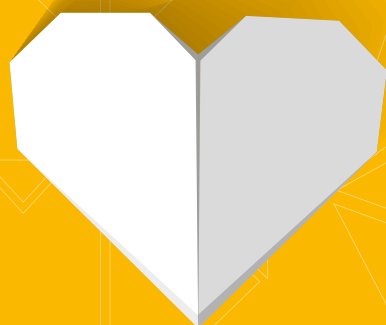




VITAL SIGNS NI 2016

#VitalSignsNI



Vital Signs NI Full Report 2016

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
Helping make Northern Ireland
a better place to live and work



Welcome

Welcome to the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland’s **Vital Signs 2016**. Vital Signs reflects factual data and the voices of the community at local levels across Northern Ireland; sharing lived experiences about what makes the area vibrant, but also the challenges our communities are facing.

Vital Signs is a global project, run by community foundations, who want to listen to, understand and appreciate the communities in which they work. It takes the temperature of how our communities are feeling, across 10 key quality of life areas and asks people across NI what is working and where we could prioritise our actions - be these personal, professional or philanthropic.

Our Vital Signs programme has several elements to it. We looked at statistical data, reports and consultations from government sources, statutory agencies and third sector organisations, across our core ten themes. Between May and August 2016 a survey was circulated throughout the community sector. We received 366 responses, with people prioritising and grading the ten themes for their area. 20 focus groups were held facilitating approximately 200 people. Through our research, we spoke to just under 600 people in total. All of these yielded some fascinating insights into community priorities and through this report we present a snapshot of the feedback we received in these vital conversations.

Vital Signs can also act as a unique guide for those who are charitably-minded and want to come together to act on priorities at community level. We have found that people are willing and eager to engage on issues that affect their lives most; as long as they can see how it might be of benefit to them, their families and their community. There is much to celebrate about life in Northern Ireland. But we have also heard of some particular challenges that people are facing within their area. We have been told some of the practical steps that civic society could take, potentially with support from philanthropic activities, to help make our communities more vibrant.

Of course, Vital Signs isn’t the final word on the quality of life in Northern Ireland, but we hope that it allows the start of a wider conversation.

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HOW TO READ THE REPORT

VITAL ISSUES

These are a sample of the issues that caused people the most concern and were raised with us at consultation, through focus groups and a survey, across a range of geographical areas.

VITAL STATISTICS

These are publicly available statistics, from a range of sources, collated and analysed by the research team. Reliable sources were used with an emphasis on the most current and geographically specific data possible. Statistics were also chosen based on the issues raised with us at consultation.

VITAL GIVING


This is a case study of a Community Foundation grantee. It is an opportunity to highlight some of the amazing projects that we fund and show how philanthropy can make a real difference to people’s lives across the 10 themes.

So, how is Northern Ireland doing?


There is much to celebrate about life in Northern Ireland. But we have also heard of some particular challenges that people are facing within their area.

We've produced a report card to show how we think Northern Ireland is doing in relation to **10 key themes**. The **grades** indicate how people overall rated this theme.


10 KEY THEMES




Arts and Culture




Civic Engagement




Community Safety




Economy




Education and Skills




Environment




Poverty



Health and Wellbeing



Housing and homelessness



Work

GRADES – What they mean

We asked people to grade each theme based on how they think it is doing. Each theme was given a grade based on what most people (60% +) told us.

A

Everything is great. Let's keep things that way!

B

Things are going well, but we can make them better.

C


The situation is okay, but could be improved.

D


Things aren't going very well. We should take action as soon as possible.

E

Things are going very badly. We must act now!












Northern Ireland is home to **1.8 million people**



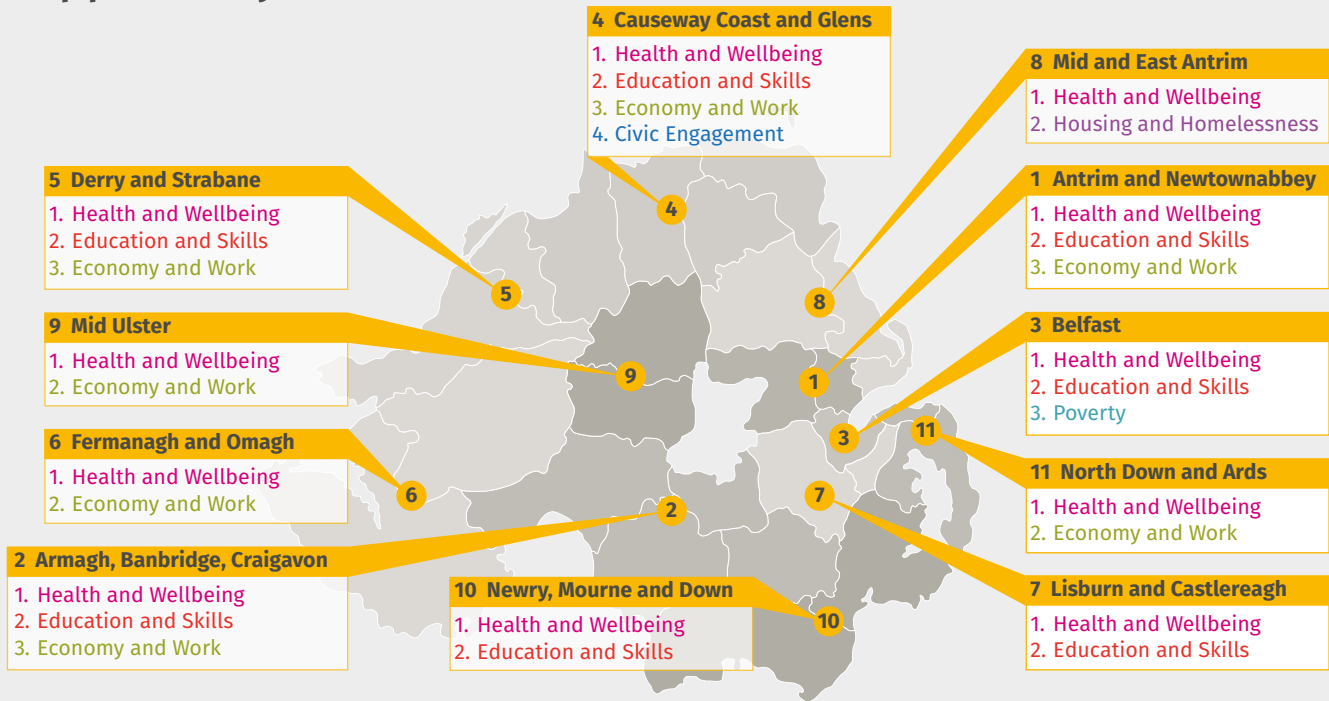
Between **2012 & 2016** the **Community Foundation** awarded **£21 million** in grants

