

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Status Key:

-  Complete for this reporting period
-  In progress/ongoing OR on schedule to be progressed in line with timeline
-  Partially achieved
-  Overdue
-  Action suspended / not commenced
-  New action
-  Amended action

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 1: Dialogue and Consultation

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
<p>1.1 Equality and good relations issues are discussed at Secretariat Management Group (SMG) and Assembly Commission meetings.</p>	<p>Issues are progressed in line with the Good Relations Action Plan requirements and timings.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings are published on the Assembly website on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Corporate Support Unit Timeline: Regularly throughout 2016-2021 with the exception of Assembly recesses. Status: Complete for reporting period Cover template for all SMG/Commission papers asks for information on equality/section 75 implications and equality screening.</p> <p>Paper to SMG in November 2019 covering the Assembly Commission's continuing membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme.</p> <p>Paper to SMG in December 2019 on the key principles of a Transgender Policy.</p> <p>Paper to SMG in January 2020 presenting the findings of the Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) which was conducted in Autumn 2019.</p> <p>Minutes of SMG/Commission meetings published.</p>
<p>1.2 Review of initiatives on how art and exhibitions might be used within Parliament Buildings</p>	<p>Consideration of new art initiatives to allow opportunities to reflect the wider community within Parliament Buildings.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement Timeline: Long-term direction to be revisited by new Speaker and Commission in 2017/18 Status: In progress</p> <p>Consultation had previously taken place with the Arts Council and the College of Art to look at proposals for a series of new art initiatives for</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>2018-19, but the political situation and the associated potential for reputational risk led to a decision not to progress matters until the political situation became clearer.</p> <p>Now that the Assembly has returned to normal business, and to facilitate the corporate strategy, a review of how art and exhibitions might be used within Parliament Buildings will be undertaken during the 2020/21 business year.</p>
<p>1.3 To draft a response to Assembly Commission questions within one week of receipt</p>	<p>To draft answers to Assembly Commission Questions for written and/or oral answer applicable to equality and good relations.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: As required during the 2016-2021 period Status: Complete for reporting period During the reporting period no questions were tabled requiring input from the Equality and Good Relations Unit</p>
<p>1.4 Identification of equality and good relations issues to be addressed</p> <p>Issues arising to be addressed or forwarded to the appropriate Directorate for consideration</p> <p><i>Action amended in March 2018 update to allow for</i></p>	<p>Action Plan following on from 2014 staff survey will be reviewed.</p> <p>Use the results of future staff surveys to produce and implement action plans if required.</p> <p>Monitor the progress of the implementation of action plans on an annual basis.</p> <p>Staff surveys to be undertaken regularly between 2016 and 2021 and will include</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: RaISe/Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Draft survey to be submitted to SMG by September 2018. Date of issue to staff to be agreed. Status: Complete for reporting period. RaISe has prepared a report presenting the survey findings, and a cross-directorate working group has been established to consider the issues raised. A meeting of the group will be scheduled in the coming months.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
<i>the development of a separate equality and good relations survey</i>	questions regarding equality and good relations issues.		
1.5 Organise three teachers' conferences per year to increase teachers' knowledge of the way the Assembly works and how to participate	<p>All teachers at primary, secondary and A-Level will be invited to participate in conferences.</p> <p>An estimated total of 70 teachers will attend 3 conferences per year</p> <p>Increased understanding in teachers' knowledge of how the Assembly works and how to participate will be measured via questionnaire and other means of feedback.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team</p> <p>Timeline: Hold three conferences per year over the 2016-2021 period.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period.</p> <p>A conference for primary-school teachers was held on 14 June 2019. It was attended by 10 teachers from across Northern Ireland and included special schools and schools in the controlled and maintained sectors. Similar conferences were also attended by 38 A Level Politics teachers on 8 October 2019 and 19 Key Stage 3 and 4 teachers on 6 December 2019.</p> <p>A total of 67 teachers attended conferences in the reporting period.</p>
1.6 The Assembly delivers its education programme in a format which provides for schools from different backgrounds to learn together	Schools from different backgrounds will have had the opportunity to learn together by attending education programmes together.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period:</p> <p>Programmes were delivered to school groups comprising pupils from different backgrounds, including shared education groups, integrated schools, Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) and National Citizen Service (NCS) groups.</p> <p>During this reporting period, seven groups of 25 young people received education programmes and met with MLAs as part of a cross-community programme called 'Politics in Action'. On 8</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>November 2019, the Education Service delivered a programme for 60 students (30 from Northern Ireland and 30 from the Republic of Ireland) participating in a cross-border programme. They met with politicians to discuss climate change. On 20 November 2019, education officers represented the Assembly at an event organised by the NI Commissioner for Children and Young people (NICCY) to mark 30 years since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Over 1,000 young people attended the children's rights event in W5, Belfast.</p> <p>On 7 February 2020, the Education Service worked with the NI Anti-Bullying Forum on an event chaired by the Speaker in the Assembly Chamber and attended by 85 young people from schools across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>On 6 March 2020, the Education Service and the NI Assembly Women's Caucus facilitated an event to mark International Women's Day. A debate in the Assembly Chamber was chaired by the Speaker and attended by 100 young women from a wide variety of youth organisations and schools from across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>On 9 March 2020, the Education Service facilitated an event for 22 pupils from different schools participating in the YMCA Youth in Government programme.</p>
1.7 The Assembly focuses on engagement	Increased engagement with minority ethnic communities to inform groups how to utilise	Persons of different racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager</p> <p>Timeline: Annually throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
with disenfranchised groups	<p>resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations.</p> <p>Target members and representative organisations of minority ethnic communities to attend 'How the Assembly Works' sessions to encourage a 5% increase in participation.</p>		<p>Status: In progress.</p> <p>Given the political situation up until January 2020, and the associated practical difficulties and potential for reputational risk, proactive training was not delivered, but requests for training have been met as and when received.</p> <p>The corporate strategy and plans include actions to improve connections and ensure engagement with a wide range of groups. Proposals for an Assembly Community Network are being reviewed and updated. There is also a commitment in the corporate plan to deliver an event programme and to review opportunities to include different sections of the wider community by, for example, considering marking specific defined days and/or theming recurring annual events.</p>
1.8 Hold focus meetings and engage with sectoral and voluntary groups to inform committee business	<p>Hold at least two meetings and engagement activities per month, when the Assembly is sitting, with groups which will inform committee business.</p> <p>Continue to develop a database to register voluntary and community organisations by sector</p> <p>Use database to gather information to inform committee business.</p>	All good relations groups	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: At least 24 meetings annually throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan Status: In progress.</p> <p>Given the political situation up until January 2020, and the associated practical difficulties and potential for reputational risk, proactive training was not delivered, but requests for such training have been met as and when received.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>The corporate strategy and plans include actions to improve connections and ensure engagement with a wide range of groups. Proposals for an Assembly Community Network are being reviewed and updated. There is also a commitment in the corporate plan to deliver an event programme and to review opportunities to include different sections of the wider community by, for example, considering marking specific defined days and/or theming recurring annual events.</p> <p>The corporate plan also includes an action to review and refresh proposals for an engagement toolkit for Committees that will assist in ensuring engagement with a wide range of groups.</p>
1.9 Legal Services Office continues to provide advice as necessary	The provision of legal advice to the NI Assembly Commission, and to staff, in relation to obligations under S75(2) of the NI Act 1998.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Legal Services Office Timeline: As required during 2016-2021 Status: Complete for reporting period</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 2: Promotion of Good Relations

