

## **Belfast City Council's Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15**

1. In October 2012, Belfast City Council published its Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–16. Its vision is that “By 2020, everyone in Belfast experiences and is inspired by our city’s diverse and distinctive culture and arts. Arts and heritage are valued for enriching quality of life and creating wealth, and the city’s culture and creativity is renowned throughout the world.”
2. The Cultural Framework was developed following extensive consultation with the sector and other stakeholders, and it has been positively received.
3. Actions in the Cultural Framework are arranged under four key themes:
  - a. **Distinctly Belfast:** This theme is about creating and supporting high-quality art that reflects Belfast’s unique character; is culturally relevant and resonates with our residents, their interests and tastes; and attracts and nurtures artistic talent.
  - b. **Inspiring communities:** When we were developing the strategy, Councillors and other stakeholders told us that the people of Belfast must be at its heart and that everyone in the city must have the opportunity to engage with high-quality arts. However, some people and communities are harder to reach and are less likely to engage with the arts. This theme is about providing opportunities for and removing barriers to participation, including among priority groups such as young people, older people, disabled people, minority ethnic communities and people living in areas of disadvantage.
  - c. **Attracting audience:** One of the most critical challenges for the cultural sectors is to engage with, retain and develop audiences. This theme aims to increase both local and visiting audiences for the arts and promote Belfast as a dynamic, creative and cultural city.
  - d. **Strengthening the sector:** The market alone will never wholly support the arts sector, which is one of the reasons it relies on public subsidy. However, the sector is peopled with enthusiastic and inventive fundraisers who work hard to sustain and grow their businesses. This theme is about working with the sector to share knowledge, expertise and opportunities to diversify income streams.
4. Key outcomes we will achieve under the Framework include:
  - a. Participants will have an increased sense of community and civic pride
  - b. Participants will have an increased understanding of other cultures and communities
  - c. Belfast will be a more engaged and active city
  - d. Everyone in Belfast will be aware of Belfast’s diverse culture, arts and heritage offer
  - e. We will have a strong, multifaceted arts and heritage infrastructure across the city
5. The Cultural Framework makes clear that the Council funds the arts because they improve quality of life and have an economic dividend, making Belfast a better, more prosperous and successful city to live in, work in and visit. However, there needs to be recognition of both the instrumental and intrinsic benefits of the arts to ensure that, as noted in the research paper, “Examining social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland”, policy is not detrimental to artistic quality.

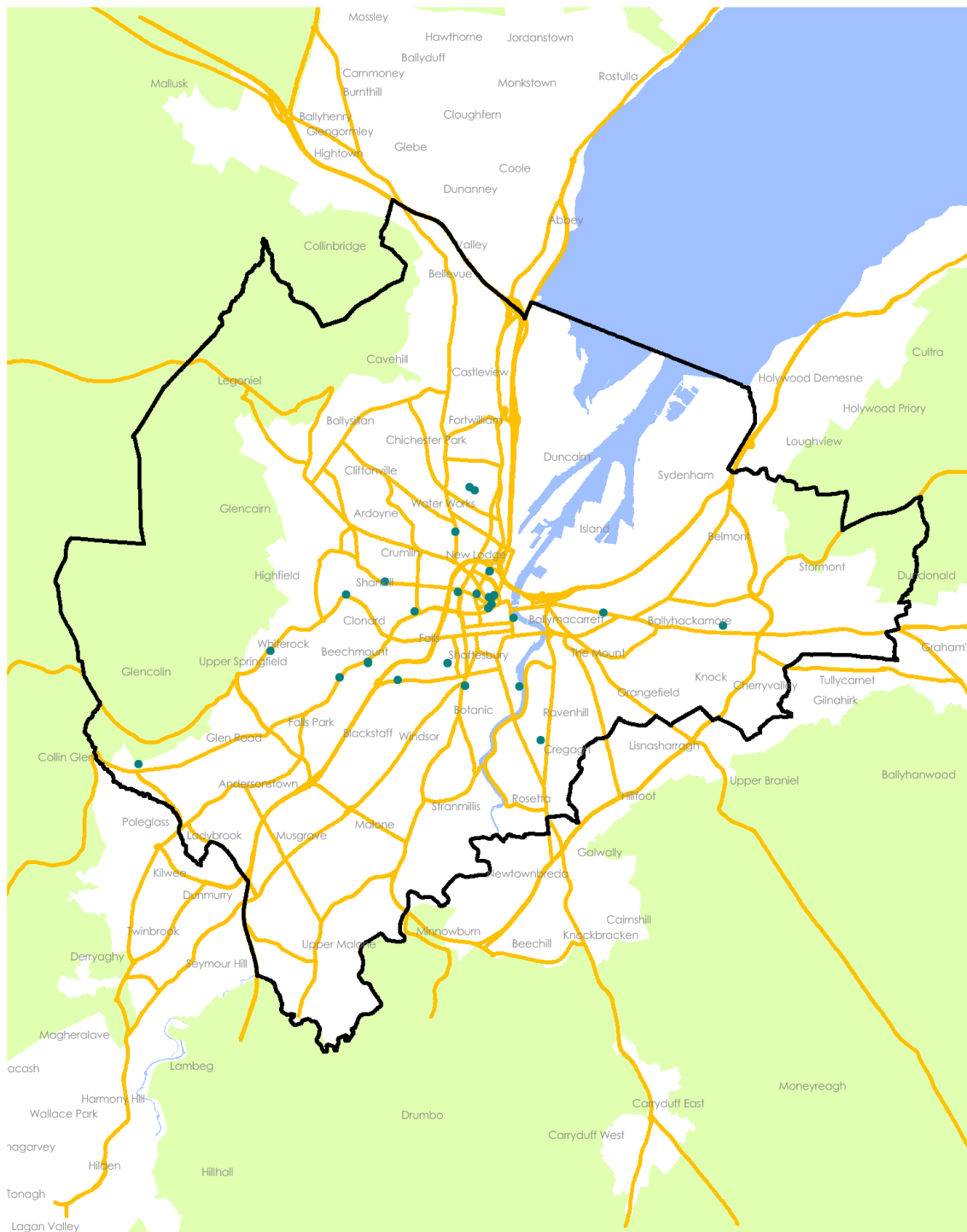
6. The Council considers that high-quality arts is also likely to have the greatest instrumental impact, which is reflected in our core values of quality and equality and embedded in our funding processes. Different arts organisations have different aims, priorities and areas of expertise, creating a strong, multifaceted arts sector. Our funding encourages organisations to work to their strengths, whether this is inspiring communities, attracting audiences or strengthening the sector, rather than a blanket approach that requires all arts organisations to address all agendas.