Vital Priorities

We have been asking you to tell us **your priorities for community foundation grantmaking**. Here are the results:

 <div>Health and Wellbeing</div> <div>29.83%</div>	 <div>Civic Engagement</div> <div>6.94%</div>
 <div>Education and Skills</div> <div>16.32%</div>	 <div>Community Safety</div> <div>6.38%</div>
 <div>Economy and Work</div> <div>12.94%</div>	 <div>Arts and Culture</div> <div>5.81%</div>
 <div>Poverty</div> <div>10.13%</div>	 <div>Environment</div> <div>4.5%</div>
 <div>Housing and Homelessness</div> <div>7.12%</div>	

Top priorities by council area:



Council Area	1	2	3	4
4 Causeway Coast and Glens	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills	Economy and Work	Civic Engagement
8 Mid and East Antrim	Health and Wellbeing	Housing and Homelessness		
1 Antrim and Newtownabbey	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills	Economy and Work	
3 Belfast	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills	Poverty	
11 North Down and Ards	Health and Wellbeing	Economy and Work		
7 Lisburn and Castlereagh	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills		
10 Newry, Mourne and Down	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills		
2 Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills	Economy and Work	
6 Fermanagh and Omagh	Health and Wellbeing	Economy and Work		
9 Mid Ulster	Health and Wellbeing	Economy and Work		
5 Derry and Strabane	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Skills	Economy and Work	

04 VITAL SIGNS THEMES AND GRADES

VITAL PRIORITIES 05

Vital Resources

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland makes grants right across the region. Certain funds may focus on a particular geographical area and we are aware that many of our current and prospective donors like to give to causes near to where they live. They may also wish to give to a specific issue, theme or beneficiary group, such as mental health, education or young people. This explains why some areas (both themes and geographies) have higher spending on certain issues than others.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SPEND PER HEAD OF POPULATION	
30p	Arts and Culture
64p	Civic Engagement
2p	Community Safety
17p	Economy and Work
12p	Education and Skills
3p	Environment
38p	Health and Wellbeing
<1p	Housing and Homelessness
£1.09	Poverty

5 Derry and Strabane	
Arts and Culture	£2.30
Civic Engagement	£1.32
Community Safety	17p
Economy and Work	21p
Education and Skills	24p
Environment	17p
Health and Wellbeing	12p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	58p

4 Causeway Coast and Glens	
Arts and Culture	41p
Civic Engagement	37p
Community Safety	1p
Economy and Work	12p
Education and Skills	37p
Environment	13p
Health and Wellbeing	19p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	8p

8 Mid and East Antrim	
Arts and Culture	7p
Civic Engagement	4p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	8p
Education and Skills	9p
Environment	0p
Health and Wellbeing	11p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	6p

1 Antrim and Newtownabbey	
Arts and Culture	5p
Civic Engagement	14p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	0p
Education and Skills	2p
Environment	1p
Health and Wellbeing	8p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	3p

9 Mid Ulster	
Arts and Culture	22p
Civic Engagement	20p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	0p
Education and Skills	9p
Environment	2p
Health and Wellbeing	11p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	2p

6 Fermanagh and Omagh	
Arts and Culture	39p
Civic Engagement	£2.84
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	0p
Education and Skills	0p
Environment	11p
Health and Wellbeing	5p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	3p

2 Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	
Arts and Culture	7p
Civic Engagement	£1.59
Community Safety	1p
Economy and Work	5p
Education and Skills	5p
Environment	1p
Health and Wellbeing	8p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	3p

10 Newry, Mourne and Down	
Arts and Culture	13p
Civic Engagement	2p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	11p
Education and Skills	2p
Environment	0p
Health and Wellbeing	£2.04
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	3p

3 Belfast	
Arts and Culture	8p
Civic Engagement	4p
Community Safety	2p
Economy and Work	68p
Education and Skills	27p
Environment	0p
Health and Wellbeing	39p
Housing and Homelessness	<1p
Poverty	£5.38

7 Lisburn and Castlereagh	
Arts and Culture	5p
Civic Engagement	2p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	1p
Education and Skills	0p
Environment	0p
Health and Wellbeing	71p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	1p

11 North Down and Ards	
Arts and Culture	2p
Civic Engagement	8p
Community Safety	0p
Economy and Work	0p
Education and Skills	1p
Environment	0p
Health and Wellbeing	2p
Housing and Homelessness	0p
Poverty	37p



Arts and Culture

GRADE C

The situation is okay, but could be improved.



Poverty

GRADE D

Things aren't going very well. We should take action as soon as possible.

Northern Ireland is rich in arts, culture and heritage. This is a country that boasts spectacular buildings and a wealth of artistic talent in fields ranging from music to theatre and drama to TV and film. It has a historical legacy with a range of talent from Van Morrison to George Best and CS Lewis to John Hewitt.

Community philanthropy plays a vital role in preserving and nurturing such assets. However, its key job is to ensure that such assets remain accessible and relevant to all the country's residents. Arts and culture has the ability to transform the lives of excluded individuals and communities, through community based arts projects, however it must be both accessible and meet community need. Whilst a large swathe of the population has attended an arts event in the past year, our engagement has shown that communities, particularly in deprived areas, do not see the relevance of the arts in their or their families' lives.

