital Connect South is managed by Jonny and funded for the most part by Urban Villages. The Project aims to bring together members of the south Belfast community to take part in activities using digital creative equipment and software. Participants will be fully supported by experienced staff to design and create a variety of items through both accredited and bespoke workshops. The project aims to reduce isolation, build confidence, encourage good relations, upskill and support participants who wish to progress into further training and employment in this area. The project will also explore how the digital revolution can bring the proud manufacturing tradition of Belfast back to life.

This year the Digital Connect South Programme was able to work with over 700 participants from South Belfast, delivering a range of Digital and STEAM related training, workshops and activities. We were able to engage with 8 local Primary Schools, 1 Nursery and the Link Centre, who support students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties from 17 different post Primary schools.

Our Primary School projects, focused on wellbeing and the transition to Secondary School.

Collaborating with our Moving Up Team, we were able to offer digital sessions to young people which taught them valuable digital based skills and also improved their self-esteem, emotional resilience, wellbeing and confidence. In these sessions young people learnt about 3D printing, Designed and fabricated their own leavers hoodies and took part in a range of creative exercises.

The All in One wellbeing days were delivered to 8 Primary Schools in South Belfast. Young people in p5-p7 came to BSCR and took part in a carousel of digital and creative exercises that fostered an interest in STEAM and taught them about wellbeing simultaneously. 212 young people from South Belfast came to BSCR for this project.

The feedback from teachers and young people was great and they recognised the

importance of developing and nurturing an interest in STEAM from an early age through informal and practical based learning.

STEM 4 Wee Uns, worked with Arellian Nursery in introducing coding, digital Art and literacy to 54 pupils.

Our after schools projects, like Minecraft Monday and Digital Fabrication classes continue to be popular and are a great way of fostering and developing mutual respect and friendships for young people from different backgrounds.

We are delighted to have started digital fabrication training with a group of young people. The young people learnt how to use computer aided design and manufacturing to create their own board game that will be distributed out to different groups and organisations.

Quarter 2, involved inhouse workshops, projects and collaborative work with clubs from the Education Authority throughout the summer holidays. Over 250 people took part in digital and STEAM based activities, throughout the holidays. As always, nurturing a love for digital and STEAM related activities and improving digital literacy is at the foremost of our objectives for the digital hub.

Our Digital Fundays, Lego camp and coding camp were great additions to our summer activities and were well attended by young people from across South Belfast. Participants at these projects learnt a range of valuable Digital skills, including basic coding, problem solving, digital design/fabrication, photography, 3D design and much more. These events received great feedback from the participants and it was great to get new young people engaging within the digital hub.

The Explore project, looked at promoting mental health, good relations and independence through cinematography and practical experiences. Young people each day travelled to different parts of Northern Ireland to explore different areas and try a range of experiences that promote positive wellbeing. This included, photography and paddleboarding in Antrim, Luminaire film making, Foley sounds and exploring Belfast by water bike, Street Art and digital editing in Bangor.

The explore project wasn't the only digital and wellbeing based project we had this summer. Working alongside the local youth club, we were able to support their wellbeing project by creating digital activities to aid the understanding of emotional resilience and feeling for young people in p2-p4. The digital team were able to bring equipment up to the centre and let young people take part in a range of digital activities over 5 weeks. The Baby Rave, saw parents and 0-4 year olds come together and emerge themselves in Early year STEAM activities.

The digital hub continues to expand and grow. We are working with more organisations and schools than ever before. There is continued interest for digital fabrication workshops. Due to this demand, we have taken one of the available units managed by BSCR. We are currently in the midst of converting this unit into our new workshop called, 127 Creative Space. We feel having our own space, will allow us more opportunities to add additional classes and activities for the residents throughout South Belfast. We have noticed a dramatic price increase in materials, that are needed for our digital workshops.

