



MANOR STREET /  
CLIFTONVILLE  
COMMUNITY GROUP

# Cliftonville Community Centre



2001



2024

## A little bit of History

For over 50 years, a very popular youth facility, known as the Manor Street Boys' Club, played a crucial role in the provision of youth activities, in the Manor Street/Cliftonville area. Unfortunately, however, this much-needed facility was closed down, due to fire damage, in 1989.

In 1991, a group of individuals came together, to try to re-establish a youth provision for the youth of the Manor Street/Cliftonville area. This group became The Manor Street/Cliftonville Community Group

A needs assessment was carried out in 1997, which identified that, not only was there a need for youth provision in the area, but that there was also a need for a much broader range of provision, in order to meet the needs of the Manor Street/Cliftonville Community as a whole.

The needs assessment proposed that funding should be sought to construct a purpose-built community Centre, to be sited in Manor Street.

After many years campaigning for the Centre, building work began in 1999/2000 and came to a conclusion in November 2001. The Centre has been in operation for 18 years now and offers a range of quality services to over 1,000 households in the Manor Street/Cliftonville area and beyond. The Cliftonville Community Centre is managed by the **Manor Street/Cliftonville Community Group**.

# Cliftonville Community Centre



## Vision Statement

Working towards a new bright future together, by tackling the needs at the heart of our community and helping to rebuild trust, confidence and pride in our area.



## Mission Statement

To become a beacon of hope and opportunity in our community, where local people come to address their needs, and gain support and advice that will help to ensure a better quality of life for them



## Strategy

### Overarching Aim 1

To address the needs and concerns of young people nearing their teenage years through creative learning, personal development and social based activities.

### Overarching Aim 2

To provide priority services that will ensure that the youngest in our community have the best start in life.

### Overarching Aim 3

To offer our most vulnerable young people the practical support, guidance and training needed to ensure a smooth transition from childhood to adulthood.

### Overarching Aim 4

To create a supportive network where adults can communicate their needs and desires and take the active steps to achieve these.

### Overarching Aim 5

To raise the profile of the Centre among the elderly residents of the community and to offer a variety of services that meet their needs.

Learning Sharing Caring together in the ♥ of our community

## **Public Benefit**

Our organisation meets the public benefit requirement by having the following purposes:

The advancement of education by providing quality training placements in the Cliftonville Community Centre

The benefits which flow from this purpose are that young people and adults will be learn new skills in a safe, secure and easily accessible environment, supported by qualified staff.

These benefits will be demonstrated by the participants having an increase in their competences, gaining qualifications and being better equipped to gain employment.

A private benefit would be to the training providers, who need partners such as ourselves, in order to enable their trainees to gain the practical experience that they need, but this is necessary and incidental in advancing the charity's purpose because without the support of these training organisations the trainees would not be able to achieve the qualifications.

The beneficiaries of these purposes are young people and adults from Belfast.

The provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare, such as a purpose-built community Centre, 3 G football pitch, community garden, sports hall, training suite, games room etc. in the heart of the Cliftonville community, within which the following would be provided: carer and toddlers groups, afterschool programmes, youth programmes and adult education programmes and groups.

The benefits which flow from this purpose are that toddlers, children, young people and adults will avail of activities and resources and opportunities for social interaction and structured physical activity, in a safe and secure environment, in their community, which will help to improve their physical and emotional-being and conditions of life.

These benefits will be demonstrated by the number of people accessing the services and the quality of the resources.

A private benefit flowing from this purpose would be the employment of staff to manage the Centre resources and to run the activities within but this is necessary an incidental in advancing the charity's purpose.

The beneficiaries of these purposes are people from North Belfast of all ages who choose to avail of the services.

The advancement of citizenship or community development by providing opportunities for local people to volunteer in the Centre

The benefits which flow from this purpose are that local people will be able to use their existing skills, learn new skills, engage in meaningful activity and interact with others in a safe and secure environment, at the heart of their community, which will help to improve their well-being and conditions of life and also those who attend the Centre.

These benefits will be demonstrated by the number of people volunteering in the Centre.

A private benefit flowing from this purpose would be the employment of staff to support these volunteers but this is necessary an incidental in advancing the charity's purpose. Another private benefit would be the unpaid hours that the volunteers would be working for the betterment of the Centre but this is necessary an incidental in advancing the charity's purpose and the volunteers would not be replacing staff.

The beneficiaries of these purposes are people from North Belfast and beyond and those who chose to become volunteers.

The advancement of environmental protection or improvement by providing green spaces/growing spaces for the local community to use and reclaiming the derelict land and having a Men's Shed allotment project in the Manor Street area.

The benefits which flow from this purpose are that local people will enjoy a better quality of life through participation in the Men's shed project and by the improvement in the physical environment.