VITAL STATISTICS

79%

of arts council investment goes to **most deprived areas of NI**

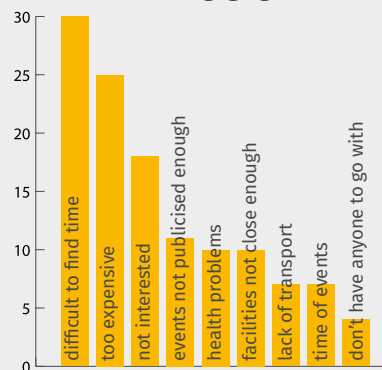
80%

of the population has **attended an arts event** in last year

5%

of population is **employed** in the **creative industries**

Barriers to engaging with the arts



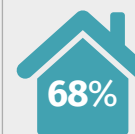
VITAL ISSUES



- **The Arts can be seen as 'elitist':** Despite the level of funding for communities living in deprived areas, there is a view that the arts are "not for them". There is a recognition that arts activities are often readily available however they do not seem relevant to some.
- **The Arts can be seen as 'a luxury':** Communities feel that funding for arts and culture is important, but it is not necessarily a priority when there are other more prevalent issues.
- **Access:** For communities or individuals living on low or restricted incomes, there can be an issue of access as many arts activities come at a cost, particularly for families. Access can also come in the form of a physical barrier, particularly for those living in rural areas, as arts activities are often concentrated in urban settings. The issue and cost of transport also comes into play for those living in rural settings.

Northern Ireland has 13,000 millionaires and 376,000 people living in poverty. Inequality has emerged as a key issue for the country. Northern Ireland is a vibrant place to live, yet also has a raft of social and economic problems.

The percentage of those living poverty is similar to that of GB, and is a little higher than before the recession. However, Northern Ireland has not experienced the same employment performance as the rest of GB. Average weekly pay is lower in NI than a decade ago (after inflation) However, the composition of those in poverty in Northern Ireland has changed over the last five years. There are more working-age adults, particularly young people, more private renters and fewer pensioners in poverty.



Home heating oil, the most expensive fuel, is also the most prevalent form of central heating in NI, used by 68% of households as the sole means of central heating, compared with 4% in England and Wales

VITAL STATISTICS

376,000

individuals living in poverty – **2% increase** since 12/13

1/3

of **adults** with **no qualifications** were in **poverty**, compared with 1/10 of those with a degree.

23%

Over **100,000 children** live in **poverty** in Northern Ireland (23% of our children)



Who is more likely to be in poverty? **Single working age adults, disabled, pensioners, families with children**

3.6 times higher income

Households in **top 20%** of **income distribution** had weekly income of **3.6 times higher** than **bottom 20%**.

VITAL ISSUES



- **Foodbank use:** This is at an all-time high in Northern Ireland. The use of food banks is rising faster in Northern Ireland than elsewhere in the UK.
- **Defining poverty:** There are many definitions of poverty. The stark reality is that poverty is about not being able to heat your home, pay the rent, or buy food and other essentials. Poverty stops people from being fully involved in their local communities.
- **Cost of heating/oil:** Heating a home is more expensive in Northern Ireland. People spend a significantly larger proportion of their income on fuel than their counterparts elsewhere in the UK.
- **Inequality:** There is an established and recognised link between inequality and health/social problems. Tackling inequality is the most important step in achieving social justice and a more prosperous Northern Ireland.

VITAL GIVING // STAGE BEYOND THEATRE COMPANY

Stage Beyond is a theatre company for young adults with learning disabilities. They received funding through the Community Foundation's Acorn Fund Legacy Grants in early 2016 for a production of Rashomon by Fay and Michael Kanin, which took place in the Millennium Forum, the Alley in Strabane and in schools in the Derry/Londonderry and Strabane area.

Alongside the production, three groups were funded to run workshops to contribute to set and costume design and construction and music production: Afasic, Jigsaw and the Foyle Down Syndrome Trust. This provided 60 young people with six months of diverse, artist-led training, enhancing their understanding of arts and culture. This project enabled participants to express their creativity, and develop artistic skills as well as social skills.

VITAL GIVING // EAST BELFAST INDEPENDENT ADVICE CENTRE

East Belfast Independent Advice Centre (EBIAC) was set up by the local community in 2000 to meet the need for advice services in East Belfast. They provide free, independent and confidential advice in relation to Social Security, Debt, Housing and Employment. The organization received funding in early 2016 from the Community Foundation's Social Justice Fund.

The project involved EBIAC developing a pilot Young People's Advice Service in East Belfast aimed primarily at 16-24 year

olds not in education, employment or training. The 4 month pilot employed an adviser to work for 16 hours per week to run a benefit uptake advice service and research in partnership with NICVA and Participation and Practice of Rights Project. The project led to young people being able to access benefits and entitlements that they perhaps hadn't previously realized they were entitled to. The project had a particular focus and impact on young people from deprived urban areas.



GRADE C

The situation is okay,
but could be improved.

Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement is the process through which individuals and their representatives engage with social and political institutions on issues of public concern to achieve collective goals. This is not just voting in local and national elections; it also includes volunteering, lobbying and trade union membership amongst other things.

Northern Ireland boasts a vibrant community and voluntary sector, which plays a crucial role in supporting communities at a local level. Such groups provide opportunities for local people to work together to enhance community life, tackle social problems and ensure that local people have a say in the decisions that affect them. However, dependency on funding means that some groups may be hit hard by future public expenditure cuts. Some have struggled to adapt and a growing number have closed. Small community groups have been affected as they are under resourced and staff are overworked - facing

increased competition for small grant funding from each other and from larger organisations, who are anxious to cover shortfalls in their budgets.

Some residents felt a strong sense of being part of and belonging to their local community. While other residents highlighted issues of isolation, lack of community cohesion or 'spirit' and a sense of disengagement from society and decision making. Some of these feelings may be attributed to northern Ireland's impact of conflict and legacy and ongoing sectarian division.



