

RAG/LAG Stakeholder Engagement Event

Northern Locality

(Derry & Strabane, Causeway Coast & Glens,
Mid & East Antrim, Antrim & Newtownabbey)

The Impact of Environmental and Climate Change

Wednesday 16 December 2020

*Derry Youth Office, Strabane Youth Resource Centre, Shantallow Youth Centre,
Limavady Youth Resource Centre, Parkhall Youth Centre, Ballykeel Youth Centre,
Sunlea Youth ICT Centre, Ballycastle Youth Centre, Portrush Youth Centre, Larne YMCA
and online via Zoom*



Executive Summary

3

Section 1: Introduction

4

Section 2: Methodology

5

Section 3: Attendance

6

Section 4: Analysis of Evidence

7

Section 5: Outcomes

11

Section 6: Appendix

12



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides details of the Stakeholder Engagement Event that took place on Wednesday 16th December 2021. The event was presented via Zoom to participants in a range of satellite venues across the locality in order to comply with COVID restrictions; those who couldn't attend a venue were able to participate via Zoom breakout rooms. The event was part of the Education Authority (EA) Regional Advisory Group (RAG) participative process and was led by the Local Advisory Groups (LAG) for Derry and Strabane, Causeway Coast and Glens, Mid and East Antrim, and Antrim and Newtownabbey.

The event engaged one hundred and two key stakeholders from across the statutory and voluntary youth sectors to consider the 'Impact of Environmental and Climate Change'.

In the course of the event participants watched a virtual keynote video developed by groups of young people across the locality and used this to help stimulate discussion and develop actions.

Young people and adults agreed that environmental issues needed to be addressed urgently and identified practical improvements that could be made at youth group level right through to RAG.

Key recommendations were for RAG to set priorities around Green Standards and providing educational opportunities for Youth Workers and young people relating to this.

Local Youth Services should act on making youth settings more environmentally friendly, inside and out and to move towards green energy sources and materials.

Youth groups should be proactive in keeping their area litter free, reducing plastic use, increasing recycling and creating an environmentally friendly outdoor space.

1.1 Local Advisory Group

1.1.1 The event was supported by four Local Advisory Groups (Mid & East Antrim, Antrim & Newtownabbey, Causeway Coast and Glens, Derry and Strabane) which are made up of a range of representatives from the statutory, community and voluntary sector, including young people.

1.2 Aims

1.2.1 To engage with young people and other Youth Service stakeholders to identify environmental concerns in their area.

1.2.2 To discuss and identify actions that will help address these environmental concerns.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 To host an event across eleven hubs and online to increase the participation of young people and key stakeholders.

1.3.2 To provide opportunities for RAG members, LAG members and key stakeholders to analyse and discuss approaches that may address the impact of environmental climate change through youth work.

1.3.3 To develop recommendations on how youth services could lessen the impact of environmental and climate change at a local, council area and regional level.

2.1 Methodology

- 2.1.1 The event was hosted and facilitated via Zoom and face to face, with youth groups in 6 of the 11 intended hubs.
- 2.1.2 Young people from 4 areas; Derry City, Rathlin Island, Portglenone and Bawnmore Estate, had prepared videos in advance which were edited together as a virtual keynote address, and this was broadcast via Zoom to the 6 hubs and the zoom participants.
- 2.1.3 The keynote video stimulated discussion for the first workshop which aimed to identify local issues. The workshop took place in each hub and in two virtual breakout rooms.
- 2.1.4 Feedback from each workshop group was collated via Microsoft Forms and presented to all groups via zoom.
- 2.1.5 The second workshop, using the same breakout format, then looked at possible actions to address the issues identified from the first workshop.
- 2.1.6 Feedback was again collated via Microsoft Forms and presented to all in a plenary session via Zoom.

3 ATTENDANCE

3.1 Attendance

- 3.1.1 At total of 102 people participated the event.
- 3.1.2 Participants in attendance included young people and youth workers from Local EA and Voluntary Youth Services, including Parkhall Youth Centre, Ballycastle Youth Centre, the Education Authority FLARE Service, Girl Guides, Portrush Youth Centre, Downshire Youth Centre, St Mary's Youth Club, Limavady Youth Resource Centre, Strabane Youth Resource Centre, Ulster Wildlife Grassroots Challenge and Duke of Edinburgh group, Londonderry YMCA and Larne YMCA.
- 3.1.3 Other key stakeholders included representatives from Ulster Wildlife UK, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, and Volunteer Now.
- 3.1.4 Representation from RAG included the Department of Education, YMCA Ireland and the Youth Work Alliance.

3.2 Attendance Figures

Attendance Group	Number
Young People	75
Local Advisory Members	3
Regional Advisory Members	4
Youth Work Staff	18
Statutory Partners	2

3.3 Satisfaction

- 3.3.1 100% of evaluations stated that the event was very satisfactory or satisfactory.

4.1 Workshop 1: What are the environmental issues for young people in your area?

- 4.1.1 In this workshop, groups discussed the issues relating to environment and climate change for young people. These are outlined below.
- 4.1.2 Many of the young people continued with the themes from the videos identifying litter, especially from fast food outlets as a major issue in their locality.
- 4.1.3 There was criticism of local councils for failing to empty litter bins often enough resulting in overflow.
- 4.1.4 Fly tipping of household items including toys.
- 4.1.5 The impact of COVID with disused masks and hand sanitiser bottles left behind. It was noted that no one likes the idea of picking these up during a litter pick.
- 4.1.6 Fumes from traffic and smokers/vapers.
- 4.1.7 The impact of large outdoor events which attract large crowds, leading to increased traffic, litter and food waste from discarded takeaways.
- 4.1.8 Trees being cut down and the negative impact this has on air quality.
- 4.1.9 Chemical pollution from industry and farming.
- 4.1.10 Food waste from people buying too much.
- 4.1.11 Lack of electric/hydrogen/sustainable transport options and sustainable energy sources.
- 4.1.12 Behaviour of community; littering isn't a young person's habit.
- 4.1.13 Lack of recycling facilities.
- 4.1.14 Source food locally.
- 4.1.15 Noise pollution.

