

Artillery

Youth Centre



Annual Report
2011



About Artillery

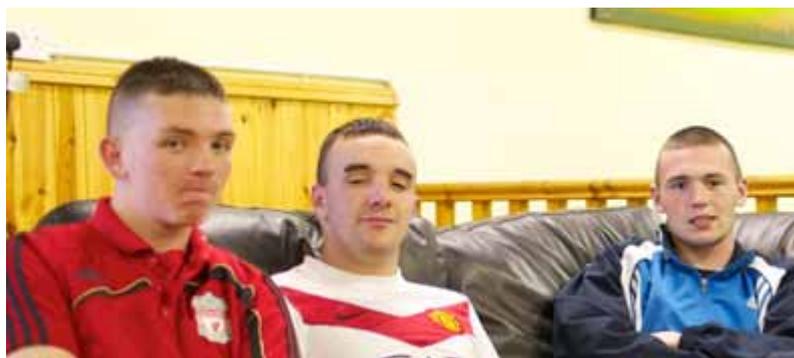
Artillery Youth Centre is a youth led project for young adults based in the New Lodge area of North Belfast. It is independent and works with marginalised groups including young parents, young offenders, youth at risk and school refusers. The key aim of the project is to foster a climate where innovative and creative work with children, young people and their families can be delivered.

Current work includes; the management of the New Lodge Area Project which works on a range of projects around the themes of employment, empowerment, education and poverty – this work includes the development of a number of social economy projects, a youth bank, an advice unit and a youth forum. We also manage Artillery Youth Centre which has a youth run cyber café, a drop in project and an outreach initiative. The Young Parents Project works with parents under the age of 25 and their dependents and the Youth Safety Project which addresses issues such as domestic violence and its effects on young people and the effects of violent and risk taking behaviours. We also manage the Hub which is a multimedia facility that has a video training project and a DJ school with training accredited by OCN.

We host a community based Youth bank which gives grants to young people throughout North Belfast which are assessed and managed by young adults. This work has been supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs, The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and Belfast City Council.

Artillery currently employs 8 staff and 14 volunteers and is the most visible and professional youth provision in the Greater New Lodge. Managed by a Steering Group of local people, the project engenders the participation and empowerment of young people. Our staff team are professionally qualified or in professional training and are from the New Lodge area.

Over the past **nine years** the key statistics are that:



70 young people completed driving lessons (62 have since passed their driving test)

182 young people undertook DJ skills training

108 young people completed the Youth Achievement Awards at Bronze Level

20 young mothers finished a course in Drugs Awareness

36 young people completed their emergency First Aid

222 young people participated in alternatives to violence training





12 young leaders took part in the Young Community Leaders Programme
230 young parents and 248 children took part in activities and programmes
112 residentials were completed as part of the programme
16 young people completed child safety in the home training
12 young people took part in an international exchange in South Africa
10 young people participated in an international programme in Slovakia
631 Young people have registered for the text messaging service
30 young adults used Artillery drop in facility on average daily during this period
1064 young people were targeted through outreach during this period
12 Young people completed their OCR in Computers
21 young people participated in Web design workshops

NLR youth magazine delivered to every household five times
103 Young people has joined the Youth Savings Union
922 young people have participated in consultation events
Young people have been involved in 20 major funding applications.
On average the centre has been open 65 hours per week during this period.
197 young people attended careers events at Artillery
22 young people have been employed by Artillery during this period.
163 young people have taken part in five GCSE revision schools.
7 public enquiries/youth juries have taken place.
9 young people have taken part in UK wide youth forums
32 young people have acted as grant assessors for the Youth Bank.
12 young people have gained childcare qualifications
6 members of staff have undertaken JNC youth worker training
85 young women have participated in the personal safety alarm project
44 youth projects have been supported by Artillery Youth Bank.
We have been involved in 10 major partnership programmes





Northside Youth Safety Partnership

The key aim of this project was to develop a model of work with young people to examine the nature of violence and to explore alternatives to it. This was conceived as a response initially to violence in the New Lodge/ Newington/ Tigers Bay interfaces. We were concerned that so many of the young men in the 15-19 age group who we worked got involved in recreational rioting and sectarian violence. We saw that many received injuries, had been arrested and had begun to see this behaviour as somehow normal and acceptable.