VITAL ISSUES

- **Lower voter turnout and scepticism/disengagement from elected reps:** In much of Northern Ireland, there are residents who take little interest or feel they have no power over the decisions that affect them. NI has the lowest voter turnout for general elections in the UK and Assembly elections are experiencing a constant decline. This is due, in part, to a lack of confidence in political leadership and the political process to deliver change.
- **Social Isolation:** This is a particular problem in rural areas and for members of vulnerable groups.
- **Lack of facilities:** There is a concern that there are not enough facilities for young people and that community health facilities (particularly mental health) are scarce. We have found that communities are unable and/or unwilling to share space both on a single identity and cross-community basis. We are further exploring these barriers and how to overcome them.
- **Loss of community cohesion or 'community spirit':** There is a perception in some communities that this loss of community cohesion or community spirit is in part due to immigration.
- **Little to no self help:** Communities struggle to identify the issues of concern in their area. This prohibits them from being able to adequately articulate and address such needs.
- **Short term core and programme funding:** The Community and Voluntary sector (CVS) is unable to strategically plan or develop long term approaches to issues due to the short term nature of much funding.

VITAL STATISTICS

15%
drop

Assembly election turnout declined from 70% in 1998 to 54.9% in 2016

31%

of adults believe NI Assembly has 'achieved nothing at all'



40% of young people rarely or never socialise with different ethnicities. 25% of adults prefer to socialise with people of their own ethnicity

6127

Voluntary, Community, Social Economy (VCSE) organisations in NI – concentrated in urban areas:

27%

Belfast

11%

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon

9%

Derry/Strabane

70%

of adults feel they have little to no influence on local decision making



44% of people said nothing would encourage them to volunteer

32%

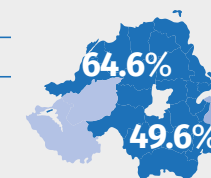
of adults have volunteered in past year

81%

of VCSE organisations provide support exclusively to communities living in NI

33.3

VCSE groups for every 10,000 people previous studies suggest that NI's third sector is the least dense of all UK regions



Voter turnout in May 2016 elections lower in Eastern NI: North Down lowest at 49.6%, compared with Fermanagh and Omagh at 64.6%

VITAL GIVING // CLARE

CLARE, a community organisation in North Belfast, received funding through the Ulster People's College, in Spring 2016 to increase levels of volunteering and improve the wellbeing, skills and employability prospects for young people and adults living in disadvantaged communities across North Belfast.

A minimum of 20 young people and 50 adults were supported to engage in the project. They received one to one support to identify a volunteering role suitable for them, develop a

personal learning and development portfolio whilst gaining skills and qualifications that improved their wellbeing and employability prospects. The Project also involved the development of a bespoke community volunteering programme, which engaged people in meaningful volunteering, improving their life outcomes and having a positive impact on the lives of those who are socially isolated by helping them overcome challenges in connecting to social opportunities.



GRADE C

The situation is okay, but could be improved.

Education and Skills

When it comes to education, no one will be surprised by these vital statistics or issues. This theme by far sparked the least discussion, in terms of 'better-off children and young people' continue to achieve academic success, those 'less well-off' are not achieving the grades necessary to enter the labour market.

This affects their future life chances and is reflected in the poor literacy and numeracy levels amongst our student and adult population. The link between poverty and educational attainment has been established and bold steps need to be taken by policy makers if the link is to be broken. Some of those consulted highlighted that ending academic selection, as it operates here, could make an enormous difference to the educational opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

VITAL STATISTICS

18.4%

of economically active **18-24 year** olds are **unemployed**; compared with UK average of 11.7%

1 in 5

NI students struggle with more than **basic reading, writing** and **maths** tasks

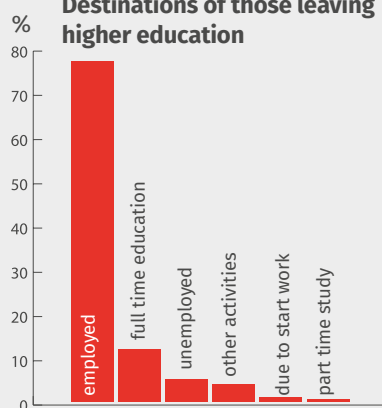
45.6%

of **Free School Meal Entitled (FSME) pupils** achieved **5 GCSEs A*-C**, compared with:

74.3%

of **non-FSME pupils** – a difference of **28.7%**

Destinations of those leaving higher education



VITAL ISSUES



- **Brain drain:** Many young people feel they need to leave NI to find employment.
- **Academic selection:** Children from the poorest areas are automatically at a disadvantage in the current system.
- **Local culture and history excluded from curriculum:** Communities are concerned that a lack of agreement about history and culture is preventing children from learning about the past and stifling their ability to move forward.
- **Little to no opportunities for family learning:** Better working relationships and understanding between school based and community based activities are required to ensure that families and adults can learn together with their children.
- **Academic achievement:** Literacy rates, numeracy rates and levels of educational attainment, particularly in poorer neighbourhoods, are amongst the lowest in the UK. However, there are also parts of Northern Ireland that are doing relatively well; this tends to be concentrated in affluent areas.

VITAL GIVING // GEMS NI

GEMS NI received funding through the Ulster Bank Community Impact Fund in 2014. GEMS NI worked in conjunction with local community organisations, training companies and employers to coordinate 5 pre-employment programmes over a period of 8 months.

It allowed 80 unemployed people from the Belfast area to gain accredited

qualifications for working in a range of sectors, including childcare, social care and hospitality. The direct target beneficiaries of the programmes were economically inactive people who are unable or unwilling to use the traditional employability interventions such as the local Jobs and Benefits Office including longer term unemployed people, returners to the labour market and young people.

Schools don't teach respect, confidence and lifelong learning

Education should do more about employability - careers services are inadequate



GRADE C

The situation is okay, but could be improved.