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
2.1 Maintain the display of Speaker's gifts within in the Assembly and Senate Rotundas in Parliament Buildings	Display of Speaker's gifts is accessible to the visiting public and maintained.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Speaker's Office Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Status: Complete</p>
2.2 Participation and inclusion of external groups in identified events held at Parliament Buildings	<p>Speaker's and other Assembly events to be used to include external guests and organisations to highlight issues and work in the wider community. Events will vary each year but will typically include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christmas event 2. St Patrick's Day event 3. Community Relations Week 4. International Women's Day 5. Chinese New Year 	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Speaker's Office/ Engagement Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Subject to review on election of a new Speaker. Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>In December 2019 the then Speaker held an event to launch a giving tree for the Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul. Following resumption of the Assembly in January 2020 the Speaker is committed to delivering a range of events in Parliament Buildings which include external groups.</p> <p>On 7 February 2020, the Speaker chaired an event in the Assembly Chamber for the NI Anti-Bullying Forum attended by 85 young people from schools across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>On 6 March 2020, the Speaker facilitated an event to mark International Women's Day and chaired an event in the Chamber, which was attended by 100 young women from a wide variety of youth organisations and schools from across Northern Ireland.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>The Speaker also facilitated events to mark Commonwealth Day (9 March 2020) and Irish Language Week (10 March 2020) but the event planned for 16 March 2020 to mark St. Patrick's Day (16 March 2020) was cancelled due to the on-going COVID-19 situation.</p>
<p>2.3 To further develop capacity of Assembly Commission Members on issues concerning Good Relations and Equality</p>	<p>Development of a mechanism to enable Members to discuss good relations issues.</p> <p>Invite guest speakers and a facilitator to assist Members to discuss contentious issues through dialogue and understanding. Members' knowledge of good relations and equality issues is increased.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit, Corporate Support Unit and Learning and Development</p> <p>Timeline: Group is established and terms of reference completed - 2016 Training needs are assessed and training developed - 2016 Facilitator and guest speakers are identified - 2016 Programme of issues confirmed - 2016 Training complete - 2016 Programme timetabled with facilitator and guest speakers on good relations issues 2017 – 2021</p> <p>Status: In progress</p> <p>The original action was agreed by a previous Commission in a different political context. Following the restoration of the Assembly, it is intended to consult the new Commission on this action to consider the most practical means of identifying and addressing the good relations and equality needs of current Commission Members.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
2.4 To agree a Language Policy	<p>Prepare a paper on language policy for the Assembly Commission</p> <p>Development of a clear and concise policy with measurable standards and present to the Assembly Commission for agreement.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit</p> <p>Timeline: Jan 2017 and 2017</p> <p>Status: Partially achieved</p> <p>Language paper presented to SMG in January 2017 and March 2017. Paper ready for presentation to the Assembly Commission at a future date.</p>
2.5 Implementation and communication of Good Relations Action Plan to staff	<p>Communication of Policy and Action Plan to all staff.</p> <p>Staff training updated to cross-reference with Good Relations Action Plan.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit</p> <p>Timeline: 2016</p> <p>Status: Complete</p>
<p>2.6 Reconsideration of Civic Occasions Protocol</p> <p><i>Action added March 2017</i></p> <p><i>Lead responsibility transferred to Director of Parliamentary Services in October 2017 as Facilities Director post no longer exists</i></p>	<p>Reconsideration of the draft protocol that was presented to the Assembly Commission in March 2016.</p> <p>Intended outcome is the provision of clear guidance with regard to the flying of the Union flag at Parliament Buildings to mark civic occasions, e.g., the accession of a new Monarch; the death of a serving or former First or Deputy First Minister; and a time of designated national disaster.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Director of Parliamentary Services/Equality and Good Relations Unit</p> <p>Timeline: Following publication of final report by Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition</p> <p>Status: On schedule to be progressed in line with timeline</p> <p>Awaiting outcome of final report by Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 3: Equality of Service Provision