Initially we devised a workshop-based programme that attempted to address not only the nature of violence but also put in place practical responses to the effects of violence. This included teaching emergency first aid, bringing in a solicitor to talk about what to expect if they became involved with the criminal justice system and working through a series of sessions that examined what it meant to them to be a male.

The evaluation of this programme led to a further development of the programme during the year and we have since worked with mixed sex groups and young women alone. What became apparent was that casual violence was a big issue, whilst the programme was prompted by the street based sectarian violence; it was obvious that issues such as fighting in clubs, domestic violence and bullying were a greater concern for young people. We

completed a major piece of research into violence and young women (The findings can be found at the following address: <http://www.artilleryyouthcentre.org/research.pdf>) We have designed a ten week curriculum and have over the past three years delivered it eleven times involving 111 young people.



Over the past two years we have been involved in the delivery of pilot project that has set up a Youth Safety Partnership. The Partnership is a collective of young people, parents and locally based youth workers who have completed an audit of need, consulted with young people to determine responses to safety and well being issues for young people in the area and prioritised actions. The work of the Partnership has included the design and delivery of an internet safety programme aimed at parents and children to address bullying; a residents and young peoples initiative to improve the environmental concerns on a street by street basis; and a sports initiative to involve young people in a range of sports programmes and health drives.



The key achievements of the project over the past year are:

- 12 young people received an OCN level two qualification in positive and healthy relationship programme,
- 12 young people received an OCN level one qualification in domestic violence awareness.
- 440 local people participated in the Sports Festival with 52 separate events held during a two week period in August.
- 120 young women aged 17 and 18 years participated in safety initiative that piloted personal safety alarms with those young women who were socialising in the City Centre for the first time. As part of this programme we addressed issues around healthy relationships and personal safety.
- 210 young people from the Greater New Lodge participated in a series of workshops and events designed to create a Youth Safety Partnership in the area.
- The project linked up with a range of statutory agencies to address issues around youth safety in the area including the Youth Justice Agency, Queens University Belfast, Belfast City Council, The

Department of Social Development and the Belfast Education and Library Board.

- 20 young parents participated in a number of healthy relationship workshops delivered by the project during a young parents' conference.
- Over the past year we have worked directly with over 120 young people, young parents and community organisation, who have participated in focus groups, awareness training, surveys, study visits and policy making.
- 12 have undertaken the role of peer mentors and have worked with 8 groups of young people in the area.
- An attitudinal survey has been carried out with 250 local residents to measure the impact of the project on the attitudes of local people to personal safety.
- 30 young people from 4 schools participated in a Northern Ireland wide conference to look at youth safety issue







New Lodge Area Project

The New Lodge Area Project is supported by the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities Initiative. The key themes of the project are Poverty, Education, Employment and Empowerment. The past year has seen the project work with young people and agencies to identify and create projects and programmes for the benefit of all young people in this area. The projects and programmes that have been created are the Youth Savings Union, YouthBank, Easter GCSE Revision and Careers School, Youth Newsletter and Youth Information Service, the focus of the projects work this year has been to assist these projects become established and plan for their short-term future.

The Debt Management Project is a programme, which aims to address the problem of debt and the issues that can arise through this. Young people have completed their OCN levels one and two in money management.

The Youth Bank is a group of young people from across North Belfast who have secured funding to award groups of young people with small grants to assist them with their projects or ideas. The group has seen a change in personnel during the year but training for the new group members has taken place and to date more than £14000 has been distributed by the group in grants to other groups of young people in the area. The Youth Bank has supported Summer Programmes in Ligoneil and Ballysillan, Sporting Groups in the Shore Road and New Lodge, Cross Community initiatives through

North Belfast and residential programmes for young people of all ages.

