



**WHO European Healthy Cities Network
Phase VII (2019-2024)**

Application for Belfast City

City Requirement Four:

Situational Analysis Report

Working Paper

Final Draft Version

WHO European Healthy Cities Network Phase VII (2019-2024) Application for Belfast City

City Requirement Four: Situational Analysis Report

1. INTRODUCTION

Each city applying to be a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network in Phase VII is required to complete and provide a **City Situational Analysis**.

As detailed in the framework document prepared by WHO Europe, this analysis is an initial assessment of the local situation in relation to the goals and core themes of Phase VII.¹ In short, it is expected to look at the city, as it currently stands, in relation to, and through the prism of, the goals and themes of the Phase VII framework. This allows for the identification of the health and well-being areas that the city is performing well in; along with the identification of particular challenges, or areas of strengthening, that the city needs to prioritise and address.

There are six core themes: People; Place; Planet; Participation; Prosperity; and Peace (Figure 1). These themes align closely to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (Figure 2). The themes are also very relevant to the actions being taken forward in the overarching public health strategy for Northern Ireland; Making Life Better: A Whole System Strategic Framework for Public Health, 2013 to 2023; the desired outcomes of the Draft Programme for Government published by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2016 (Figure 3); and the community plan for the city of Belfast, The Belfast Agenda: A New Vision for Belfast in 2035 (Figure 4);



Figure 1: Priority themes for Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network

¹ WHO Europe, *Implementation Framework for Phase VII (2019-2024) of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network: Goals, Requirements and Strategic Approaches* (2019), available at: http://www.euro.who.int/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/400277/04-FINAL-Phase-VII-implementation-framework_ENG.PDF?ua=1



Figure 2: The 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Programme for Government Outcomes

List of Programme for Government Outcomes

1. We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy
2. We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment
3. We have a more equal society
4. We enjoy long, healthy, active lives
5. We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential
6. We have more people working in better jobs
7. We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other
8. We care for others and we help those in need
9. We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity
10. We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest
11. We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure
12. We give our children and young people the best start in life

Figure 3: The 12 Northern Ireland Programme for Government Outcomes



Figure 4: The Goals of the Belfast Agenda

The following report presents the situational analysis of the City of Belfast in preparation for its application to Phase VII. The report reflects the information provided through a process of engagement by Belfast Healthy Cities with representatives of public sector organisations and government departments. During this engagement, a wide range of current and planned initiatives were highlighted. Belfast Healthy Cities recognises that this is not a comprehensive picture of the full range of work taking place in the city in which is relevant to the Phase VII themes, in particular by the very many community and voluntary organisations who are active in the city.

Structure of report

This report is divided into two sections. The first section details the programmes and initiatives identified in Belfast during the stakeholder engagement exercise set out against each of the six Phase VII themes. Hyperlinks have been included where available to facilitate additional information to be provided for specific initiatives.

The second section sets out priority areas for development during Phase VII which emerged during the stakeholder engagement exercise and at the Phase VII workshop in November 2019.

Methodology

In preparing this analysis of the city of Belfast, Belfast Healthy Cities initially identified the key stakeholders that shape health, well-being and social care delivery within the city. Following the identification of key personnel within each organisation or government department, a two-stage engagement process was undertaken:

1.1 Situational Analysis Questionnaire

Representatives from each of the organisations engaged were asked to complete a brief questionnaire. Respondents were asked to describe the established or emerging priorities for their organisations in relation to the WHO themes. For ease of completing the questionnaire, it was divided into three themed sections: Investing in Healthy People; Investing in Healthy Places and Investing in a Healthy Planet. Priority areas fell under a number of themes and these three themes covered all the priority areas from the six themes. (Appendix A).

1.2 Face to Face Meetings

On the basis of the feedback received from the questionnaire, a face-to-face meeting was conducted to discuss the work of the department/organisation in relation to the issues they highlighted were of importance. The aim of this discussion to identify specific programmes of work or initiatives for each area, and, where possible, to consider if there were any areas of their work that they felt could be strengthened in the future.

Between August 2019 and September 2019, meetings were conducted with the following organisations and government departments:

- Public Health Agency (PHA) *
- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSC)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) *
- Belfast City Council (BCC)
- Education Authority (EANI) *

- Department of Education (DE) *
- Department for Communities (DfC) *
- Department for Infrastructure (DfI) *
- Department for Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) *
- Department of Health (DoH) *
- Department of Justice (DoJ) *
- The Executive Office (TEO) *

* Government departments largely have responsibility for formulating policy across Northern Ireland. It should be noted that the PHA, NIHE and EA have responsibility for delivering/implementing government and/or formulating policy, alongside some government departments. Therefore, programmes and initiatives identified through these discussions are regional. However, they apply to Belfast and, where possible, departments provided examples of policy implementation within the city.

Following each meeting, the initiatives and programmes described, were aligned across the Phase VII six themes to inform this report for WHO Europe.

1.3 Phase VII Stakeholders Workshop

On 22 November 2019, a workshop was held at which 60 participants, invited by the Lord Mayor of Belfast from organisations across the city, considered what the priorities should be for the City during its participation in Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network. Participants were asked to consider the priorities under each of the six themes.

