

**From: The Minister**

**Sinead McLaughlin MLA  
Northern Ireland Assembly  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont**

Dear Sinead,

**AQW 47524/22-27– INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY  
LIBRARY**

Due to the volume of information provided, I have arranged for the detail attached at Annex A to be placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely,



**Gordon Lyons MLA  
Minister for Communities**

**Answer:**

This issue is an operational matter for Northern Ireland Housing Executive; they have advised me as follows;

*“From the Northern Ireland Housing Executive’s perspective, the dismantling of segregation in housing is delivered through both targeted shared housing programmes and a wider place-shaping and community development approach, aligned to Executive commitments on good relations and reconciliation.*

***(i) Contribution to dismantling segregation in housing***

*The Housing Executive plays a central role through its management of the Housing for All shared housing programme, which is the primary mechanism for promoting integrated living.*

- The programme aims to deliver, subject to budget availability, a minimum of 200 new shared social homes annually.*
- It supports 11 Housing Associations delivering:*
  - 91 schemes (3,174 homes) completed or in development*
  - 61 schemes (1,825 homes) designated as shared*
  - 30 additional schemes (1,349 homes) progressing towards designation*

*A key feature of the programme is its robust designation criteria, ensuring:*

- No single community exceeds 70% representation*

- *Balanced communities are measured across religion, national identity, and ethnic origin*

*This ensures that shared housing developments are genuinely mixed, sustainable, and inclusive.*

*Beyond physical housing delivery, the Housing Executive ensures the programme contributes to long-term social change through:*

- *41 Local Advisory Groups, which bring together local stakeholders*
- *Development and implementation of five-year Good Relations Plans*
- *Plans focused on:*
  - *Building community cohesion*
  - *Promoting inclusion and shared space*
  - *Extending shared housing principles beyond schemes into surrounding areas (within a five-mile radius)*

*These Good Relations Plans are currently being delivered with a programme horizon through to 2031, embedding sustained reconciliation outcomes.*

*In parallel, the Housing Executive's Place Shaping role supports the dismantling of segregation through:*

- *Working with local councils on Local Development Plans (LDPs)*
- *Promoting Housing for All principles in planning policy*
- *Supporting mixed tenure and balanced communities in new developments*

- *Influencing delivery of affordable and intermediate housing alongside private development*

*Furthermore, the Housing Executive has a dedicated community involvement and cohesion strategy including a focus on building positive relationships among people from diverse backgrounds.*

*The Housing Executive invested over £1.1million into our communities through Cohesion funding during 2025/26. Our Good Relations Officers, Race Relations Officer and Interface Officer work in partnership with communities to implement our Community Involvement & Cohesion Strategy, producing practical and tangible actions that benefits those communities:*

- *We funded and administered 140 estate based cohesion projects and 39 race relations projects;*
- *We supported 9 projects in Greater Whitewell and a funded worker in Glenbank via the Areas at Risk Programme in North Belfast, on behalf of Department for Communities;*
- *We supported the development and implementation of 12 reimagining projects via a community-led approach, addressing the physical manifestations of segregation within and between our estates;*
- *By the end of 2025/26, we had completed work at 12 interface locations and have invested funding into our communities; and*
- *Delivered 33 Positive expressions of culture projects.*

*We successfully collaborated with statutory partners to promote and support race relations for our tenants and customers in 2025/26. The Race Relations Officer (RRO) continued to work in areas of ongoing race*

*hate incidents using information on hotspots in conjunction with Community Safety records, this included progress made with Ethnic Minority Groups and linkages with HCNs for long term engagement. The RRO will continue to engage and collaborate with Ethnic Groups throughout 2026/27 to grow and to promote and improve race relations within our communities.*

*A total of 235 projects were supported in year across all strands of cohesion funding available to communities and delivered through collaborative efforts of GRO's, area offices, Supporting Communities and the Community Cohesion Team.*

***(ii) Targets and support for cross-departmental peace and reconciliation commitments***

*From the Housing Executive perspective, targets are framed through both programme delivery metrics and wider system outcomes, aligned to cross-government good relations objectives.*

*Programme-specific targets (Housing for All):*

- Delivery of a minimum of 200 shared homes annually (subject to funding)*
- Continued expansion of the shared housing portfolio*
- Maintenance of balanced community thresholds ( $\leq 70\%$ ) in all designated schemes*
- Delivery and annual review of Good Relations Plans to 2031*

*Wider NIHE contribution to cross-departmental objectives:*

- Embedding shared housing principles across the wider housing system*

- *Supporting integrated and mixed communities through planning and housing policy*
- *Contributing to Executive priorities on:*
  - *Good relations*
  - *Social cohesion*
  - *Inclusive and sustainable communities*

*The Housing Executive's approach aligns with a whole-system model, where physical housing delivery, community development and strategic planning are integrated to reduce spatial segregation over time."*