Environment

Northern Ireland has an amazing range of natural assets, like rivers, coastlines and green spaces. However despite this, our research indicated that communities do not seem to naturally engage with environmental issues. This theme was by far the least discussed in terms of issues, beyond the obvious waste collection and public transport concerns.

The most commented on issues at our consultation were the persistence of waste management problems and the lack of availability/quality of public transport (in both rural and urban areas); this issue was supported by the fact that 80% of total miles travelled were by car. It is therefore clear that we need to engage local people in addressing environmental issues and as such supporting local projects which do this remains a priority for us.

VITAL STATISTICS



Attitudes toward **environmental issues**, in terms of their perceived importance, have dropped to a **12 year low**

70%

Of **households** in **2013/14** are fairly concerned about **environmental issues**

83%

of NI streets and open spaces **met or exceeded acceptable standards** of **visible litter**



Household waste accounted for **89.1%** of total waste collected



Despite heavy use of personal vehicles, **all NI sites met the UK/ EU air quality targets**



Only **9%** of **urban travel** is on **public transport**; **6%** of **rural travel** is on **public transport**



VITAL ISSUES

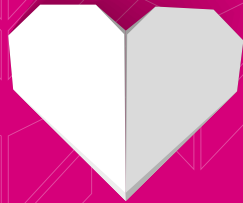
- **Lack/quality of public transport:** Communities in both rural and urban areas were frustrated by the availability or quality of public transport. Lack of access to good quality transport affects so many other issues, such as education, mental health, social isolation, etc.
- **Street lighting is a concern in communities:** This has a knock on effect for community safety, particularly in terms of people's fear of crime.
- **Overgrown public green spaces:** Our green spaces, along with other public spaces such as rivers, coastlines, parks, etc. need to be looked after to ensure public enjoyment and health.
- **Waste collection:** Communities are concerned about the infrequency of waste collection, however we need to engage communities to find ways to increase recycling and reduce residual waste.
- **Food waste:** Encouraging community interest in growing food is a good way to engage the community in environmental issues and prevent further waste of food.
- **Lack of insight about environmental issues:** Many in communities do not appear to be concerned about issues like climate change - are we doing enough to prepare for the effects of this, particularly in deprived and vulnerable communities?

VITAL GIVING // FOREGLEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Foreglen Community Association received funding through the Dunmore Community Benefit Fund in late 2015. The project installed 16 solar panels on the roof of a community building to help with high running costs with direct savings made into activities for the centre clients.

The centre accommodates 75 elderly people who are collected from home to

attend the centre three days per week. The group were keen to become more energy efficient and saw the opportunity of applying to a local windfarm community benefit fund to save costs, improve the environment and provide additional social and cultural benefits to a rural isolated community. Since the installation the group has been able to enhance their programme of activities to support people of all ages.



Health and Wellbeing

GRADE D

Things aren't going very well. We should take action as soon as possible.

Many people struggle to look after their health with problems such as poor diet, alcohol misuse and lack of physical activity often leading to obesity, with wider potential for an obesity epidemic.

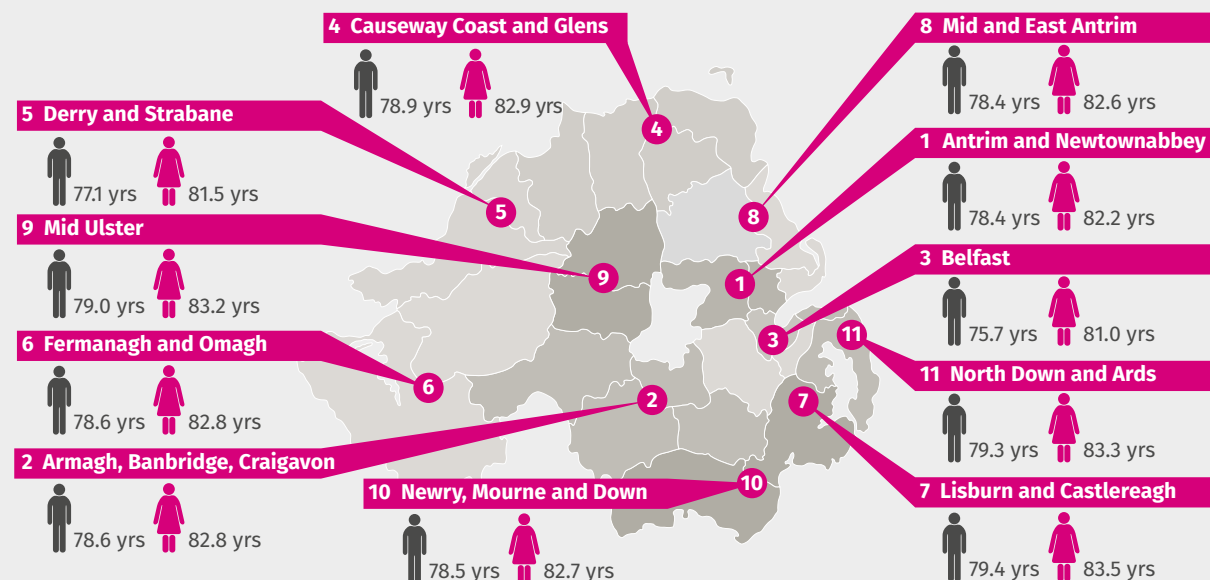
Mental health problems are much more widespread than in the rest of the UK and affect one in five people in Northern Ireland. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicide rates among young men are particularly concerning. The Community and Voluntary sector needs to help the statutory authorities by supporting people with health problems and helping people to make healthier lifestyle choices.



