



Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



Dismantling the peace walls by 2023: “rational” or “irrational” policy thinking?

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Introduction

Knowledge Exchange Partnership (ESRC funded)

Social Construction of Peace Walls as a Problem

TBUC Strategy (2013)

Today is about reflections policy design and formulation, policy implementation and challenges of delivery, and engagement with community as key stakeholders.



Policy Formulation and Design

What does the policy objective mean - 'Removal of All Peace Walls by 2023'?

What is definition of a peace wall?

How many peace walls are there and who owns them?

What function do peace walls serve?

What are the implications for the TBUC Programme Board?

- A need for linguistic precision.
- A recognition of scale.
- A decision on ownership.



Policy Implementation: the challenge of delivery

What are the structures for delivering the TBUC strategy on Peace Walls? How will this be resourced?

What effect has the declaration of a specific target for change had?

What milestones are to be achieved on the way?

What are the responsibilities of the Ministerial Panel, the Lead Department and the other members of the Inter-Agency Group and how are they to be evaluated and monitored?

What is the scale of the Barrier Support Programme and how Policy Implementation: the challenge of delivery will it be funded and delivered?



Policy Implementation: the challenge of delivery

How are the benefits of the 2023 Target articulated and monitored?

How does uncertainty in the NI Executive affect the delivery of the 2023 Peace Walls target?

What are the responsibilities of local representatives of the Executive parties in supporting change at local level?

What are the responsibilities of residents, community leaders and interface projects in delivering the TBUC target and how are they to be engaged?



The challenge of engaging communities

‘Taking down interface barriers is not something that can be achieved without engagement with, consent and support of the people who live there. We must be sensitive to the views and perceptions of residents and balance this against the responsibility on us to create the conditions within which division and segregation can become resigned to the past’ (TBUC, 2013).

What do we mean by ‘community confidence’

How is community consent understood?

How does TBUC foresee consultation with communities rolling out?

What are the implications of this for the 2023 target?



The challenge of engaging communities

Our work recognises the importance of 'community' but argues that there is also no understanding or direction about how these community contributions may fit within the overall policy process.

Need for:

An official model of consultation (that allows for bespoke approaches) ?

A series of indicators to ascertain the relationship between community confidence and the removal of peace walls?

A clear definition as to what 'community consent' means?





Northern Ireland
Assembly



Queen's University
Belfast



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