### **Belfast City Council Arts Funding**

7. Under the Cultural Framework, Belfast City Council's Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit invests in the arts through three main funding schemes. Core multi-annual funding provides 52 Belfast-based organisations with funding to support their core programme of activities over three years. Project funding provides funding of up to £10,000 per organisation per year for one-off Belfast-based activities. Community festivals funding, which is match funded by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), provides up to £10,000 per festival for community-based festivals.
8. In 2013/14, the sector benefitted from an increase in this funding of over 25 per cent, bringing the Council's investment to £4.5m over three years. This funding currently attracts an average annual audience of 4 million and supports 140,000 participants, 300 full-time jobs, 130 part-time posts and 4,000 artists' contracts.
9. However, all Council's funding schemes are oversubscribed. Only a third of applications for project and community festivals funding are successful, and the amount of funding requested is almost five times the amount available.
10. The "Examining social inclusion" paper notes that in some areas of deprivation in Belfast, residents are more than two miles away from a dedicated arts venue "which are mostly located in the city centre". There are a number of major arts or multi-use arts and community venues, such as Cúlurlann and the Spectrum Centre, which are outside the city centre but do not feature on the maps in section 2.7 of the research paper. Notably, while there may not be venues on every doorstep, there are arts organisations spread throughout the city, as shown in figure 1 below, which shows the location of Belfast City Council core multi-annual funded clients.



12. However, the location of arts organisations does not always correspond with the location of participants and audience. All core funded organisations would have a catchment area greater than one ward, and many organisations have at least a citywide catchment.
13. All organisations applying for funding from Belfast City Council are also given an opportunity to demonstrate how they inspire communities. While the amount of and approach to outreach work varies across organisations, it is estimated that 87 per cent of funded clients programme outreach and audience development activity, accounting for 94 per cent of the funding budget. This includes 31 per cent of funded organisations which could be classified as participatory arts, including community arts, which have access and participation at their core.
14. Therefore, while the “Examining social inclusion” research paper notes that lack of transport may be a barrier to attendance among disadvantaged communities, some Belfast arts organisations have already responded by providing free community buses to bring people to their events. Other organisations employ targeted marketing, for example, through local community centres, leisure centres, libraries and businesses, or others develop arts projects designed for and by the target community to develop a sense of belonging and ownership. Further examples of these can be found under the Best Practice section below.
15. Similarly, figure 2 below demonstrates the spread of festivals funded through the community festivals fund. Community festivals fund provides funding for festivals that are designed for or by geographic communities or communities of interest.
16. Community festivals fund is one of the Council’s most oversubscribed funds and many more festivals are run across the city without this funding, as indicated by the Belfast Festivals Forum membership of over 100. Often community festivals are not run by arts organisations and happen outside non-arts venues, reinforcing the need to include wider arts activity, including voluntary and community arts, in the research.
17. Figure 2: Location of community festivals funded through Community Festivals Funding