VITAL ISSUES

- **GP waiting times:** Many individuals were concerned and frustrated by the length of waiting times in GP surgeries. Most people said they have to wait at least two or three weeks for an appointment.
- **Mental health:** There is much concern about the lack and/or quality of emergency services for those suffering from mental health issues, particularly in cases of suicide. There was also a desire to see more community based health facilities and better services and information for children's mental health.
- **Cost and knowledge of and access to healthy eating:** There is a distinct lack of knowledge when it comes to healthy food choices. Many were concerned that even if they want to make healthier choices, it is much more expensive and not as readily available.
- **Drug and alcohol abuse:** There was a deep concern about the growing use of drugs and alcohol, particularly amongst young people. Communities are afraid to speak out against drug dealing but are aware of the harsh realities for their children.
- **Troubles related PTSD:** PTSD and other disorders associated with trauma represent a significant public health cost here, with economic implications right across society that stretch far into the future.
- **Social isolation:** Some recognised that many people are experiencing social isolation. The benefits of befriending services and personal social contact were recognised as ways to maintain and ensure better mental health. This was the case in both rural areas and major cities.

Life Expectancy by Area:



VITAL STATISTICS

72.5%

think **GP waiting times** are at **crisis point**. NI has the longest GP waiting times in the UK.



Lowest GP coverage in UK at 6.4 per 10,000 = **20% shortage** amounting to approx 242 GPs

25%

of GPs in NI are over the age of 55



GPs have faced a dramatic increase in workload - they now make **12.7million patient consultations** a year - an **increase of 76%** in the last decade



of adults are **satisfied** with **their health**



1 in 5 people in NI reported having **mental health problems**, with NI having **20-25% higher prevalence rate of mental health problems than rest of UK**



of people with **mental health problems** receive **no treatment at all** - still a hidden problem



of **NHS healthcare budget** is spent on mental health problems

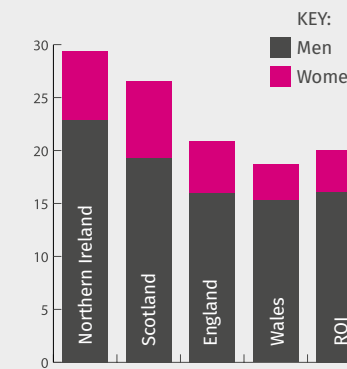


of women in NI have **no access to specialist perinatal mental health support**. This compares with 40% in Scotland and England, 70% in Wales



Double the number of deaths by suicide since late 1990s; **however, male suicide rate decreased by 10.2%** between 2013 to 2014

Suicide rates per 100,000



8.8%

NI has the **world's highest rate of PTSD** - 8.8% of population met the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder at some point in their lifetime



Troubles related Violence has been the **direct cause of mental health problems** for **18,000 people**

£679.8 million

social cost of **alcohol addiction and misuse**



Between **1986 and 2008/09** the prevalence of drinking has increased from **64% to 74%**, with a greater increase among females (58% to 70%) than males (72% to 79%)

VITAL GIVING // BUDDY BEAR TRUST

Buddy Bear Trust is an established, independent Conductive Education school for children with motor disorders including Cerebral Palsy. The school is holistic and aims to draw out potential communication and other skills in order to advance education and life opportunities for its pupils.

The funding received from the 25th Anniversary of the Telecommunity Fund in 2015 allowed the group to purchase

an interactive screen to be used to work with the children in developing communication and interactive skills. The screen complemented existing specialist equipment including a Sound Light Wall and a Sensory Room. The children who use this service have gained significantly in terms of developing both their physical and communication skills and continue to achieve more than originally hoped.



Community Safety

GRADE D

Things aren't going very well. We should take action as soon as possible.



Housing and Homelessness

GRADE C

The situation is okay, but could be improved.

Since the Good Friday Agreement and reform of policing in Northern Ireland, public perceptions of crime have largely been inconsistent with actual crime statistics. Despite lower prevalence of crime in NI, there are higher levels of worry about crime than in England and Wales.

A natural peace dividend has been the normalization of society with localized antisocial behaviour (ASB) issues reflecting those of other parts of the UK and Ireland. The fear of crime though is very real with antisocial behaviour, drug abuse and drug-dealing the new unwanted realities of post-conflict society.

VITAL STATISTICS

27% reduction in crime between 2002 and 2013, however it has risen in last 2 years

Drug offences at their highest levels since 1998/99 - increase year on year since 2006/2007

82.2% stated that ASB has a **minimal effect** on their lives

3/5's thought that crime levels in NI have **risen in past 2 years**

Crime Rates By Policing District 2014/15

Antrim and Newtownabbey	6890
Ards and North Down	6334
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	10,103
Belfast	35,455
Causeway Coast and Glens	6621
Derry City and Strabane	9510
Fermanagh and Omagh	5054
Lisburn and Castlereagh	5469
Mid and East Antrim	5793
Mid Ulster	5144
Newry Mourne and Down	8699
Total	105,072



Increase in offences of violence against the person and sexual offences



Risk of becoming a victim of crime lower in NI (8.85%) than in England and Wales (15.9%)



VITAL ISSUES

• **Antisocial Behaviour:** This is of particular concern for communities living in urban areas. This was less of a concern for those living in rural areas. Much of the fear of crime in local areas is due to groups of people and anti-social behaviour.

• **Drug abuse and drug dealing:** Some communities are still plagued by the existence of drug dealers. Communities are afraid to speak out but are concerned that the lives of some young people are being destroyed by drugs.

• **Poor to no response times from police:** In some areas there was a recognition that relationships with the police are not positive. There was a concern that at times the police can be slow to respond, if at all: "I felt safer in my community pre ceasefire, as at least my community was not out of control". This was particularly the case in rural and/or traditionally Catholic communities.

• **Poor street lighting:** A lack of street lighting feeds further into communities' fear of crime. Generally people are afraid to go out at night in areas that are not well lit.

• **Domestic violence:** Victims of domestic violence do not feel that they have the ability to either speak out or walk away. Family and children pressures feed into this issue further. Communities, and in particular women, need a safe space to talk through such issues and seek the required support.

In comparison to the rest of the UK, Northern Ireland enjoys affordable housing, and this is an advantage in terms of the area's attractiveness to inward investors. However for many people, particularly those on low wages or benefits, it can be a struggle to meet housing costs, including fuel bills.