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
3.1 Continue to utilise applicable codes and guidance from the Equality Commission NI as it relates to the recruitment of staff	Commission policies continue to reflect best practice in recruitment and continue to ensure equality of opportunity for all potential job applicants.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period This is a continuous action in that we constantly review and change policies to reflect best practice. We have recently completed a review of recruitment and utilised applicable codes and guidance from the ECNI when completing the review.</p>
3.2 The Assembly focuses on engagement with disenfranchised groups	To work with the National Assembly for Wales and the Flemish Parliament to make a joint application to Erasmus+ to deliver a trans-national youth project.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team Timeline: Project length anticipated 12 months (Estimated Sept 2016 - Sept 2017) Status: Complete Application unsuccessful.</p>
3.3 Continue programme of local events to encourage young people from all backgrounds to meet and discuss issues with their MLAs	To hold 'Let's Talk' events for young people from all constituencies.	Persons of different religious belief or political opinion	<p>Lead: Education Service Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Action suspended Action suspended due to the political situation. In light of there being no functioning Assembly for the majority of this reporting period, "Let's Talk" events have not been held because it was considered that such events could lead to reputational risk and that there would be difficulties in getting schools and MLAs to participate. However, "encouraging young</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>people from all backgrounds to meet and discuss issues with their MLAs” has continued to be actioned by inviting MLAs to meet groups as part of the Education Service’s full programme of events, both in Parliament Buildings and in schools.</p> <p>While the Education Service had hoped to resume this initiative in 2020, the current circumstances relating to COVID-19 means that the timetable for this is uncertain.</p>
<p>3.4 Identify best practice from other sources and adopt practice following consultation with section 75 groups and internal stakeholders (Learn and share good practice from other areas)</p>	<p>Work with relevant teams and staff to promote the sharing of learning and outcomes from joint projects.</p> <p>Continue participation on, for example, inter-parliamentary groups and civil service groups to document models of best practice.</p> <p>Increased understanding of the good relations issues affecting the Northern Ireland Assembly.</p> <p>Best practice is implemented and communicated.</p> <p>Increased collaboration on a regional and national basis to discuss good relations issues.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period Continued participation on relevant groups e.g. The Executive Office equality practitioners group and ongoing meetings with the Equality Commission for NI and other stakeholders.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
3.5 Advertisement of committee stage of Bills in each of the main daily newspapers offering opportunities to all sections of the community to submit evidence	Improved access opportunities for people to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Clerking Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021 Status: In progress
3.6 Plans in place to encourage Committees to actively engage with the community by meeting regularly outside of Parliament Buildings	Improved opportunities for all sections of the community to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes. Statutory Committees to aim to hold external meetings periodically throughout the mandate.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Clerking Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: In progress
3.7 Lighting of Building	To light the exterior of Parliament Buildings on days as agreed by the Assembly Commission	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Head of Building Services Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period The LED floodlighting system continues to be used to light the building on days agreed by the Assembly Commission
3.8 Continued Implementation of the 'Perspective on...' series	To hold inclusive events to mark anniversaries within the 'Decade of Centenaries' as agreed by the Assembly Commission including in 2016 the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: Speaker's Office Timeline: Anniversaries to be marked in the 2016-2021 mandate to be agreed by the new Commission following the election. Status: Complete for reporting period None of the events agreed by the Commission occurred during Oct-Dec 2019. At its first meeting following resumption of the Assembly, the new

