



Inclusive Cities Action Plan

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN CITY COUNCIL

Autumn 2022

Background information

In April 2015, Local Government reform saw the establishment of the new Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The new Council area is primarily made up of the former Newry & Mourne and Down District Council areas. As the third largest Council area within Northern Ireland, it comprises approximately 10% of the total land area of Northern Ireland, has more than 100 miles of coastline, and provides services to over 178,000 residents (10% of the Northern Ireland population). The District is an eclectic mixture of urban and rural, of towns and villages through to small hamlets and micro communities, interspersed with a mixed socio-economic profile. In addition to Newry City, the principal towns within the District are Ballynahinch, Crossmaglen, Downpatrick, Kilkeel, Newcastle and Warrenpoint.

The District is one of the most diverse areas in Northern Ireland and has been involved in integration work for a number of years. In 2007, we opened the Ethnic Minority Support Centre to assist the growing migrant population in the area. Newry, Mourne and Down Ethnic Minority Support Centre provides free and confidential advice and support to migrant communities living in the district. Information is available in a range of languages. It offers support and information on issues such as rights, access to services, education, benefits, housing and signposting to relevant agencies. For more information, see the website: <https://www.newrymournedown.org/diversity-ethnic-minorities>.

In conjunction with surrounding council areas, we led the Challenge of Change programme from 2007–2014, which aimed to increase active participation of migrants in civic, community and political life. In the years 2011–2014 we were one of eleven European partners on the INTERREG IVC Labour Plus project which aimed to improve local strategies for the integration of migrants into the labour market; and in January 2014 the Council was awarded funding from the EU Integration Fund for the Europa Diversa project (January 2014 – June 2015).

Our main focus for the Inclusive Cities programme is to support and drive inclusive economic growth. We would like to draw on innovative ideas and

practices from other Inclusive Cities members, develop a skills development policy and strengthen our cooperation with employers and local enterprise agencies to open up employment opportunities and support entrepreneurship among migrant communities.

Our Inclusive Cities Action Plan will contribute towards the outcomes of the [Community Plan 2030 'Living Well Together'](#) – the overarching strategic plan for Newry, Mourne and Down which provides a framework for the other strategies and plans and is based on a detailed analysis of future risks and opportunities for Newry, Mourne and Down.

Our mission as a council for the next two years is: “To support and advocate for a welcoming district which is progressive, healthy and sustainable, providing better economic, environmental and social outcomes for all”. This Action Plan will support strategic priorities of the Council Corporate Plan 2021– 2023 and the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020–2025. It will also link to the objectives of the [PEACE IV Local Action Plan as well as the Good Relations and Policing and Community Safety Partnership \(PCSP\) Action Plans](#).

Find out more

info@compas.ox.ac.uk

LEADING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SHARED LOCAL STORY OF INCLUSION

Actions to achieve this priority	Progress to date	How this supports the strategic priorities of the city	Lead responsible for delivery	Resources needed to accomplish the priority and action	Timescale	Success Criteria
Promote Newry City and District as inclusive and welcoming to all through civic leadership	Chairperson endorses support for recent refugees	Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021-23	Chairperson's Office, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMD Council)	Staff time	March 2023	Minimum two civic/welcome events for refugees/ migrants hosted by Chairperson
Develop and promote Newry as City of Sanctuary	Initial stakeholder meeting in January 2022		City of Sanctuary task group which will include NMD DC, Education Authority, VCS partners and BAME groups		June 2023	City of Sanctuary status adopted
Promote and raise awareness of District's diverse communities through corporate messaging	Positive social media messaging Articles promoting diversity initiatives published in annual Connect magazine.		NMD Council's Marketing team and Social Inclusion team		ongoing	Messaging disseminated through social media and corporate magazine Promotion of Newry city and District as inclusive and welcoming to all. An increase in the number of people with knowledge of BAME cultures.
Work with our diverse communities to continue to promote BAME festivals in the District.	BAME Festivals celebrated through Good Relations/ PEACE	District's Good Relations Strategy PEACE IV Local Plan	District Electoral Area (DEA) Coordinators VCS partners, e.g. Confederation of Community Groups, County Down Rural Community Network, Polish Supplementary School, Muslims of Newry, Lithuanian Supplementary School, Ukrainian Community in South Down.	Staff time Funding Good Relations/ Peace	March 2023	Minimum two festivals supported Promotion of Newry city and District as inclusive and welcoming to all. An increase in the number of people with knowledge of BAME cultures.