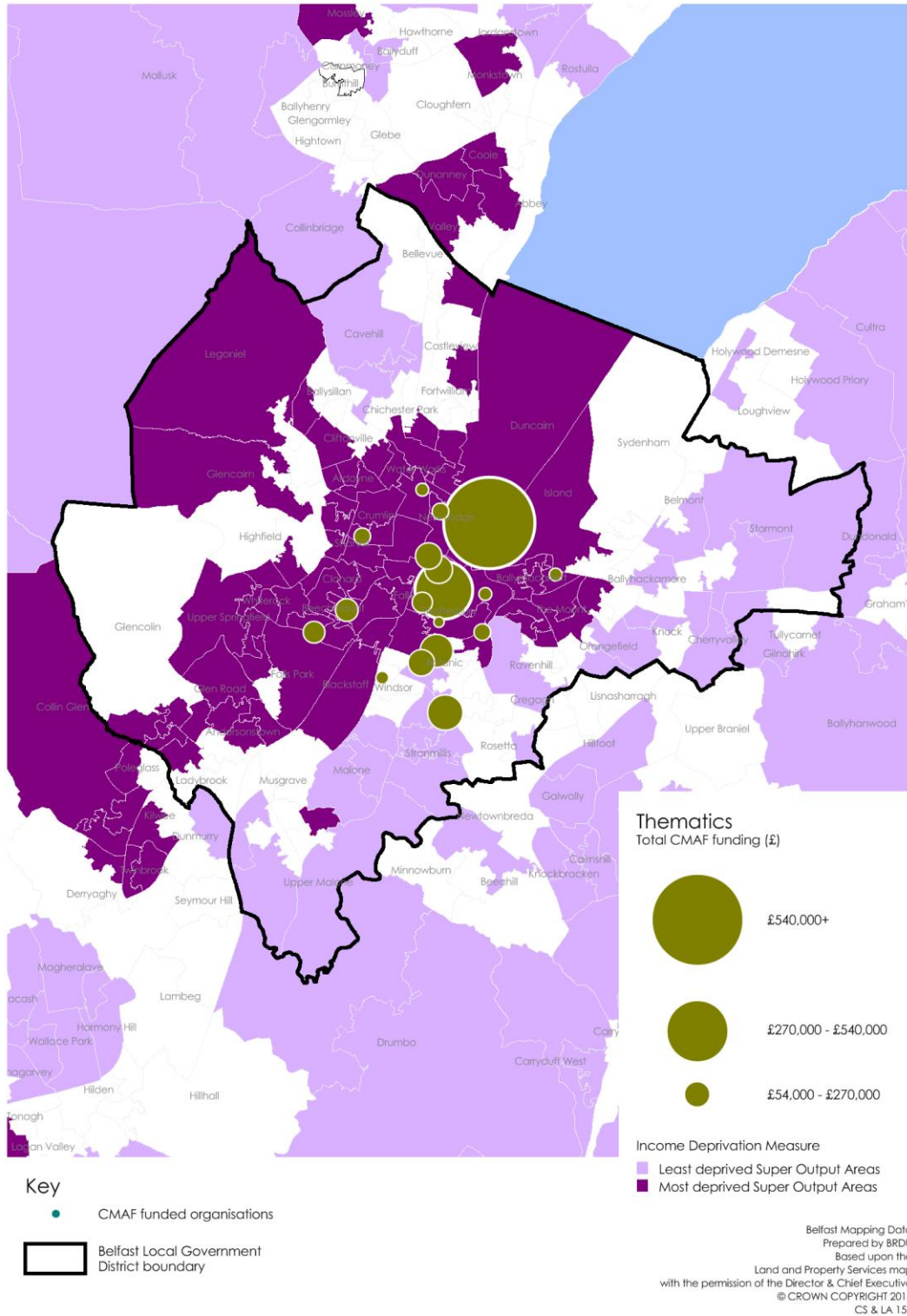
Belfast Mapping Data  
 Prepared by BRDU  
 Based upon the  
 Land and Property Services map  
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18. Figures 3 and 4 below show the amount of funding awarded by income deprivation measure. In agreement with the findings of the “Examining social inclusion” research paper, the majority of Belfast City Council arts funding is