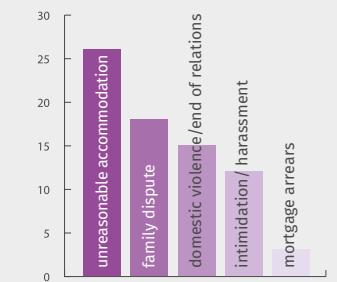
Despite this, Housing and Homelessness are two of the most challenging, urgent and important issues facing Northern Ireland today. A particular concern for communities is the rising number of rough sleepers, particularly in urban areas such as Belfast. Although the government built 542 social homes last year, homelessness rates in Northern Ireland remain the highest in the UK. The Community and Voluntary sector plays a key role, particularly in preventative work for those at risk of homelessness.

VITAL STATISTICS

39,338 people on **social housing waiting list** in 2015

23% of households in NI **regarded as hidden homeless**

Causes of homelessness



Black households wait longer than average for social housing. Chinese and Irish travellers wait less time than average – however often lower quality and not first choice.



LGBT people at higher risk of homelessness

VITAL ISSUES

• **Hidden homelessness:** Homelessness is a difficult issue, particularly because there are few direct statistics. There are discrepancies about the meaning of homelessness. Hidden homelessness accounts for those households who are seeking separate accommodation, e.g. overcrowded houses, squatters, people living with friends or relatives, etc.

• **Social housing waiting lists:** Many individuals or families have to move to other areas for suitable accommodation, which is often further from their families. It is extremely difficult for individuals, particularly men to get appropriate social accommodation.

• **Local vs newcomer tensions:** There is a perception amongst communities that the lack of social housing is due to newcomer or ethnic communities. Statistics would refute this, however it is important to listen to and engage with communities on such issues to move forward.

• **'Dumping grounds':** Tensions are not limited to local/newcomer communities; some communities, particularly families are concerned that those with drug/alcohol addictions are being placed in their area. We need to ensure that families feel safe but also that those with substance abuse problems are supported.

• **Quality of private rented sector:** Because the waiting lists for social housing are so long, many people have to rent. These people do not always receive a good standard of living. People feel that they have no options as they cannot challenge landlords for fear of eviction.

VITAL GIVING // HARLAND YOUTH

Harland Youth received funding under Red Nose Day Community Cash in 2015 for a summer diversion programme. This award provided facilities and equipment to cater for 40 youths over an 8 week period in North Belfast. This was delivered on a Friday evening when anti-social behaviour and crime are most prevalent. The project provided at risk young people with the opportunity to divert themselves from the interface and associated activities, towards

positive community activity. Additionally the project involved engagement with the PSNI and other officials to deliver workshops and lead discussions with the young people. They worked closely with Youth Justice and local schools to help signpost young people and those most in need towards the programme. This project led to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and enhanced links with statutory organisations.

VITAL GIVING // HOMEPLUS

Homeplus provides a year round nightly Street Outreach service for homeless people as well as a unique daily Drop-In Centre in Belfast for destitute Migrant Workers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Homeplus was approached by the Red Cross and Northern Ireland Community of Refugees and Asylum Seekers (NICRAS) to extend its Drop-In services. The demand for the service has steadily increased. Last year over 500 individuals attended the Centre and at

present there are on average 40 service users attending daily.

The project was awarded funding through New Beginnings in Spring 2016 to further expand their services to include language classes, eye tests and organising volunteer opportunities. To date the level of support offered and enhanced services available as a result of this funding has had significant benefit to refugees and asylum seekers.



GRADE **D**

Things aren't going very well. We should take action as soon as possible.

Economy and Work

Northern Ireland traditionally has a rich industrial heritage, and building on this the Northern Ireland economy performs well in the current economic climate. The unemployment rate is above the UK average but below that in the Republic of Ireland.

Outside of London, NI is the leading UK region for attracting inward investment, with Belfast as a top destination for financial services technologies investments. However, public sector decline is holding back overall progress. For many there are a lack of employment opportunities and job insecurity remains a major concern for people throughout Northern Ireland.



VITAL ISSUES

- **Inequality:** Individuals do not feel that the benefits of the recovery are being equally distributed throughout NI. In particular, those living in the North West are concerned that economic growth and job creation is concentrated in Belfast and the East. Rural areas face difficulties with shop and other supporting infrastructure closures, the increasing need to travel significant distances for work and reliance on seasonal employment.
- **Inadequate investment:** Poor planning and investment is believed to reduce the accessibility and appeal of areas in the North and West, thus adding to the unequal distribution of growth. The potential of these areas could be unlocked through improvements to transport, ICT and other infrastructures. This would increase the awareness and attractiveness of the North and West for investment in manufacturing and services
- **Lack of incentives for business start up:** Despite some incentives from Stormont and local councils, small businesses and entrepreneurs still face a large number of barriers in the early stages of their development.
- **Terms and quality of employment:** The reduction in quality public sector employment and expansion of zero-hour contracts, part time and temporary employment are repeatedly described as concerns for people seeking work. The reduced security of such employment discourages people from applying for jobs.
- **Emigration:** Young people are leaving rural areas and moving to urban areas or abroad to find work.
- **Training schemes are inadequate:** Young people feel that government schemes, targeting those 'not in education, employment or training', are not fit for purpose or relevant.
- **Vulnerable groups:** Overall work can be hard to find, and some individuals, particularly those with physical or learning disabilities, face additional barriers. Support interventions such as those offered by voluntary or community based organisations can help to overcome such barriers

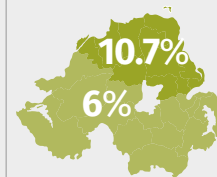
VITAL GIVING // YOUTHBANK INTERNATIONAL

Youthbank International, a youth led grant making organisation, received funding through the Community Foundation's Micro Grant Programme in the summer of 2016. The funding was a contribution towards the development and running of the first Teenage Market in Northern Ireland.