## Feedback from our projects

'It was very astonishing doing and learning things with you'

'Yes (I learnt) how to play on pc, mindfulness and robot controlling'

'it was very interesting watching the 3D printer and learning about the machines'.

'Thank you BSCR I can't wait to come here next year.'

'It was really nice to see the children working together'

'Yes because I was with my classmates and having fun with other classes'

## Numbers Supported

800

## **Physical and Economic Regeneration.**

Physical and Economic Regeneration is managed by Nikki and Garnet (on top of their other roles within BSCR) and is funded by DFC. BSCR continues to work with other social partners on the regeneration of our local area. Gilpins and Hope Street are still priorities, but as you all know we have been let down time and time again by the other partners involved in these projects and we don't know if and when it will happen. Social Housing remains a basic need for communities like sandy row if they are to grow and survive as communities on the edge of the city centre and we will continue to fight for this need to be recognized and met.

BSCR continues to take the lead on this and several other regenerational capital projects within Sandy Row. We are also working on plans for a cultural café on the old Enas site 92-94 Sandy Row and the derelict car wash side at the corner of Blythe Street and Sandy Row. We are pleased that after 5 years working on the cultural café project the site (formally known as Eans) has been bought and a join project board set up.

We still believe that that new transport hub has the potential to be a game changer for SR, and as such we are continuing to work with all the relevant bodies to ensure that we as a community receive maximum benefit. The construction of the hub is now well underway with a completion date somewhere in 2024. Our task is to ensure that the public relhm changes to Sandy Row are carried out along the entire road from the new station to the Lisburn Rd and to the highest standard.

## **Economic Sustainability**

BSCR have been supported by a number of funders for its core work and project development this year. We would like to acknowledge and thank our funders; they are all listed in our audited accounts, but I think a special mention should go to DFC, BCC and UVs for their continued support.

We will always require grant funding and it is right that central government should continue to resource some of the work we do but it is the ultimate goal of BSCR to establish a position where core activities are self-funded through our own activities.

This report illustrates the many services, activities and projects offered by BSCR as I said in the beginning they represent only a small proportion of what we do and I recommend that you follow our activities on the web site, twitter and Facebook.

### **Public Benefit Details – Summary of outputs.**

<b><i>Activity – Economic Renewal</i></b>	<b><i>Numbers</i></b>
Number of jobs sustained by BSCR	14
Number of people helped into employment	16
Number of people receiving careers advice	70
Number of new/existing businesses receiving advice / support	6
Number of people attaining a formal qualification from participation in adult education	10
Number of 16-24 year old receiving mentoring support - coment	15
<b><i>Children and Young people</i></b>	
Number of people engaged in parenting skills/development programmes	30
Number of pupils benefitting directly from the project study support and homework clubs	146
Number of children and young people having access to specialist support to enhance their emotional health and well being – transitions project	100
Number of students receiving GCSE support	150
Number of children taking part in summer scheme activities	110
<b><i>Community Confidence</i></b>	
Number of People Receiving Advice on Crime Prevention	2500
Number of Young People Benefiting From Youth Inclusion/	110

<b>Diversiory Projects</b>	
Number of victims of crime supported	6
Number of Crime Prevention Initiatives Implemented	1
We are represented on the Forum, the neighborhood renewal partnership, FSP, the community safety team, sure start.	5
<b>Physical Renewal</b>	
Parents facilities at Blythefield School improved -	completed
Childrens play area at city way completed	completed
Outdoor facilities at Uralian Nursary improved	completed
Graffiti removed from a number of sites around SR	On-going
King William Mural	Refurbished
BSCR are sitting on streeting groups for the development of a number of sites including – Gilpins, Hope Street, and the Transport hub.	On-going
Enas training cultural café	Building purchased and project steering group set up
Christmas lights	On-going -
Arts and Digital Hub	Business plan agreed and awaiting purchase
<b>Cost Of Living crisis</b>	
190 x £100 fuel vouchers given out to those in most need	completed
166 food vouchers giver out	completed