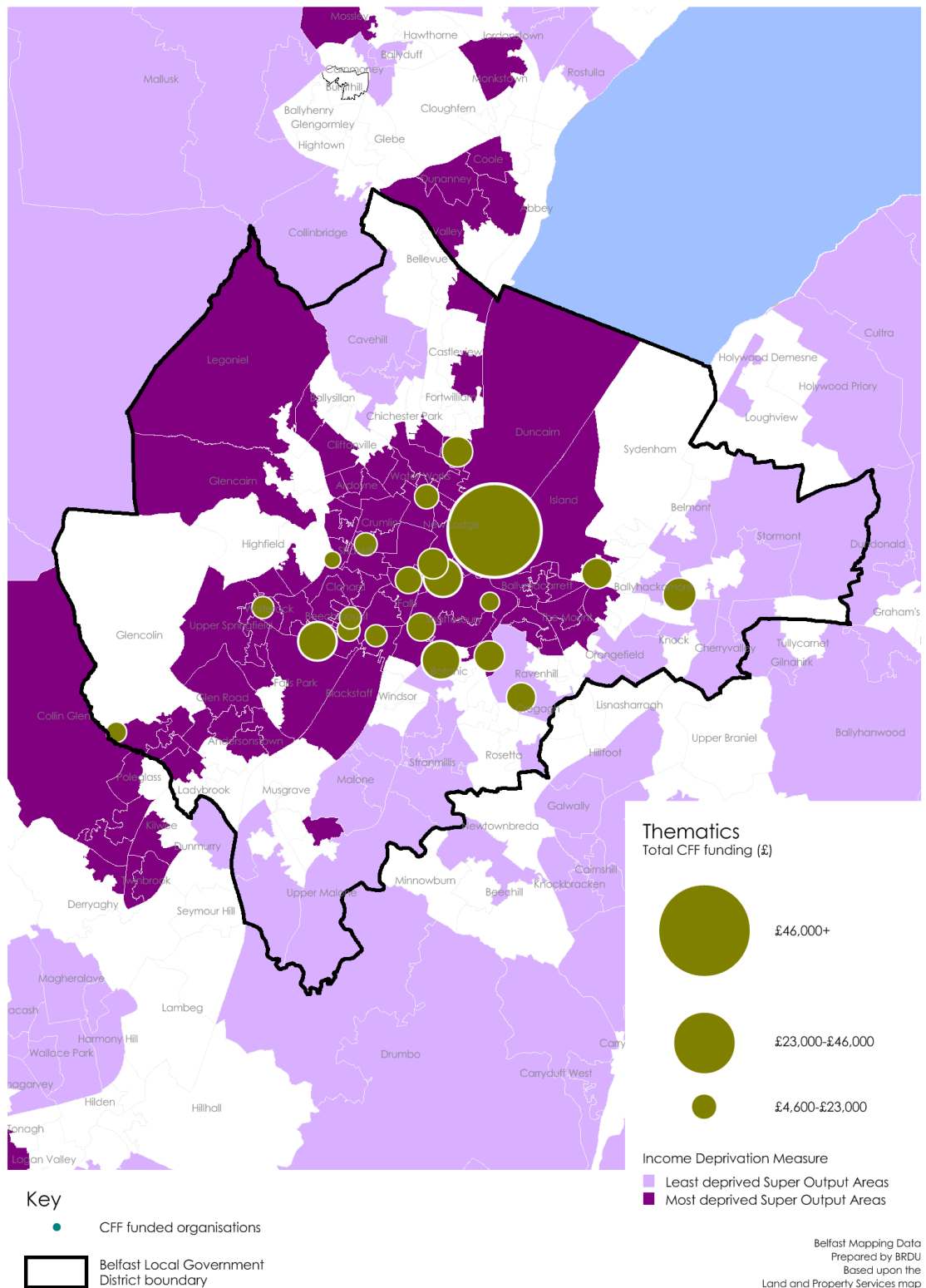
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invested in to areas that could be described as disadvantaged.

19. Figure 3: Amount of Core Multi-annual Funding Awarded by Income Deprivation Measure



20. Figure 3: Amount of Community Festival Funding Awarded by Income Deprivation Measure



21.

## **Other Council Support for Arts**

22. Arts is also supported and used by other Council Departments. The Parks and Leisure Department facilitates a wide range of events across its venues, parks and leisure centres, including through its small grants scheme. An analysis of events held in all parks across the city from January 2010 to June 2013 shows that 4 per cent of them were classified as cultural festivals or art exhibits and that 6 per cent of them were organised by arts/cultural groups or the museum.
23. The Department has also worked with local community arts group to develop murals and other pieces of public art in parks including the Waterworks, Falls and Ormeau parks. Finally, the Music in the Parks initiative, held in park bandstands, is very popular in the summer months, with a range of bands providing outdoor performances for free.
24. Given the spread of parks and leisure centres across the city, their accessibility to many neighbourhoods and their familiarity to a wide range of social groups, parks are well placed to promote inclusion in the arts.
25. The Good Relations Unit also supports arts activity, usually outside dedicated arts venues. This includes local street festivals by 45 community groups within working-class neighbourhoods to promote the positive expression of their cultural heritage around bonfires, including some artistic programming. Good Relations grant funding has also supported a large number of arts organisations to develop programmes of activity that promote equality and good relations and help transform Belfast in to a city that is shared by all.
26. The City Events Unit deliver an annual programme of civic events, including St Patrick's Day, the Lord Mayor's Day and an Easter festival, as well one-off events Tall Ships, World Police and Fire Games and Giro D'Italia. Most of these events include artistic programming and engage a diverse range of community groups from across the city. Research indicates that there is substantiate input from working class areas with approximately 50 per cent of attendees coming from lower economic groupings.

## **Other Evidence for Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities**

27. The "Examining social inclusion" research paper highlights that there is little "hard" evidence of a direct causal link between cultural engagement and greater social inclusion.
28. The Council currently gathers a range of evidence and has carried out a variety of research. This includes an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Cultural Framework for Belfast, based in part on monitoring and evaluation reports supplied by funded organisations. The EQIA includes a full assessment of the potential equality impacts on people in each of the S75 categories, considers whether the potential impacts are likely to be positive or negative, and makes recommendations for actions to remove or reduce potential adverse impacts. The EQIA report found that there is likely to be no adverse differential impact between people of different religious belief or political opinion; racial group; marital status; sexual orientation; men and women generally; or people with or without dependents. However, in keeping with the "Examining social inclusion" research report, the EQIA found that



older people and disabled people are less likely to engage with the arts.