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			Commission agreed arrangements to mark the anniversary of the Government of Ireland Act in late 2020 within the 'Decade of Centenaries' programme approach.
3.9 Outreach Parliaments <i>(Action suspended March 2017)</i>	To facilitate 2 BEM Parliaments per year in order to engage people from minority groups.	Persons of different racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Action suspended.</p> <p>This action has been suspended because the partner organisation, NICE, no longer exists, allied to which the political situation up to January 2020 brought practical difficulties (Ministers/Committee chairpersons are required).</p> <p>Action 3.15 below was added in March 2017 to increase engagement with BEM groups. The corporate strategy and corporate plan include actions to ensure engagement with a wide range of groups.</p>
3.10 Assembly Community Connect (ACC)	Increased engagement database of s75 groups by 20%; inform groups how to utilise resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations.	All S75 groups, including persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: In progress.</p> <p>Given the political situation up until January 2020, and the associated practical difficulties and potential for reputational risk, engagement was largely reactive as opposed to proactive. However,</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			the corporate strategy and plan include actions to improve connections and ensure engagement with a wide range of groups. Proposals for an Assembly Community Network are being reviewed and updated. There is also a commitment in the corporate plan to deliver an event programme and to review opportunities to include different sections of the wider community by, for example, considering marking specific defined days and/or theming recurring annual events.
3.11 Monitoring the outcome of the EQIA on the Flying of the Union Flag at Parliament Buildings	Monitoring includes regular consideration of a range of sources such as complaints, research and related policies etc.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Annually Status: Complete for reporting period Monitoring complete in line with guidance provided by the Equality Commission for NI.
3.12 Access to information	The Education Service has an Irish Language Champion and the education programme can now be delivered in Irish. Based on previous years' numbers, the programme will be delivered to approx. 3 Irish medium schools during the academic year.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Education Service Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period The Education Service received no requests to deliver the programme in Irish during the reporting period.
3.13 Keep under review the use of Irish in recruitment ads	Review per recruitment competition any feedback received on the use of Irish in advertisements as relating to the recruitment process.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: HR Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period Any feedback received is reviewed/considered on receipt.

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
3.14 Continued operation of alternative placement programme to trainee teachers ie Stranmillis College (Final year students)	To allow the Assembly to ensure that its current education programmes continue to be compatible with teacher training best practice. Max 3 places per year lasting 2 weeks each January.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>An education officer addressed the Stranmillis Alternative Placement Conference in October 2019. Two students subsequently completed a two-week placement in the Education Service in January 2020.</p> <p>On 28 October 2019, a group of 32 PGCE students from Queens' University received an education programme tailored to teachers of citizenship.</p>
3.15 Deliver 'Get Involved' conference to BEM groups <i>(Action added March 2017)</i>	Deliver one conference every year to BEM groups.	Persons of different racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21. Status: Action suspended.</p> <p>The BEM Get Involved Conference concept was suspended along with the other Get Involved events in 2017 due to the political situation and associated practical difficulties — the event involves Members and focuses on participating in the Committee process.</p> <p>The corporate strategy and plan include actions to improve connections and ensure engagement with</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			<p>a wide range of groups. Proposals for an Assembly Community Network are being reviewed and updated. There is also a commitment in the raft corporate plan to deliver an event programme and to review opportunities to include different sections of the wider community by, for example, considering marking specific defined days and/or theming recurring annual events. All of those actions will give due regard to BEM groups.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 4: Training and Development