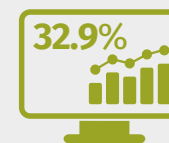
The project attracted young people, in the greater Banbridge area, as traders and performers as well as local established traders.

The young grant-makers of Banbridge YouthBank are the central beneficiaries and the key actors responsible for running the Teenage Market. They have enhanced skills and knowledge through project management of the Teenage Market, which will continue over the next eighteen months. Other positives include increased footfall, investment and publicity in the town.

VITAL STATISTICS



In 2015, **unemployment** was **6%**, although areas in the **North** saw much higher rates at **10.7%**.



Highest rate of economic inactivity is in **Derry and Strabane – 32.9%**

Economically inactive refers to those who are not in work and are not unemployed; this includes the likes of students, long term carers, long term sick, retired, etc.



Between **2008** and **2016**, **28,850** young people participated in **Training for Success** (a government training and employment scheme for young people aged 16-24)



gained a qualification



progressed into **full time employment** or **higher education**



gained neither a qualification or progressed into full time employment or higher education



Average weekly wage



Total **Exports** fell by **1.5%** in 2015

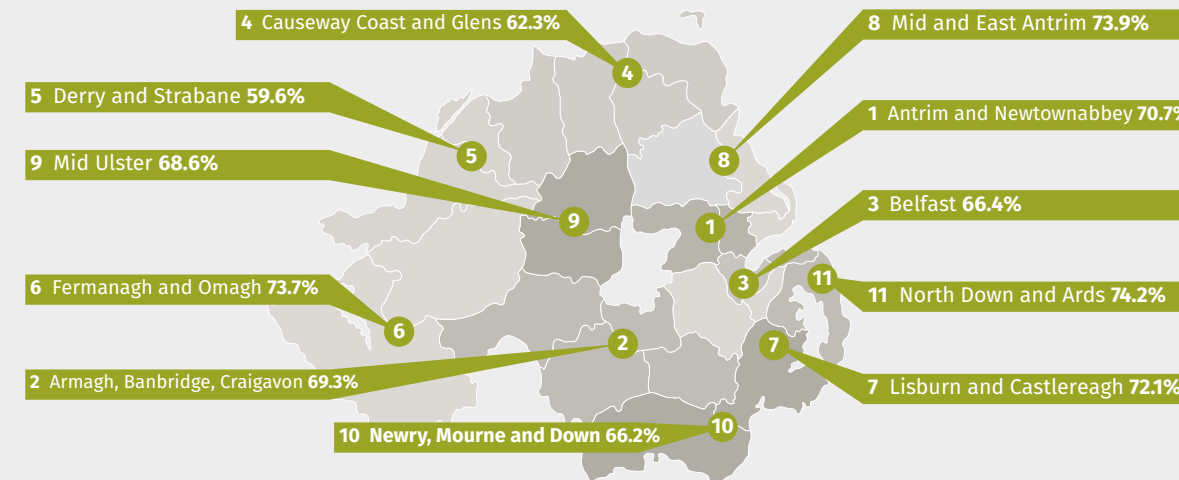


Lowest employment rate is **Derry and Strabane – 59.6%** of working age

Employment Rates by area



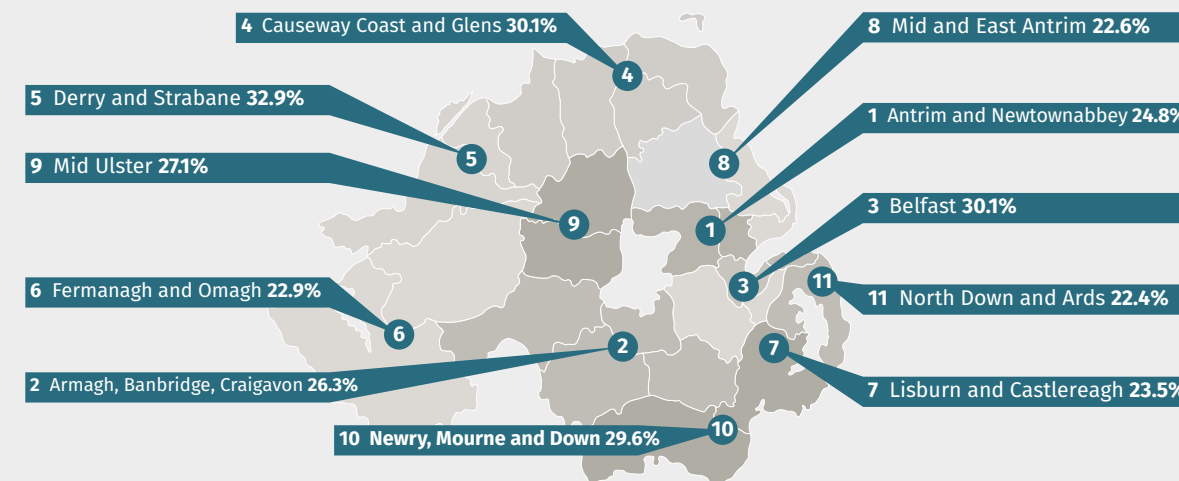
Overall employment rate



Economically Inactive Rate by area



Overall economically inactive rate



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www.vitalsignsni.org

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At the Vital Signs Website you can:

- Read more of our Vital Signs research
- Learn about what your area said about their Vital Signs
- Find out how to get in touch and give us your views
- Get the latest news on Northern Ireland's Vital Signs
- Connect to the national and international Vital Signs movement

METHODOLOGY

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland have compiled this research using publicly available data, statistics and research and original research and case studies from their own grant making. A compendium of the data and sources used will be fully available on our website or by request. All information is considered accurate as of August 2016.

The information included here should be considered a snapshot and only analyses a limited amount of the available data. If you have any queries or believe any information provided in this report to be incorrect, please contact us and we will do our best to undertake corrections.

Any quotes or opinions from individuals have been obtained via an open community consultation conducted by the Community Foundation. The identity of any individual(s) quoted within this report has been anonymised to protect their privacy.

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