29. Each year, the Council also commissions a Belfast Audience Audit from Audiences NI, which is a city-specific audit of Belfast audiences similar to the NI-wide Audience Review cited in the “Examining social inclusion” research paper. However, it is important to note that Audiences NI’s research is based on ticket sales from organisations with a box office system connected to Audiences NI. Across NI, this is a total of 28 organisations. In Belfast, this is 15 organisations, including the Council’s Waterfront and Ulster halls and Visit Belfast, formerly the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau.
30. Many of the organisations included in the audit also provide activities, such as workshops and outreach events, which are less likely to be ticketed, but more likely to be targeted at priority groups. Such events and activities may create pathways to long-term arts attendance, helping in turn to grow audiences for ticketed events and venues. However, this requires more longitudinal research.
31. The Council also provides core funding to a further 40 cultural organisations which provide a wealth of activity that is neither ticketed nor linked to the Audiences NI system. Indeed, during the consultation on the Cultural Framework for Belfast, the arts sector felt strongly that this pattern was not replicated across the arts sector as a whole and more holistic research would show the full extent of penetration in to different areas and communities.
32. In response to this need for more holistic research, the Council committed in the Cultural Framework to developing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework which would capture the social and economic impact of arts in Belfast. This framework is still being developed in partnership with the arts sector and other stakeholders, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) and DCAL. However, it is likely to include indicators of social inclusion, such as perceptions of community identity, pride and resilience; levels of participation, social engagement and commitment; social interaction and use of social networks; social cohesion; and control and self-efficacy.
33. With the caveats noted above, the Belfast Audience Audit shows that, on average, a minimum of 25 per cent of the households in each electoral ward had booked for the arts at one of the venues included in the report between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013. The breakdown of individual wards is as follows:
  - Shankill, Woodvale and Crumlin wards had less than 10 per cent of their households book for the arts
  - Seventeen wards (Glencairn, New Lodge, Whiterock, Ardoyne, The Mount, Blackstaff, Clonard, Ballymacarrett, Upper Springfield, Falls, Water Works, Beechmount, Legoniel, Duncairn, Woodstock, Ballysillan, Glencolin) had between 10 and 20 per cent of their households booking for the arts
  - Sixteen wards (Island, Highfield, Bellevue, Cliftonville, Falls Park, Bloomfield, Glen Road, Sydenham, Andersonstown, Ladybrook, Shaftesbury, Castleview, Fortwilliam, Botanic, Knock, Chichester Park) had between 20 and 30 per cent of their households booking for the arts

- Nine wards (Upper Malone, Orangefield, Windsor, Musgrave, Belmont, Ballyhackamore, Cherryvalley, Ballynafeigh, Finaghy) had between 30 per cent and 40 per cent of their households booking for the arts
  - Four wards (Ravenhill, Cavehill, Rosetta and Stormont) had between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of their households booking for the arts
  - Malone and Stranmillis wards had more than 50 per cent of their households booking for the arts
34. Finally, the Council also carries out an independent evaluation of specific projects. In 2013, this included evaluations to two PEACE III-funded programmes, Creative Legacies and City of Festivals, where target beneficiaries were defined as “areas where relationships have been significantly affected by sectarianism, racism, division or conflict – sectarian interface areas; disadvantaged areas suffering effects of physical dereliction; areas experiencing high levels of sectarian and racial crimes incidents and tensions; areas in decline due to lack of inward investment; areas where development has been inhibited by the conflict.”
35. The evaluation found evidence causal link between cultural engagement and greater social inclusion:
36. “As a result of the Programme delivery, outreach projects have affected attitudinal change in participants including an increased awareness of and a willingness to engage with culture and arts activities, a willingness to go outside of their own area and in cross-community working, an increase in respect and understanding between generations and cultures, increased knowledge of the history of their communities and a willingness to share their experiences.
37. “Projects have also been successful in taking the first step to challenging attitudes of sectarianism and racism amongst participants. Exposing individuals to arts activities and building relationships based on their shared interests have been successful in challenging attitudes.”

### **Examples of good practice in accessibility and outreach work**

#### **38. City of Festivals**

39. The City of Festivals II programme was a Peace III-funded audience development initiative delivered by Belfast City Council between April 2012 and September 2013. It provided £300,000 of funding to festival providers for activities that engaged with new and underrepresented audiences and participants, reaching a total of 214,275 beneficiaries.
40. Outcomes achieved by the festival projects included attracting new audiences in support of the core festival activities; increased accessibility and awareness of the arts; reduced sectarianism and racism through raising cultural awareness; and the creation of shared cultural resources and spaces.
41. Key learning identified by festival providers included the importance of taking time to build a relationship with the target audience; involving participants in shaping events; outreach delivery at a time that suits the participants; providing incentives to attend (such as accredited training); and the need to

be flexible in how projects were delivered.