SUPPORTING AND DRIVING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions to achieve this priority	Progress to date	How this supports the strategic priorities of the city	Lead responsible for delivery	Resources needed to accomplish the priority and action	Timescale	Success Criteria
Map skills and barriers to employment. Research looking at our local migrant population complementing work undertaken by Council's Economic Development Department in the area of identifying specific skills gaps within local industries/ employers.	Consultant appointed	Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020–2025	NMD Council's Social Inclusion team and Economic Development team Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade Kilkeel Chamber of Commerce Local employers	Staff time Consultancy support Funding secured	December 2022	Research undertaken and data on local migrant skills and barriers to employment available.
Develop job-specific English language provision and other relevant training which meets the needs of newcomers and the local economy	Will be informed by research above	Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020–2025		Staff time Facilitators/consultants	June 2023	Relevant training developed and delivered to migrant communities – 2 training programmes (Newry and Downpatrick)
Promote and encourage uptake from BAME communities in Council's Recruitment Open Days and Employment Academies by removing barriers to access such as language, childcare and transport.	Employment Academies promoted within BAME communities	Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020–2025 District's Good Relations Strategy	Social Inclusion team, NMD Council	Staff time Labour Market Partnership	March 2023	Increased number of people from BAME Communities accessing employability programmes
Promote and support entrepreneurs within migrant communities – pre-start up and start up programmes run by our Economic Development department and partners such as local enterprise agencies.		Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020–2025	Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade Kilkeel Chamber of Commerce		Ongoing	Increased number of members of BAME communities availing of business start-up activity

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Actions to achieve this priority	Progress to date	How this supports the strategic priorities of the city	Lead responsible for delivery	Resources needed to accomplish the priority and action	Timescale	Success Criteria
<p>Continue to support and promote the Council-led Intercultural Forum: an inter-agency partnership committed to working together towards an inclusive community to create opportunities that embrace diversity.</p> <p>The Forum brings together public and community/ voluntary sector service providers and promotes equity, diversity and interdependence.</p> <p>Main priorities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt a strategic approach to identifying needs of BAME communities 2. Maximise resources and opportunities to promote Equality, Diversity and Interdependence 3. Develop communication channels to encourage people to live, learn, work and play together 4. A partnership approach encompassing all sectors of the community to create a shared future for all residents of the Council through positive action 	<p>Strategy and Action Plan developed.</p> <p>Branding Campaign to promote the work of the Intercultural Forum and increase awareness of the Forum among the migrant/ BAME communities and statutory, voluntary and civic agencies.</p> <p>Intercultural Forum Blog launched September 2021: http://www.nmdif.org</p>	<p>PEACE IV Local Action Plan</p> <p>District's Good Relations Strategy</p> <p>PCSP Strategy</p>	<p>Good opportunity to highlight partner leadership here</p> <p>Intercultural Forum members: NMD Council, Local statutory and VCS partners.</p>	<p>Could be good to include here any resources which would help you to further develop the work of the forum?</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Facilitators/co-ordinator to arrange and service meetings, develop communications strategy, review and further develop membership and oversee strategy implementation.</p>	March 2023	<p>Increased BAME membership of the Forum</p> <p>Main BAME communities represented on the Forum</p>
<p>Continue to promote activities and initiatives which bring newcomers and longer standing communities together, i.e.</p> <p>Sport, arts, culture projects that promote positive relations through addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance; Projects to facilitate personal interaction between residents and groups from different communities;</p> <p>Development of strong inclusive civic leadership, including increasing the capacity of marginalised groups; Conflict resolution and mediation at a local level.</p>	<p>Integration programmes delivered through the Peace IV Local Action Plan and Council's Good Relations</p>		DEA Coordinators	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Good Relations/PEACE IV funding</p>	Ongoing	7 initiatives delivered (1 per each DEA) a year
<p>Continue to develop initiatives building trust between migrant communities and public agencies, including the police.</p>	<p>Engagement events held by Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) involving local migrant communities and PSNI.</p>		PCSP	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Funding secured</p>	March 2023	Further 2 engagement events

MAINSTREAMING AND BUILDING INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