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
<p>4.1</p> <p>Personal learning records to include details of equality and good relations training undertaken.</p> <p><i>Previous action was: '4.1 Personal Development Plans include equality issues/updates.'</i></p> <p><i>This action has been amended to more accurately reflect the monitoring of staff learning.</i></p>	<p>Ongoing learning in relation to equality takes place.</p> <p><i>Additional outcomes/impacts and measurements:</i></p> <p>Learning and Development Team to update personal learning records on iTrent with mandatory equality and good relations training. Staff can also add additional equality and good relations training to their personal learning plans, and this training will also be monitored by the L&D team.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: Annually throughout lifespan of the plan Status: Complete for reporting period.</p> <p>A range of learning opportunities in relation to equality matters (9 categories) are made available to staff throughout the year and attendance is recorded on itrent. The Equality Manager in consultation with the ECNI and the NICS is exploring the development of several e-learning packages in both equality (Section 75) and Good Relations.</p>
<p>4.2 Induction training monitored and reported on</p>	<p>Monitoring of mandatory staff training which includes the promotion of good relations as part of the induction process for any external appointments that occur.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: As required Status: In progress.</p> <p>The Equality Manager in consultation with the ECNI and the NICS is exploring the development of several e-learning packages in both equality (Section 75) and good relations.</p>
<p>4.3 To provide good relations support to staff</p>	<p>Good Relations input into training programmes as required.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21. Status: Ongoing</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
To support mainstreaming of good relations at Directorate level	<p>Meet with relevant staff to provide good relations support and information for services within the Assembly secretariat.</p> <p>Increased confidence in tackling good relations issues by staff.</p> <p>Good relations agenda is mainstreamed with Assembly staff.</p>		
4.4 Develop an e-learning good relations package for staff training	<p>E-learning package is developed to enable staff to better understand good relations and its relevance to their role in the Assembly.</p> <p>Mandatory completion of e-learning takes place by all Assembly staff.</p> <p>Monitoring of mandatory training takes place to ensure all staff complete training and it is complete to a satisfactory standard.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Learning and Development</p> <p>Timeline: 2018</p> <p>Status: Overdue</p> <p>Staff in the Equality and Good Relations Unit have continued to attend meetings of the Equality Commission and the NI Civil Service Statutory Duties Forum, which is considering a range of equality matters including Section 75 online training. The final e-learning package is not yet available..</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 5: Management Information and Data

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
5.1 Direct staff to screening training as required	<p>Screening guidance in place for staff.</p> <p>Training provided as required.</p> <p>Increased knowledge and skills to address good relations issues.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Learning and Development</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period</p>
5.2 Continued use of 'social media' to engage with people of NI and hear their views on the Assembly and political issues	<p>We will have listened to the people of NI and provided different groups with a democratic understanding and the opportunity to develop mutual positions in a shared (cyber) space.</p> <p>Education Service uses Social Media (Twitter) daily to inform users of its services and initiatives.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period. Education Service uses Social Media (Twitter) daily to inform users of its services and initiatives.</p>
5.3 To monitor user comments collected from feedback processed in place for all engagement activities	Feedback is used, where appropriate, to help inform decisions and build the promotion of equality and good relations into the delivery of services.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: In progress.</p> <p>The report on Assembly Community Connect (ACC) 'Measuring Success', assessed feedback from 700 attendees at ACC events. Its findings will be used to inform future action and activities. Equality data was collected as part of the work in producing the report and it will help benchmark future equality targets.</p> <p>The corporate strategy and plan include actions to improve connections and ensure engagement with</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			a wide range of groups. Proposals for an Assembly Community Network are being reviewed and updated and it is envisaged that those actions will include the development of feedback mechanisms.
5.4 Maintain an inventory and monitor the condition of all artefacts belonging to the Assembly	All artefacts belonging to the Assembly are kept and maintained in an appropriate manner. Artefacts will be monitored on an annual basis.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Head of Building Services Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete for reporting period. Artefacts belonging to the Assembly are maintained in an appropriate manner and the inventory of Assembly artefacts and artwork is reviewed at least once per year.

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Aim 6: Monitoring

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
6.1 Good Relations Action Plan is updated to include additional relevant actions that arise during the lifespan of the plan.	<p>Monitoring relevant sources to ensure any additional actions are added as appropriate.</p> <p>Continue engagement with Assembly Directorates to discuss any potential issues for inclusion.</p> <p>Produce a monitoring report of progress and any additional action every six months and table at SMG meetings.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit/All Directorates</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Six-monthly monitoring updates show progress on actions, including additional activity and amended actions. Once approved, this update will be published on the Assembly website alongside previous updates.</p>
6.2 To provide adequate staff resources to allow the implementation of all programme activities	Directorate budget includes, where relevant, for strategic development, implementation and monitoring.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: All Directorates</p> <p>Timeline: Budgeting as necessary in line with Assembly policies throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period</p>
6.3 To continue implementation and reporting to SMG of Assembly Visitor's survey	<p>Conduct a Visitor's survey 3 times a year (generally February, June and October).</p> <p>Assembly research collate data and produce a report for Equality and Good Relations Unit to be submitted to SMG with good relations six-monthly monitoring reports.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and RaSe</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>SMG agreed at its March 2018 meeting that the survey should be reduced in frequency from three times a year to an annual survey until such times as full Assembly business resumes, at which point a full review of the survey will be carried out. Full Assembly business resumed in January 2020, and the review is due to be carried out this year, in</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Update March 2020

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
			consultation with the relevant business areas. In the meantime, the survey will once again be carried out three times a year – generally spring, summer and autumn. During this reporting period, RaISe produced a report on the findings of the Autumn 2019 survey, and this is attached at Annex 1. SMG noted this survey report at its meeting of 24 January 2020.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Note

Paper 000/00

07 January 2020

NIAR 184-19

Barbara Love

Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) Autumn 2019 results

1 Introduction

This paper presents the findings of the Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) which was conducted in Autumn 2019. The purpose of this survey is to inform the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's Good Relation Strategy by gathering the views of visitors to Parliament Buildings on a range of good relations issues.