42. A list of City of Festivals projects is included at appendix 1.

43. Creative Legacies

44. The Creative Legacies II programme was a Peace III-funded audience development and outreach initiative delivered by Belfast City Council between November 2012 and September 2013. The programme provided £300,000 of funding to consortia of arts and community organisations to deliver activities that promoted equality of access to the arts. The 11 consortia projects engaged a total of 1,508 from targeted communities and reached a total audience of 16,600, culminating in a showcase in City Hall in September.

45. Outcomes achieved by the outreach projects included challenging existing behaviours and stereotypes leading to a better understanding of 'others'; increased involvement in community life; cross-community and inter-community working; increased accessibility and awareness of the arts; increased self-confidence through involvement and skills developed leading to enhanced employability; and leaving a legacy for future developmental work in the areas targeted.

46. A list of Creative Legacies projects is included at appendix 2.

47. Creative and Cultural Belfast including Development and Outreach

48. In September 2013, Belfast City Council launched a new landmark new fund for arts and heritage projects called the Creative and Cultural Belfast fund.

49. Belfast is a dynamic, diverse and unique city and having a dynamic, diverse and unique culture is vital for its success. It improves our quality of life by creating a shared, welcoming and proud city. It inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and others.

50. However, some people and communities are less likely to take part in culture and arts than others due to lack of economic opportunity, educational achievement or other barriers.

51. Working with ACNI, Belfast City Council developed the Creative and Cultural Belfast to challenge social exclusion by providing everyone in Belfast with the opportunity to experience high-quality culture, arts and heritage.

52. Applications must demonstrate how projects will support the Cultural Framework's Distinctly Belfast and Inspiring communities themes and be:

- a. cross-community – by which we mean, brings together people from different cultural and religious backgrounds
- b. cross-city – by which we mean brings together people from different parts of the city
- c. delivered in partnership between cultural and community organisations
- d. benefit hard-to-reach areas and communities, by which we mean people who are less likely to participate in culture and arts due to social, economic or other barriers

53. Most public funding is tied to one financial year. However, this level of partnership working and community engagement requires a more sustained delivery time. For this reason, projects can run for between a maximum of 18 months and three years.
54. This type of engagement work can also be expensive. For this reason, the maximum level of funding available was £300,000 or 12 times the value of the largest project grant previously offered by the Council.
55. However, the Creative and Cultural Belfast fund was heavily oversubscribed, and we received a number of high-quality project proposals that we could not fund. Only 1 in 4 applications have been recommended for funding, and applicants requested four times the value of the funding available.
56. The fund is due to reopen again in April 2015 with a reduced level of funding available.
57. Inspiring communities action plan
58. The Council is currently developing an action plan to further deliver on the Cultural Framework's Inspiring communities theme, which aims to remove barriers to participation; develop shared cultural space, celebrating and promoting local cultures and communities; and target areas and communities with low levels of engagement.
59. Actions to be included under this action plan include:
- Support for communications, networking and training for community and community arts organisations in partnership with Community Arts Partnership
  - Support for Test Drive the Arts, which offers free tickets to new audiences
  - Development of a community ticketing scheme to encourage community groups to attend arts events. This is based on a best practice model developed by the Waterfront Hall, which works with event promoters to offer tickets to registered community groups.

60. Attracting audiences action plan

61. The Council is currently developing an action plan to further deliver the Cultural Framework's Attracting audiences theme. Over the past five years we have invested heavily in cultural infrastructure. Now we must ensure there is demand to meet supply, but engaging, retaining and developing audiences is one of the most critical challenges facing the sector today. This theme aims to increase the number of residents and visitors taking part and promote Belfast as a diverse and dynamic cultural city.
62. Actions to be included under this action plan include a five-a-year campaign to raise awareness of the wealth of arts activity available and to encourage people to engage more frequently. We will ensure that all actions under Attracting audiences consider the needs of target groups, including people and communities in disadvantaged areas.