These benefits will be demonstrated by the number of people participating in the Men's Shed project and by physical changes to the Manor Street areas.

The beneficiaries of these purposes are people from North Belfast and beyond.



Learning Sharing Caring together in the ♥ of our community

We have 3 full-time and 3 part-time members of staff and 30 + volunteers of all ages.

This Year the Centre has been able to offer a full range of services to the community. We facilitate 2 Sure Start programmes, A 2-year-old programme, 4 days per week and 'Stay and Play' programme once weekly. We have a Carers/Toddlers group that meets twice weekly.

A daily Afterschool project for 4–11-year-olds.

A Youth Project which is open 5 evenings Monday-Friday from 6-9pm for young people aged 12-25 years.

We also have a mentoring programme for children and young people aged 6-18 years.

We continually update the Centre Facebook page with relevant information provided to us by outside organisations (such as the Belfast Trust, The Public Health Agency, Children in Need, The Department for Communities, Family Support Hubs, the Children and Youth Peoples Mental Health Services (CAHMS), Aware Defeat Depression, Age NI, Youth Action, Lifeline, etc.). We support families referred to us by the Family Support Hub also signposting to relevant services in addition to our mentoring project.

Age NI, Victim Support, Nexus, New Life Counselling, Jigsaw Counselling, Pips, Lighthouse, CCRF, Saint Vincent De Paul, Sure-Start, North Belfast Senior Citizen's Forum, Cliftonville Men's Shed, Aware Defeat Depression, Bryson Future Skills, Workforce, Rainbow NI, Belfast Works Connect Ashton Centre, Cara Friend, Bridge of Hope, The Vine Centre PSNI etc.

### **The promotion of Healthy Living**

As detailed above, staff signpost both young people and adults to relevant Mental Health services when needed. Because of their wide knowledge of available services, the Centre staff can make initial contact with service providers, on behalf of residents/parents, which increases the likelihood of them accessing these services. In addition to receiving support from organisations promoting positive mental health, the opportunities for social contact helped to reduce isolation and improve mental and physical health. Overall, volunteers and service users are provided with relevant and up-to-date information as and when needed.

The Carers & Toddlers based in the Centre encourages parents to come out of the house and connect with programme staff thus reducing isolation and children connect with their peers at such a crucial stage in their development.

The toddlers engage in creative play which increases opportunities for emotional and social development. Research shows that early intervention is key to encouraging positive mental health and emotional resilience so any provision that encourages positive engagement between carer and child is to be supported.

Parents commented that the service gives their children an opportunity to socialise with other children outside the family home.

## **Work/training placements**

The Centre works in Partnership with training organisations such as Workforce, Impact Training, Bryson Future Skills. We also provide students from various schools, colleges and universities, to provide quality work placements for trainees, school pupils, university students and adults on a variety of training and work placement schemes. While on placement or volunteering with us, young people and adults work towards qualifications such as Childcare, Play-work, Administration/Finance, IT and Youth Development. Since the Centre opened in 2001, we have provided placements for 350+ young people and adults.

All our employed Staff and volunteers are either fully qualified for their roles and have the mandatory training as requested by BHSCT. We have two staff members on the Childcare team qualified to Level 5 as they are in a supervisory position (Minimum standards in Childcare 2018).

Five out of the six current Centre staff (who all live locally) started with the Centre as Centre users, progressing on to becoming volunteers, trainees and ultimately paid employees. We feel that this is a clear example of how we have encouraged residents to play an active part in economic life as well as making an invaluable contribution to the life of the local community. These staff are now very positive role models for others in the community, encouraging them to follow the path that they have taken, especially those who might otherwise feel that there is no possibility of them gaining employment in their community.

## Partnership working

Throughout the year we have been an active member of our Local Crumlin/Ardoyne Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, working with other organisations from the community, voluntary and statutory departments to maximise existing services and resources in the Neighbourhood Renewal area, highlight gaps and look at ways of meeting those gaps through partnership working. We have also been working with these organisations to develop an Outcomes Based framework for our work, to increase the partnership's overall accountability and advance the likelihood of attracting more funding.

Women from the Cliftonville area, who meet weekly in the Centre, are involved in the Imagine Peace Barriers Project. They meet as part of a joint project with the Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum and Lower Oldpark Community Association.

We provide administrative support to the established men's shed adjacent to the Centre. In addition, we have contracted the Men's shed to carry out a variety of maintenance works to the Centre such as: painting interior and exterior of the Centre, carrying out repairs and cleaning and maintaining the grounds around the Centre. The funding of this work has enabled the Men's Shed to pay for essential bills.