The Youth Information Service comes in two forms; the first is a text messaging service with information being sent to young people's mobile phones on areas they have expressed interest in such as training and employment opportunities and events. The second is a digital media initiative that uses social media to contact young people and keep them informed of activities, opportunities and news on the project.

A significant strand of the work of the New Lodge Area Project over the past two years has been the building of a portfolio of training courses which are offered to young people throughout the area and further a field. We currently deliver OCN training in DJ skills (levels 1&2); Money Management (Level 1&2); Grant Making (1&2); Dangers of Drugs and Violence (level 2); Video Production (Level 1); Fundraising Skills (Level 1&2) and Healthy Lifestyles (level 1&2). We also accredit and assess a number of other training programmes including Outdoor Play Skills (levels 1&2) and Community Development (level 1.) Over the past year alone we have delivered accreditation to 140 young adults. We are currently developing new OCN programmes including Youth Work and Restorative Practice.

That we received funding for the project of over £200,000 from the Reaching Communities Initiative of the Big Lottery was testament to the far-sightedness of the New Lodge Area Project and its potential to bring real benefits to young people and the wider community. The key outcomes for the coming year include:



1. At least 80 young people will achieve enhanced educational qualifications this year
2. 16 long term unemployed young people and young parents will move into employment.
3. Two social economy initiatives will be supported by the project over the coming years.
4. A debt management initiative will be delivered and 100 young people will participate.



5. Five empowerment projects will be delivered including the youth jury scheme



Supported by BBC Children in Need, the Young Parents Project continued to deliver a range of services to parents and their children this past year. The work of the project included educational and advice services, programmes to reduce isolation and a range of initiatives to help with parenting skills and improve the lives of families in the New Lodge and surrounding areas. A summer scheme introduced children and parents to activities that ranged from educational to recreational.

Over the year we worked with more than 70 young parents and their children and helped to nurture an ethos of self help and sustainability. Highlights of the project included support for children transferring from primary to secondary schools, anti bullying



initiatives, a healthy eating programme and a continued emphasis on healthy relationships. During the year 32 young parents completed accredited training and parents were involved in a number of consultation events and programme planning.



The Youth Intervention Programme

Our **summer scheme** was funded by the BELB, Belfast City Council and The New Lodge Area Project, and operated from the start of July until the end of August 2010. The programme included outreach and detached work with young people aged 15 and up and involved a range of initiatives including 3 OCN training courses in DJ skills, Healthy Lifestyles and Dangers of Drink and Drugs.



The programme operated 6 days each week during this period and involved residentials in the Mourne Mountains. Activities included Watersports, Caving, Canoeing, Football, Bowling, Ice-skating, Bouldering, Climbing and Deep Sea Fishing. At the same time Artillery Drop in Centre was open throughout this period at nights and weekends offering internet access, multimedia facilities and a safe environment for young adults.

The **Point to Point** programme was supported by OFMDFM through Belfast City Council and was developed by Artillery Youth Centre to address interface violence and anti social behaviour. We identified Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons as

times when interface violence was more likely to take place. We targeted transport and staff resources at the three main interface areas; North Queen Street, Limestone Road and Clifton Street and we were able to work with a core group of young people who congregate at these areas and who were more likely to be at risk from interface violence.

In response to this the staff team – which included workers from Artillery, Newington and the Terry Enright Foundation delivered a programme of activities such as water sports, team building and outdoor activities. This programme had a significant impact across the whole community with a marked reduction in interface violence throughout the summer.

Importantly the staff involved was able to build relationships with young people and their families and to address the interface issues directly. It is fair to say that this programme has had the most significant impact on the relative peace on the interface this year (and last) of any initiative. The Point to Point programme was offered over a six week period, with more than 120 young people taking part.