The survey was administered by tours and events staff working within Parliament Buildings. The data was analysed by the Assembly's Research and Information Service.

2 Participants

Seventy-three responses from visitors who were taking tours or attending an event in Parliament Buildings participated in the survey. For almost three quarters of

respondents (71.2%), this was the first time they visited Parliament Buildings. The main reasons for visiting Parliament Buildings were to take a tour (44 public tours, 2 law tours, 1 private tour), to attend an engagement day (15), for food/lunch (7) and for a day out or visit (5). Two participants attended a Member supported event or function and four participants attended an event or function, the specific nature of which was not provided.

3 Access to and within Parliament Buildings

Respondents with a disability were asked to rate the physical access to and within Parliament Buildings. Six of the seven respondents rated the physical access to Parliament Buildings as either excellent (5) or good (1). One respondent reported the physical access to Parliament Buildings as very poor. Four of the five respondents rated the physical access within Parliament Buildings as either excellent (2) or good (2). One respondent reported the physical access within Parliament Buildings as very poor. The respondent who rated access to and within Parliament Buildings did not provide an explanation for this rating.

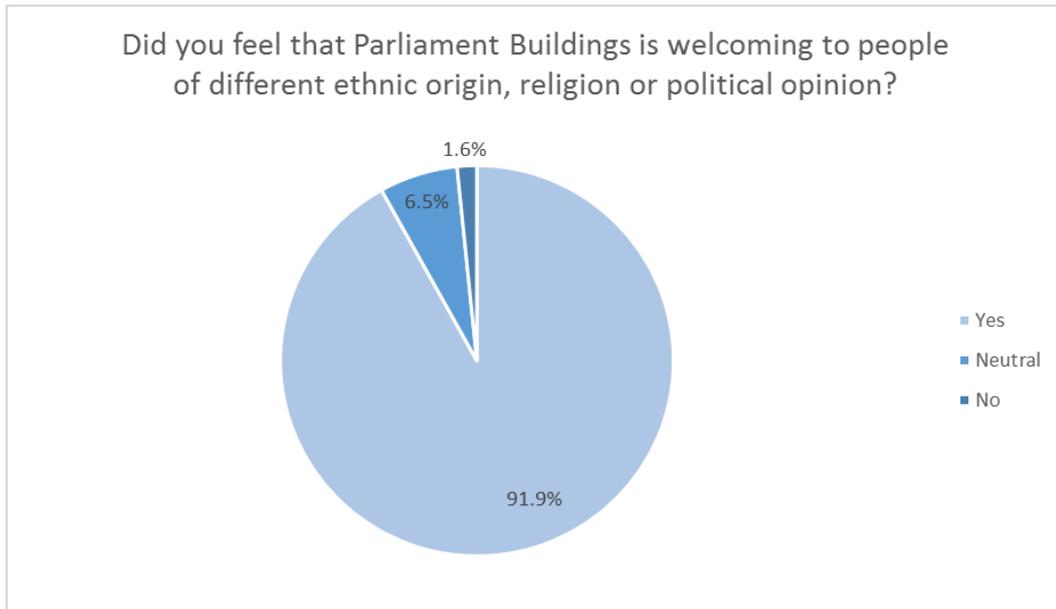
4 Welcome in Parliament Buildings

All but one out of 65 respondents who answered this question said that they felt welcome in Parliament Buildings.

One respondent commented:

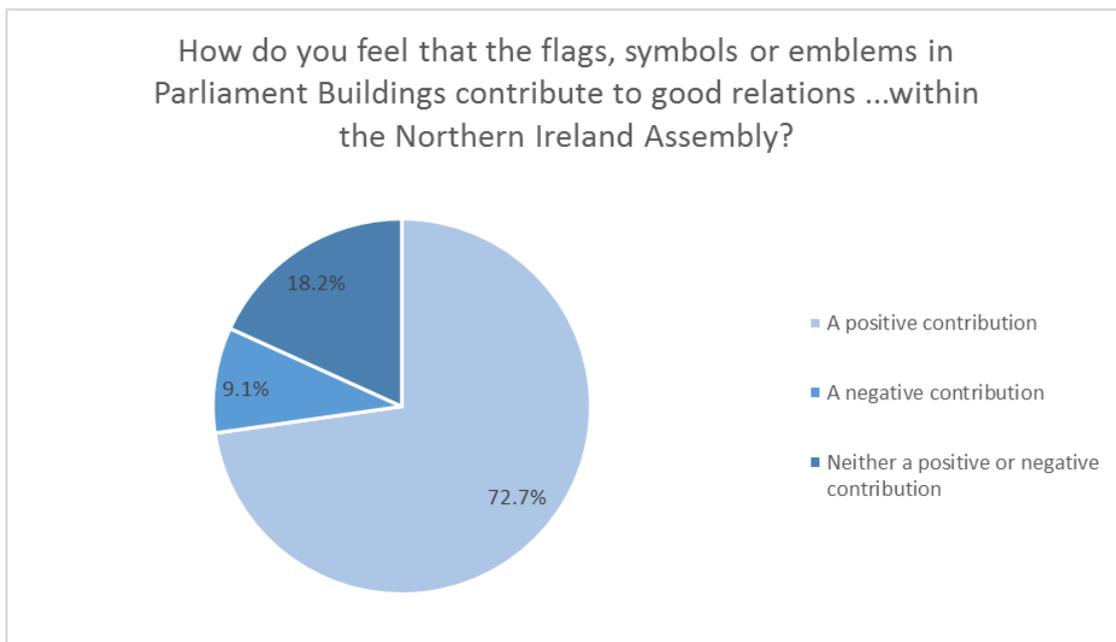
“I felt very welcome and well treated from the very first staff member I had contact with.”

When asked if they feel that Parliament Buildings is welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or political opinion, excluding those who said they have no opinion, 91.9% of respondents said the building is welcoming. A further 6.5% said that the building was neutral (neither welcoming nor unwelcoming to people from different religious or political backgrounds or ethnic groups). One respondent out of 62 said that they felt the building was not welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or political opinion.



5 Flags, symbols and emblems

When asked how they felt that the flags, symbols or emblems in Parliament Buildings contribute to good relations (ethnic origin, religion and political opinion) within the Northern Ireland Assembly, almost three quarters of respondents (72.7%) said that they feel they make a positive contribution to good relations. A further 18.2% said they make neither a positive or negative contribution. 9.1% (4 out of 44) said the flags, symbols or emblems in Parliament Buildings contribute to good relations (ethnic origin, religion and political opinion) within the Northern Ireland Assembly make a negative contribution.



Those who felt the flags, symbols and/or emblems make a positive contribution commented:

"It's hard for anyone to not have either a bias or be not educated enough to...truly answer this question. If it's a minority of people who'd be educated enough to be able to answer that without bias."

"Everyone is recognised."

One respondent who said they make neither a positive or negative contribution commented that they "did not notice them."

Those who felt that they make a negative contribution commented:

"Some symbols do not promote equality due to positioning."

"All should be removed, to make it a neutral environment."

Other comments included:

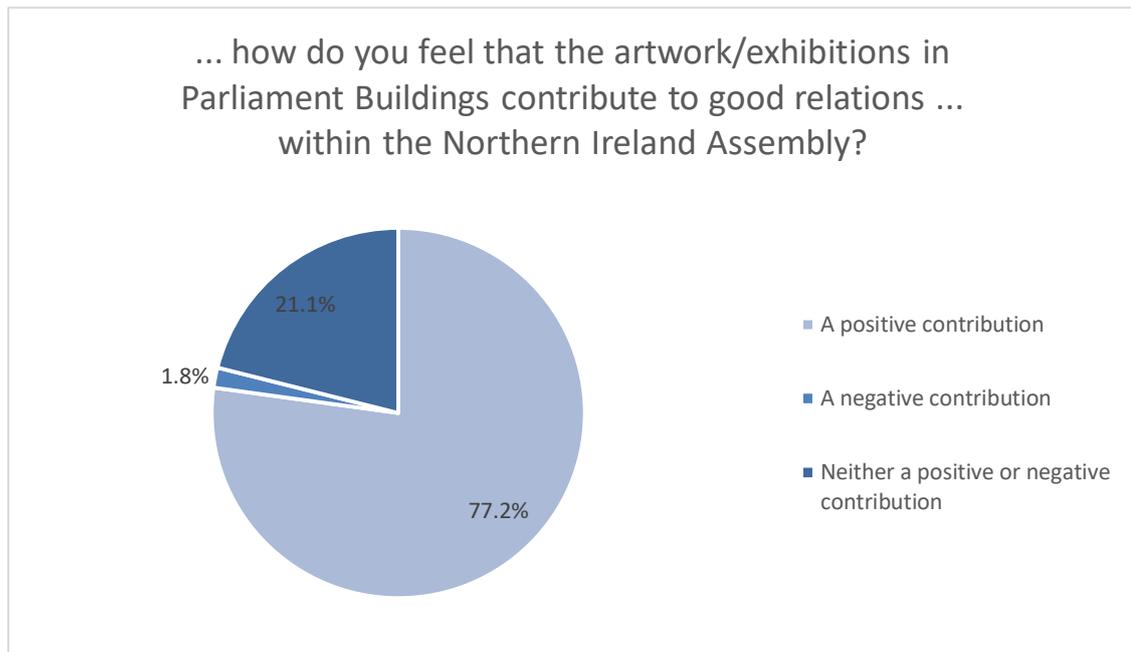
"I think it's best not to have flags or emblems to keep the building neutral as possible."