Our organisation has been working with or referring to community/voluntary/statutory groups such as:

PSNI	Rainbow LGBT Bridge of Hope
The Vine Centre	Action Mental Health
Let Youth Lead	PYPD
Belfast Works Connect Ashton	New Life Counselling
Mindwise	CCC Women's Group
Marrowbone Youth Club	Wheelworks
Shankill Women's Centre	Workforce Training
Bryson Future Skills Springvale Training	Ashton Core Project
New Lodge Arts	Education Authority
YEHA	St Vincent de Paul
Cash for Kids Cool FM	Belfast MET
Belfast City Council	Newington Housing Association
Artez	

## Cliftonville Men's Shed

The men's shed has 3 containers fitted out for social activity, joinery work and storage, and a large poly tunnel. We support the group in any way that we can. The men also avail of the facilities in the Centre such as our pool room and the large hall as needed.

Due to the high visibility of the project, statutory, voluntary and community organisations which deliver services to men including the promotion of health awareness initiatives etc., promotes reaching a traditionally hard-to-reach population of service users. (Men 18+)

## Family Support Hub Referrals

*"Family Support Hubs are local groups of voluntary, community and statutory organisations who meet every month to match requests for family support to the most appropriate services. The organisations involved have a good knowledge of the support services available to families in the local area and work together to identify what service is best suited to each family referred for support.*

*Each Hub is made up of different early intervention family support providers depending on the area, as it's important that all members have a strong understanding of the local community and the services available ". (Niacro 2019).*

Our organisation is a member of the Lower North Belfast Family Support Hub and can take referrals from both the Lower and Upper hubs for activities such as: mentoring, football coaching, after-school and youth programmes. The family support hub provides early intervention family support services to vulnerable families and children in Partnership with the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and the Belfast Trust. We take referrals from all areas of North Belfast and during the financial year ended March 2024 we took direct referrals from the hub, delivering mentoring sessions to children aged 6 to 18 years.

## **Christmas Events**

### **Christmas Gift/Food Parcel Distribution**

Staff work in partnership with Cash for Kids Cool FM to apply for and distribute 250 gifts to families registered as Centre Users. This year we were able to allocate approximately 2,000 gifts to local families who were struggling and in need.

In partnership with Mayfield Village Hall we were also able to supply some families with Vouchers that could be used in a local Butchers and delivered to their homes.

North Belfast Hub referred families were in receipt of vouchers to help purchase gas and electricity.

### **A Shared Community that respects everyone (+ Section 75)**

We have posters up throughout the Centre written in many languages and also have LGBT friendly posters and “No Hate Crime Here” art work and posters designed by the young people who use the Centre in partnership with the PSNI and Rainbow, to let people know that they are welcome and shown respect right from their very first contact.

We have a display/information board for families and ensure that all types of family group are represented by putting pictures up of single parent families, couples, same sex parent families, families of many nationalities, and families with children with disabilities, parents with disabilities, adults with no children etc.

We also aim to let people from all backgrounds and cultures know that they are all welcome in the Centre, through care that we take in keeping the Centre well maintained, through the friendly approach of staff and volunteers show them and by providing access to excellent facilities and resources.

We take referrals per year (for mentoring and CYP services) from the Local Family Support Hub from all area of North Belfast - thus attracting people from a rich mix of cultures, traditions and ethnicities. People will come to an area that they would normally not feel safe in, in order to access much needed services for their children. When they are reassured that their children will be well looked after, adults will then be more likely to also access services in the Centre for themselves in the long run.

**Overall:** We consult and engage with participants, involve stakeholders in evaluation and planning and hold ourselves to the highest standards in the delivery of programmes and services to the local North Belfast community. We collaborate, innovate and ensure that employees have sustainable development skills. We are an ethical organisation, committed to equality of opportunity and delivering a range of programmes and services under our organisational themes of

*"Learning, sharing, caring in the ♥ of our community".*

We design programmes and deliver services that help children, young people and their families play a more positive role in their communities. We seek to build social capital, encourage volunteering and enhance participation.

*"I feel safe in the Centre and it is always there for me".  
(Local resident aged 15)*

*"I enjoy coming to Cliftonville Community Centre and really like working  
with the Afterschool staff and children as a Volunteer"  
(Local Resident aged 18)*

And finally . . . . A very Big **Thankyou** to all our

funders who supported us in 2023-24 including:

**The Department for Communities**

**Children in Need**

**Belfast City Council**

**The Education**

**Authority Cash**

**for Kids**

**The Irish Youth Foundation**

**Coco-Cola**

**The Belfast Health and Social Services Trust**

**Newington Credit Union**

**Newington Housing Association**

We could not have achieved all that we did achieve in 2023-2024  
without your support 😊

## Cliftonville Community Centre

(at the ❤️ of the Cliftonville community)



**C**onnecting people with others ❤️

**C**onnecting people with services ❤️

**C**onnecting people with their own potential ❤️