Actions to achieve this priority	Progress to date	How this supports the strategic priorities of the city	Lead responsible for delivery	Resources needed to accomplish the priority and action	Timescale	Success Criteria
<p>Continue to proactively support newcomers through the Ethnic Minority Support Centre</p> <p>Increase the capacity of the established Minority Support Centre in Newry and Downpatrick by employing an additional staff member</p>	<p>Council's Ethnic Minority Support Centre operating in Newry and Downpatrick</p> <p>2,600 visits to the Centre in 2021/22</p> <p>8 initiatives hosted a year</p> <p>400 participants at events hosted by the Centre in 2021/22</p>	<p>PEACE IV Local Action Plan</p> <p>District's Good Relations Strategy</p> <p>PCSP Strategy</p>	<p>Social Inclusion Officer, NMD Council</p> <p>Director of Active and Healthy Communities, NMD Council</p>	<p>Funding required</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>Number of visitors to the advice clinics maintained</p> <p>1 additional part-time staff employed</p> <p>Increase in the number of initiatives hosted by the Centre</p>
Facilitate integration and access to services by further development and delivery of newcomer orientation programmes	Orientation programmes developed and delivered to newcomers, incl. Syrian refugees Roma community and Ukrainian evacuees.		PEACE IV team, NMD Council	Facilitators/consultants	December 2022	2 further projects completed with min 12 participants each
Provide training to services providers to ensure equitable access to services for all newcomers	Training aimed at statutory, voluntary, business sector staff developed and delivered to 30 staff.			Peace IV funding secured		Further 2 training courses delivered
Operation of the Ukraine Assistance Centre (UAC) as a key element of the integration of Ukrainian refugees. UAC provides advice on key services: health, education, jobs and benefits, housing, immigration.	Ukraine Assistance Centre established in Newry in April 2022 and operates on a weekly basis.	Draft Refugee Integration Strategy	<p>NMD Council's Executive Office and</p> <p>Social Inclusion Unit</p> <p>Delivery Partners: Red Cross, Education Authority, NI Housing Executive, Southern Health and Social Care Trust, Jobs and Benefits, Law Centre</p>	<p>Staff time (Council and partner agencies)</p> <p>Venue costs</p> <p>Interpreter costs</p>	ongoing	<p>Newly arrived Ukrainian evacuees registered with main public services.</p> <p>Further support provided through referrals to local VCS organisations.</p>
<p>Ensure equal access to Council services for residents whose first language is not English.</p> <p>Develop Language Policy and Procedures for Council staff</p> <p>Roll out a Language Awareness course for staff to promote the Language Policy and enhance their competence in providing services to residents whose first language is not English.</p>	Language guidelines for staff developed and under review	Complements Council's Bilingualism Policy	Policy and Equality Unit, NMD Council	Staff time Consultancy support	June 2023	<p>Language Policy developed and adopted by Council</p> <p>2 Language Awareness Trainings delivered to staff in Newry and Downpatrick</p>

ENCOURAGING CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

Actions to achieve this priority	Progress to date	How this supports the strategic priorities of the city	Lead responsible for delivery	Resources needed to achieve priority and action	Time scale	Success Criteria
Provide Grant Aid opportunities for organisations across the District to develop BAME- focused community projects/initiatives.	Two Ethnic Minority themes under Council's Financial Assistance Programme established: Theme 1: Cultural expression Theme 2: Positively engaging minority communities. 2021/22 – 23 applications made, 13 awarded (56%)	Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 PEACE IV Local Action Plan Financial Assistance Policy	Programmes Unit, NMD Council	Staff time	March 2023	Two calls per year Increase in successful applications to Minority Ethnic Themes from 56% to 66%
Ensure that festivals and cultural events are inclusive of all communities living in the District.	Training for groups on how to organize and run inclusive events completed in 2021. 7 intercultural events delivered under Peace IV Local Action Plan	Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan 'Living Well Together'. Council Corporate Plan 2021 –23 PEACE IV Local Action Plan	Social Inclusion Unit, NMD Council		Ongoing	% increase in the number of people from BAME Communities participating in events/festivals.

Case Study: The Newry, Mourne and Down Ethnic Minority Support Centre

The Newry, Mourne and Down Ethnic Minority Support Centre opened in 2007 as the Council's response to the changing demographics in the area and the needs of the new migrant communities. Based in Newry Town Hall, the Centre is mainstreamed within core Council services and is the only council-run support centre for ethnic minority residents in Northern Ireland.

The objectives of the service are as follows:

- Development of a one-stop shop as first point of contact for BAME residents;
- Providing information, support and signposting in Newry, Mourne and Down;
- Collation of details of existing service provision by statutory and voluntary agencies;
- Provision of outreach clinics in rural areas;
- Facilitation of two-way communication between statutory agencies, community groups and ethnic minorities.

The Centre provides free advice and support to minority ethnic communities in their own languages. Problems addressed relate to the following: access to social benefits, education, language courses, health appointments, pension enquiries, housing issues including housing benefits, homelessness and requests for social housing, employment issues, EUSS registrations, passport/driving licence renewals as well as organising help through charities for access to clothes, food vouchers and food banks, and home heating.

The Centre works in partnership with other statutory and voluntary organisations providing regular specialist advice clinics in the area of housing (with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive), employment rights (with Community Advice) and delivering information sessions on a variety of topics.

In 2021/22, the Centre recorded 2,600 visits and delivered 9 information sessions with 400 attendees. Currently 70% of clients are Romanian and Bulgarian Roma with the remaining 30% coming from the Polish, Lithuanian, Syrian and Ukrainian communities.

INCLUSIVE CITIES

Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange initiative supporting UK cities and their local partners to achieve a step-change in their approach towards the inclusion of newcomers.

Drawing on innovative ideas and practices from Europe and the United States, Inclusive Cities aims to support the development of an approach to inclusion which is strategic across the city administration. This approach consistently uses positive messaging to develop an inclusive narrative for the city which informs and drives practice and is local authority led, working in close partnership with business, public and voluntary sector organisations to achieve shared goals.

Inclusive Cities is supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

www.compas.ox.ac.uk/inclusive-cities

THE GLOBAL EXCHANGE ON MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

The Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity is an ambitious initiative at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford, opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and longer term collaboration between those working in the migration field.

www.compas.ox.ac.uk/global-exchange