**Recommendations for improvements in policies, delivery mechanisms and collaboration among key stakeholders**

63. Arts and culture should be promoted by statutory bodies and agencies on an equitable basis across all working class areas of the city.
64. Policy and funding should recognise that different arts organisations have different aims, priorities and areas of expertise, while different art forms appeal to a diverse range of people and communities. A diverse sector is also a strong, vibrant and sustainable sector.
65. Policy should also be based on sound evidence, and if working class communities are to be targeted, there needs to be further research demonstrating need as well as a clear definition of the target group. This research should look at the sector holistically and take in to account diverse audiences for non-ticketed activities and in non-traditional arts venues. Steps should be taken to acknowledge and build on the work of voluntary and community-based arts, cultural and musical organisations which operate at a localised level in Belfast.
66. Any interventions should also be based on best practice and targeted at those organisations that are best placed to make a difference, but not to the detriment of the wider arts sector. Any funding, in particular, should be additional to the current investment, rather than make an already stretched sector do more on existing resources. Measures should be implemented and supported at a localised level to promote indigenous culture.
67. Sound research also has the potential to advocate for the sector. The sector is already working hard to attract new audiences and inspire diverse communities, and there should be recognition of the excellent work already being carried out. We would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with the Department to implement the Council's monitoring and evaluation framework, which will capture the social and economic impact of arts in the city.
68. Similarly, there is already a wealth of arts activity already programmed across the city. We need to make sure that all our residents and visitors are aware of these opportunities and work together to encourage strategic, joined-up marketing.
69. More funding could be made available to support outreach and audience development initiatives, reactive to any disproportional impacts highlighted by research. Initiatives targeting underrepresented audiences are often resource heavy and funding should be commensurate. In particular, it is not guaranteed that PEACE IV funding will be open to or secured for projects such as Creative Legacies or City of Festivals, which will leave a vacuum unless other public subsidy can be levered.
70. Such projects also benefit from both longer-term development and evaluation. Community groups are sometimes concerned that approaches from arts organisations are tokenistic, while arts organisations are concerned that genuine, sustainable partnerships cannot be built within a one-year funding cycle. Benefits may also not be realised until several years in to a project, and we would welcome more longitudinal arts research.

## **Appendix 1: City of Festivals Projects**

### **Arts Ekta**

The organisation sought to deliver a targeted outreach programme in support of the three large festivals, Belfast Mela, Diwali & Samhain and the Festival of Colours. The outreach targeted under-represented groups including women, young people, LGBT, Irish language communities, the Roma and Chinese communities and was successful in engaging with 128 participants. In addition, the project provided the opportunity for 60 volunteers and two work placements.

### **Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival**

The Reels on Wheels project sought to engage with older people from deprived areas of the city as a group that had been identified as being underrepresented in existing festival activities. This was delivered using a Cinemobile and an Open Source pop-up venue in Donegall Street. Activities included 10 film screenings, reminiscence sessions and showcasing the work of community groups throughout the festival.

### **Crescent Arts Centre**

The Crescent Arts Centre sought to create a culture of reading through the establishment of 10 book clubs at community centres, primarily across north and west Belfast in areas of deprivation. The clubs met for 10 months and read a title selected by the group. Participants were encouraged to attend events at the Belfast Book Festival with discounted tickets offered to participants and their friends and families. Facilitated book clubs have continued to be delivered following the initial outreach period.

### **Culture Night**

In support of Culture Night 2012, new audiences were targeted from deprived areas by providing workshops to encourage involvement and to bring individuals into the city centre in the week prior to the festival. Groups were encouraged to showcase their work, companion tours were delivered to bring escorted groups to the festival, with a community mural created in Buoys Park. More than 900 individuals participated in these activities, with many attending Culture Night itself.

### **Féile an Phobail**

Féile Unplugged targeted young people from nationalist, unionist and minority ethnic communities in west Belfast. Training was provided in a range of disciplines including media skills, production and event management. The 113 young people trained then delivered Féile Unplugged over three days during the both the Féile festival in August 2012 and the Draíocht Young People's Festival in April 2013. More than 5,000 young people attended these events with delivery at venues including the grounds of City Hall. Féile Unplugged will continue to be delivered in future Féile festivals.

### **Festival of Fools**

This project sought to attract new audiences to the main festival in 2012 and 2013 through targeted outreach. The activities were successful in engaging with 191 participants and 1,925 additional audience members, including women, children, young and older people, with a high percentage of these from the top 25 per cent most deprived super output areas.

**Orangefest**

The aim of the project was to increase the number and range of individuals in the city centre on the Twelfth of July 2012 and 2013. Working with Belfast City Centre Management, the project sought to ensure shops and businesses would be open on a day when they would be traditionally closed. Children's workshops and cookery demonstrations were also delivered in the grounds of City Hall.

**Pride**

Pride sought to increase the attendance at its annual Belfast Pride event by targeted outreach at underrepresented groups including women and young people. These activities were delivered in conjunction with Here NI, the WOW Group and the Gay Ethnic Group. This led to growth in festival activity to more than 50,000 individuals in 2013.

**The Beat**

The Urban Ballet project sought to engage with over 100 young people from across Belfast in art-based activities and workshops. Engaging with arts professionals in rap and hip hop, lyric writing, choreography and music making, the young people were also dancers or drummers in the Made in Belfast Carnival 2013.

**Young at Art**

This project targeted women and children under 14 in the Shankill, Woodvale and Highfield areas as they had been identified as having low arts participation. Activities resulted in 947 children being accessed through working with 11 schools. In support of the work, a companion manual, DVD and prop boxes were created to assist with future delivery, with training provided for teachers to assist with this.

## **Appendix 2: Creative Legacies Projects**

### **Arts for All: The Edward Carson Drama and Summer School**

Partners: The Dean Clarke Foundation, Tiger's Bay Historical Society, Tiger's Bay Men's Group; Basement Youth Club, Crosswires Women's Group

This project explored the life and impact of Edward Carson using a single identity development approach to promote understanding of local history. The project has included historical and creative writing workshops, photography training, a walking tour of North Belfast, the creation of a drama, *My Duncairn Diary*, and a participant-led visit to Dublin. *My Duncairn Diary* has been staged at the summer school, the East Belfast Arts Festival, in Crumlin Road Gaol as a part of Culture Night and at the Creative Legacies showcase in City Hall.