4.2 Workshop 2: Agree 3 priorities for RAG, Local Youth Service and your Youth Centre/Project

4.2.1 In this workshop, groups discussed priorities for the RAG to implement through planning for all Youth Services, actions for Local Youth Development Plans to be implemented across council areas and actions that could be completed by youth groups.

4.2.2 Priorities suggested for consideration by the RAG were as follows:

4.2.2.1 Planning should include educational programmes to engage young people about the environment and things they can do to help raise awareness of climate change.

4.2.2.2 Youth services should be provided with funding to support climate programmes and reduce waste programmes and there should be an investment in renewable energy sources for running of youth centres.

4.2.2.3 Education and workshops should be delivered to all not just those who are interested. Everyone needs to take responsibility not just eco projects.

4.2.2.4 Youth Workers should be provided with training to deliver this topic.

4.2.2.5 There should be a recycling campaign, where each youth centre must have a recycling bin and promote recycling to help combat the littering issues.

4.2.2.6 Set a Green Standards award with sustainability goals and an Environment Day for all Youth Organisations.

4.2.2.7 Youth Services should connect people who are interested in these issues across the country.

4.2.3 Actions suggested for Local Area Youth Services were as follows:

4.2.3.1 Delivery of awareness raising programmes, to include programmes like John Muir's Award, which support young people to protect the environment.

4.2.3.2 More litter bins should be provided, with funding targeted at projects for youth centres and for area projects to complete information sessions.

- 4.2.3.3 Events could be developed showing how things can be reused, for example recycled art or furniture and the positive impact this will have on the environment.
 - 4.2.3.4 There should be notice boards in youth centres dedicated to the environment.
 - 4.2.3.5 Short promotional videos made by young people showing the small changes that can have a big impact.
 - 4.2.3.6 There should be recycling bins in all youth centres and recycling programmes delivered.
 - 4.2.3.7 Young people can lobby councils for more bins in towns as there are not enough for the big events held and encourage councils to redesign bins so it's difficult for seagulls to get in and pull out the litter.
 - 4.2.3.8 Youth Services should plant more trees around youth centres.
 - 4.2.3.9 There should be an Environmental category added to the Youth Oscars.
 - 4.2.3.10 Curriculum resources should be developed for youth workers to use, in partnership with expert environmental agencies.
 - 4.2.3.11 There should be events where local councillors are asked about their environmental credentials by young people.
 - 4.2.3.12 There should be an Environmental Youth Forum developed, which could be built up from local centres, to council level to regional level.
 - 4.2.3.13 Youth Services should develop Environmental Champions within Service provision.
- 4.2.4 Actions suggested for each youth group were as follows:
- 4.2.4.1 Completion of litter pick-ups in local areas.
Youth centres could create wildlife gardens and/or grow own vegetables. This could include developing projects around bird boxes/hedgehog houses/bug hotels
 - 4.2.4.2 Youth Centres should ensure the area around the youth centre is tidy and hold fundraisers to purchase equipment to clean up the area.
 - 4.2.4.3 Educational projects should be developed around waste management and recycling, where young people develop posters and hold information sessions, with parents and other young people.
 - 4.2.4.4 Smaller recycling bins should be placed beside black bins in youth centres to encourage recycling.

- 4.2.4.5 There should be bike facilities at youth centre and schools.
- 4.2.4.6 Programmes should be delivered to increase knowledge and promote awareness and a positive mindset towards environmental issues.
- 4.2.4.7 Promote the use of less plastic in youth facilities.
- 4.2.4.8 Youth groups should apply for Small Grants fund to complete environmental programmes

5.1 Recommendations

5.1.1 The following recommendations were developed in relation to suggested actions, identified during this engagement event.

5.1.2 Priorities should be set by the RAG to be including in the Regional Youth development Plan, as follows:

- training of youth workers on environmental issues
- development of a Green Standards Award for youth settings
- delivery of information and awareness raising workshops
- development of recycling guidelines for youth settings
- give consideration as to how youth settings are powered

5.1.3 Local Youth Services development plans should include:

- appointing Environmental Champions across provision
- delivery of environmental programmes
- provision of recycling facilities at all youth settings
- use of environmentally friendly materials in all projects
- the inclusion of an environmental category at the Youth Oscars
- provision of bike parking facilities at youth centres

5.1.4 Youth Group action plans should include:

- redesigning outdoors environment with trees, where possible
- development of wildlife gardens with bird/bug/hedgehog boxes (where space allows)
- additional litter bins for recycling
- promoting the use of less plastic in youth provision
- utilising the Small Grants funding to develop environmental projects
- provision of litter picking around the local area
- development of educational projects around waste management and recycling

5.2 Future considerations

- 5.2.1 The key themes identified through the stakeholder event should be considered further by the EA Information and Planning team in preparation for the Regional Assessment of Need and will be shared with all local Senior Youth Officers for development of the upcoming action plans.
- 5.2.2 The LAG should take account of the recommended youth service responses to identify issues for future area planning purposes and future service delivery.

List of evidence sources available on request:

- I. Agenda
- II. Video presentations
- III. Notes from workshop groups
- IV. Programme Invite
- V. Attendance Record
- VI. Evaluation Feedback