"I don't feel in a position to answer this - however personally I liked the flaxen image and I felt that they do make a positive contribution."

I "didn't really notice so it must be ok."

6 Artwork and exhibitions

Sixty-three respondents said that they viewed the artwork/exhibitions on display. Of those who responded and excluding those with no opinion, 77.2% of respondents said they feel the artwork/exhibitions in Parliament Buildings make a positive contribution to good relations within the Northern Ireland Assembly. A further 21.1% of respondents said they make neither a positive or negative contribution. One respondent out of 57 said they feel the artwork/exhibitions in Parliament Buildings make a negative contribution to good relations within the Northern Ireland Assembly.



Those who said they felt the artwork and/or exhibitions make a positive contribution to good relations commented that:

“Everyone is recognised.”

“It is “historically important to be able to see the artwork.”

“Tradition and values are highlighted.”

Those who said they make neither a positive or negative contribution commented:

“I think they should be there.”

“Cost!”

One respondent who said they had no opinion commented that:

“Not everyone has an opinion on religion or political opinion.”

7 Treatment by staff

All of those who responded (n = 66) said that they feel as though they were treated with respect by staff working in Parliament Buildings irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion or political opinion.

8 Shared space

Respondents were asked if they have any suggestions as to how the Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat can take steps to ensure that Parliament Buildings is a shared space for all regardless of ethnic origin, religion or political opinion. Comments and suggestions regarding ensuring Parliament Buildings is a shared space were as follows:

“No, it's good.”

“Market it as a destination to visit – FREE.”

“Keep as neutral as possible.”

“Perhaps directly engage with other Tourist Boards.”

“Remove Carson and Craigavon statues.”

“In the interest of a shared space I found the lack of Irish language signage interesting but personally it doesn't offend. Your questionnaire is geared to NI - recognise other country citizens might visit.”

9 Other comments regarding good relations

Respondents were asked if they have any other comments. Feedback regarding the tours and tour guides were very positive. There was no negative feedback regarding the tours. From a good relations point of view, comments were that:

“It is very positive that the tour is non-political.”

“Guide very knowledgeable - made tour fun and politic free ... Loved the vote at the end of the tour.”

One respondent asked who the statue on the main staircase is of.

Another respondent commented:

“Above were not always supportive of the UK.”

“I thought the building itself is fabulous. The neutral chamber, a neutral space, but like a lot of people I don't feel that the amount of money spent on renovation is warranted.”

10 Conclusion

Overall, the feedback from visitors to Parliament Buildings regarding good relations has been very positive:

- 64 out of 65 respondents said they felt welcome in Parliament Buildings;
- Almost three quarters of respondents (72.7%) said that they feel the flags, symbols or emblems in Parliament Buildings make a positive contribution to good relations whilst a further 18.2% said they make neither a positive or negative contribution.
- 77.2% of respondents said they feel the artwork/exhibitions in Parliament Buildings make a positive contribution to good relations within the Northern Ireland Assembly whilst a further 21.1% said they make neither a positive or negative contribution.
- All of those who responded (n = 66) said that they feel as though they were treated with respect by staff working in Parliament Buildings irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion or political opinion.
- Feedback on staff has been very positive. Tours and tour staff received very positive feedback.

11 A final note

Although it was not the purpose of this survey to gather views on the tours, it should be noted that twenty-one respondents commented on the tours or tour guides. The tours were described as *“excellent”, “very informative”, “absolutely fantastic”, “enjoyable”, “good for all ages”, “effective”, “well delivered”, “interesting” and “great”*. One respondent commented *“well done. Very interesting. **** stars well done.”* The tour guides were also described as *“superb”, “exceptional”, “excellent”, “extremely/very/full of knowledgeable”, “fab”, “fantastic”, “an asset to your service”, “informative”, “very engaging”, “amazing”, “really impressive” and “good”*.

It was also commented that that the *“lunch was amazing”* and feedback was also provided on the engagement day.

Finally, a small number of respondents commented on the current political situation.