### **Arts Ekta: Belfast Suitcase Stories**

Partners: Northern Visions, Cara Friend, Belfast Islamic Centre, An Droichead; Over 50s Indian Senior Citizens Group

This project sought to engage with hard-to-reach individuals from minority ethnic, LGBT and cross-community backgrounds who are resident in deprived areas. Workshops created a series of 'suitcase' art pieces that have been displayed at events including Mela, Pride, the Ulster Museum, Conway Mill, the Spectrum Centre and the Creative Legacies showcase. The suitcases will be exhibited in the City Hall again in April 2014.

### **The Beat Initiative: Belfast Big Drums**

Partners: Féile an Phobail, Wandsworth Community Association

This project sought to redefine the perception of the Bodhran and Lambeg drums and turn them into positive, shared cultural symbols. Working cross-community, participants created Lambeg, Bodhran and Alfaia drums and decorated them for the theme 'Voices of the City'. A new piece of music was created and taught to 46 participants. This musical piece has been performed at Wandsworth Carnival in June, Féile parade in August, as a part of Culture Night in September 2013 and the Creative Legacies showcase event.

### **Beyond Skin: World of Music, Art and Dance (WOMAD) Outreach Programme**

Partners: Walkway Community Association, Pobal, WOMAD, T13, Releasing Rhythms

This project sought to engage young people from across Belfast who would not normally have access to creative arts in a series of facilitated workshops to develop a wider cultural understanding. More than 50 workshops have taken place involving more than 200 children and 35 adults from 10 community groups. Participants performed at the Skainos Centre as a part of the East Belfast Arts Festival and at the Creative Legacies showcase.

### **Kabosh Theatre Company: Celebrating Belfast**

Partners: Northern Visions, Shankill Women's Centre, Spectrum Centre, Féile an Phobail, Belfast Festival at Queen's



This project was the first stage of a larger project as part of the Belfast Festival at Queen's. Activities delivered included the creation of an intergenerational oral archive; 6 workshops delivered to the Shankill area local history group on developing a script for and delivering a guided tour; delivery of tours in the Shankill area; 4 professional 5-minute drama productions to animate the tour; and contribution to the development of an app on the 'streets of Belfast'.

### **New Lodge Arts: Temporary Places**

Partners: Skegoneill and Glandore Common Purpose, Paragon Studios (PS<sup>2</sup>)

This project has used temporary or pop-up spaces in the New Lodge (an empty shop) and on the Glandore/Skegoneill interface (a shipping container). The spaces have been used for activities facilitated by eight artists, including model making and drawing classes. The activities have been filmed to tell the story of the project, and there are plans to continue utilising the spaces beyond the project.

### **Open Arts: Several Stories High**

Partners: Aspen (subsidiary of NIAMH), Conway Education Centre

This project sought to use intergenerational reminiscence workshops to gather information on the streets where participants first lived and where they live now. The information gathered has been used to create a musical composition and visual art. The performance has been recorded and is now available online.

### **Prime Cut Productions: The People's Choir**

Partners: Open Arts, Outburst Queer Arts Festival, Knocknagoney Parent and Toddler Group, Ardoyne Women's Group

This project worked with 200 participants drawn from 10 community groups located in areas of multiple deprivation. They created musical compositions and songs based on their experiences of living in a post-conflict society. The resulting compositions formed a part of *The Conquest of Happiness* theatre production, which toured Europe.

### **Spectrum Centre: Crimea Square**

Partners: Y.E.S.S. Performing Arts Group, Green Shoot Productions

This project looked at the last 101 years of history through 12 watershed moments to illustrate how the Shankill and surrounding areas are a mixed community with a shared and culturally diverse history. Fifty-six participants representing 4 community groups took part in activities including 22 workshops with playwrights and creative directors, a script read-through and the production of a DVD. Crimea Square won the Audiences Award at Belfast Festival at Queen's 2013.

### **Workers Education Association: Whispering Belfast**

Partners: Ulster Museum, Forthspring Inter Community Group, The Vine Centre

This project sought to provide a voice for those that have not had their voices heard in either the past or present. Using Theatre of Witness techniques, including facilitated creative writing, drama and arts, participants created 14 Belfast puppets and an audio narrative of their experiences. The puppets have been exhibited at the Ulster Museum, Crumlin Road Gaol and community centres.

**YouthAction NI: Community Voices**

Partners: Greater Village Regeneration Trust, Upper Springfield Development Trust, Wave Trauma Centre

This project targeted young people from deprived areas across Belfast who would not otherwise have access to performing arts. Fifty-one young people engaged in a 20-week arts training project culminating in the performance of three 30-minute theatre pieces at a Community Voices festival in July 2013. The festival also included 4 master classes, a diversity workshop, 5 rehearsals and 8 performances.