Artillery Staff worked as volunteers on two separate family fun days (**Lark in the Park**) on the 12th July both of which were supported by Belfast City Council, the Big Lottery through the New Lodge Area Project and the Irish Youth Foundation. Artillery Young Mothers ran a fun day at North Queen Street Park and the New Lodge Youth Forum ran a family fun day at Alexandra Park. Both events were attended by hundreds of young people, parents and families and included the usual stage events, inflatables, barbeques, activities and games. Entirely staffed by volunteers both events were successful and contributed to a peaceful 12th day in both areas.

The Hub

The Hub is a community owned multimedia suite managed by Artillery Steering Group and based at Artillery Youth Centre. Funded in the main by a grant from the Urban 2 Programme, it delivers training to young people in a variety of disciplines including web-design, publishing, video production and DJ skills and music production.

Opened in January 2004, the facility boasts computer facilities, a video edit suite using Premiere Pro, a DJ training booth using Technics equipment, and a training room for work with groups. The Hub uses licensed software including Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia, Cubase, Pagemaker and Premiere Pro. With trained staff on site, the facility offers a base for multimedia work

with young people including publishing, video and music production, web design and DJ schools.

The New Lodge Area Project has used the Hub for the design and publication of its magazine NLR which is a youth oriented publication delivered to every household in the New Lodge and Newington Areas. The Young Parents Project has used the Hub for design of posters, flyers and publications.

The Hub has been used for the hosting and design of six websites. The Youth Information Project – a

youth programme managed by the New Lodge Youth Forum produce all their information at the Hub and a text messaging service which has 270 young adults aged 15-25 registered is based at the Hub. The Hub has also produced video projects for Groundwork NI and the Terry Enright Foundation.

In some ways the Hub has exceeded any expectations we had for it. The amount of usage has been remarkable and at times we have had to refuse groups because it is has been over subscribed. In other respects its original rationale





for the Urban programme that it would reduce anti social activity and have an impact of reducing interface tensions seems ambitious and difficult to quantify.

The Hub has been a useful tool in engaging with unattached young people. The Text Messaging Service and the DJ schools have been particularly relevant to this target group. The Youth Information Project has designed colourful posters and flyers at the Hub and this project has sought to reach out and inform all young people in the area. It has been a tremendous resource not only to Artillery Youth Centre but also to other groups in the area.

This year we received money from the Big Lottery through its Awards for All Programme to upgrade the equipment at the Hub so that the training, learning and opportunities on offer for young people remain state of the art.



The Youthbank
On-going development of the Youth Jury model.
Research projects included youth safety and young parents work



The key activities undertaken by the Youth Forum over the past year included:

Lark in the Park
The International Programme in Slovakia



The consensus was that the expert jury/ peoples court system could be a good way to involve young people in dialogue with voluntary, community and statutory bodies. The Youth Jury system has brought young people from the area into dialogue with a range of voluntary, statutory and community groups.

There has been a considerable interest in the method of involving young people in decision making and in having their say about issues of the day. The Juries have looked at contentious issues and the findings have provoked debate. One of the remarkable aspects of the youth jury system is that allows all and any young person to get involved and not just the usual most articulate and confident young people who tend to populate youth forums. The model was adopted by the Participation and Rights Project to look into issues surrounding the redevelopment of Girdwood.

Over the past year the Text messaging service has been successfully delivered. Members of the Youth Forum took part in a number of consultation events and workshops including the Interface Youth Project with the Terry Enright Foundation and work with the ICR and Bradford Programme.





The Year Ahead

Artillery Young Adult Drop in Centre

The Drop in Centre is open 7 days per week and six nights. In total Artillery Youth Centre is open to the public 65 hours per week. The Drop in opens until 11pm most nights and to midnight on other nights and is somewhere where young people can come to take part in training programmes; find out information; get help with official documents; get access to the internet through the Cyber Café; or just have a game of pool or a cup of tea. Artillery is a welcoming environment that is open to any young person in the New Lodge, Carrickhill or Newington areas aged 15-25 years.

The drop in centre is a neutral and safe environment for young adults where information on all the services available can be accessed. It is the one project that is most like a traditional youth service and yet the atmosphere is very distinct, the décor inviting and its focus on young adults unique.

The drop in centre provides a much needed resource in this community and receives no funding from any source.

We intend to deliver a wide range of programming in the coming year including the further development of the New Lodge Area Project, the Young Parents Project, the Youth Information Project, the 183 Project and to work in partnership with other groups such as Challenge for Youth, Umtapo, Include Youth, the Terry Enright Foundation and NI Alternatives. We will deliver a summer intervention programme; continue to contact young people through outreach, text messaging and face-to-face contact.

Our social economy projects over the coming year will, we hope, go some way towards sustainability for youth services and we are confident of our ability to innovate, work harder and smarter to ensure that we continue to deliver quality services to young adults in this community and further a field.

The coming year will see Artillery to continue to develop its educational programmes in response to the needs of young adults in this community. We expect to work more closely with secondary and primary schools that serve these areas and to further develop our range of educational programmes.

We are currently developing a programme aimed at young people not in education, training or employment (NEETs) and will continue to work with at risk young people and those subject to probation orders. We intend to further develop our work with young leaders and to pilot an initiative that will bring on board young people to undertake training and to accept positions of responsibility within the organisation.



Belfast City Council

Staff Profiles

Anna Marie Burns

Anna Marie has experience of working with young women and young parents. Anna Marie has been involved with Youth Forum and has been involved in the delivery of the Young People and Violence Programme and the OCN in grant making.



Billy McDonald

Billy is the longest serving employee of Artillery Youth Centre and has a range of experience and qualifications in community youth work including outreach, group work skills and RSA. He is currently involved in the New Lodge Area Project. Billy also works for Extern's Pathways Project.



Harry Murphy

Employed as a Senior Youth Worker by Artillery for the past seven years. A graduate in Community Youth Work from St Martins College, Harry has 20 years experience in youth work and has worked in both the Statutory and Voluntary Sector. He has been centrally involved in the design of the Youth Safety Partnership model and is involved with several initiatives aimed at re-designing the model of work with young people.



Dervla Skelly

Is a qualified youth worker and is currently employed through the Young Parents Project. She has been employed by Artillery for nine years and a range of qualifications and experience from detached and outreach to advice and advocacy work with young people.



Cathy Valente

Currently completing the Diploma in Community Youth Work with the University of Ulster, Cathy has worked as a youth outreach worker and is currently employed as a youth worker with the Domestic Violence Project. Cathy has been involved in the design



and delivery of the Young People and Violence Project and has a diploma in community development alongside her youth work qualifications.

Ciara Maskey

Ciara worked as a youth support worker this past year. Ciara has volunteered on a number of projects and has worked on consultation events with young people and has been involved in the Youth Safety Project and the Youth Bank over the past year.



Hugh Armstrong

Hugh is a qualified youth worker having attained his diploma in Community Youth Work from George Williams YMCA. Hugh has worked on a variety of projects in the past including the Two Parks Project and with the Terry Enright Foundation. He currently works as a part time youth worker with Artillery and is supported by the Probation Board.



Patricia Breen

Patricia is a JNC qualified youth worker who has worked for the WELB as a detached youth worker and was employed as a programme manager on IFI Wider Horizons Programmes for a number of years. Patricia has a wealth of experience and has managed both youth centres and an outdoor education centre. Patricia works on the Young Parents Project.



Artillery Steering Group

Artillery Youth Centre is managed by a local young people and past and current users of the services available at the Centre. There are a range of skills and experience amongst the Steering Group which has maintained a fierce independence for Artillery over the years.

Cheva Hawkins – Chairperson
John Magee – Treasurer
Ann Wilson – Secretary
Tracey Alsopp
Danny Maitland
Gail Saunders
Michael O'Reilly
Christopher Hughes
Patrick Harmon
Joanne Skelly