Initiatives taking place in Belfast relevant to the Six Phase VII Themes of the WHO Healthy Cities Network

2.1 Theme One: PEOPLE

Investing in the people who make up our cities

Healthy early years, including positive early-childhood experiences

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 2.1, 2.2, 3.7, 5.6

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12

Providing a strong and healthy foundation for all children and young people is a key goal for all the organisations and government departments who participated in the engagement process.

Giving every child the Best Start is the first theme in [Making Life Better: A Whole System Strategic Framework for Public Health](#). Under this theme there are three key outcomes: Good quality parenting and family support; Healthy and confident children and young people; and Children and young people skilled for life.

The [Belfast Agenda](#) has set out the ambition that by 2035, 'Every young person leaving school has a destination that fulfils their potential'.

DE leads the development of the [Children and Young People's Strategy](#) that aims to invest in improving all aspects of children and young people's lives through better service provision.

The Department for Communities (DfC) leads on the Child Poverty Strategy. 'New Decade New Approach' which commits to the Programme for Government setting a shared strategic vision for the future with the aim of improving well-being for all by tackling disadvantage and driving economic growth on the basis of objective need. The most recent Child Poverty Strategy aimed to reduce Child Poverty and mitigate against the impacts of Child Poverty. Annual Reports are published to demonstrate the effect of measures taken.

The cross departmental [Early Intervention and Transformation Programme \(EITP\)](#) aims to ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential by equipping parents with the skills needed to give their children the best start in life.

A range of early intervention programmes are delivered across Belfast, one of which is the [Family Nurse Partnership](#), developed by the PHA and backed by the EITP.

BHSCT provides a [Health Visitor service](#) to all parents with pre-school children. For the particular care of sick children, the Trust provides a [Community Children's Nursing Service](#) that provides specialist care in a community setting along with a team of [Community Paediatricians](#). Their work links with the Trust's [Complex Needs Team](#) that brings together health and social care professionals in order to provide a more streamlined and efficient service for children with complex health needs.

In the formal education setting, DE's [Extended Schools Programme](#) aims to help improve the educational, health and social outcomes for disadvantaged children and young people, while its [Pre-school provision](#) programme provides a year of funded education upon request

by parents. The department has developed the [Getting Ready to Learn](#) initiative, delivered by the EA.

The [Northern Ireland Curriculum](#), at both primary and secondary levels, focusses on issues related to healthy lifestyles and healthy behaviours, with a particular emphasis placed on health prevention. The curriculum also places emphasis on developing knowledge, skills and understanding around physical, social and psychological health. Supporting this, BHSCT provide a [School Nurses Programme](#) that operates in all the city's primary and post-primary schools.

At local level, DE supports the [Greater Shankill Early Years Project](#) that seeks to assist children transitioning into – or between – formal education, and the West Belfast [Sharing the Learning](#) project that aims to raise educational attainment levels in deprived communities.

DfC, has responsibility for the delivery of [Universal Credit](#) which provides help with the costs of housing, children, childcare and other living costs.. Additionally, DE, as part of the NI Executive's [Childcare Strategy, Bright Start](#), operate – in conjunction with the Health and Social Care Board – a school age grant scheme that aims to reduce the cost of childcare costs through the provision of breakfast clubs, after school clubs and summer schemes.

BHSCT has developed the [HYPE Programme](#) that provides young people with information, knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and well-being.

The EA provides a [Youth Service](#) that operates in youth centres across the city². Belfast City Council (BCC), through its role on the [Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Belfast Outcomes Group](#), leads the [Belfast Youth Forum](#) that brings together forty young people from across the city. Through the [Youth Justice Agency \(YJA\)](#), DoJ offers a range of services to young people both in community and custodial settings with the aim of preventing offending and re-offending, while the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) operates the [Youth Diversion Scheme](#) that provides a restorative framework for the police to deal with children and young people who come to their attention for certain behaviours. Aimed specifically at young people in post-primary education, the DoJ offers the [Blackout School Resource](#) in partnership with the Lyric Theatre in Belfast and Hydebank Wood College.

For those young people aged between 12 and 17 years who cannot live at home BHSCT provides [Residential Care facilities](#) across 6 homes where specialised staff prepare young people for independent living. NIHE shares responsibility with BHSCT for providing young people with appropriate independent living arrangement.

For younger children BCC runs its [Play Service](#) that provides play centres across the city, particularly in areas where there are limited other play opportunities. The Council also provides an [Outreach Play Service](#) through which it delivers sessions directly to voluntary and community groups. In addition, DE has developed a [Play Matters](#) programme based on outdoor play that encourages parents and children to play and learn together in non-formal environments. The [Strategic Investment Fund \(SIF\)](#) funds further development of play facilities in local communities including extensions to the Taughmonagh SureStart centre and the McSweeney Centre³.

² It should be noted that the EA Youth Service operates outside of Belfast as well.

³ A full list of the projects funded through SIF across Belfast is available at: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/social-investment-fund-projects>

All departments acknowledge the importance of providing mandatory safeguarding training for those who work directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults. EA's designated [Child Protection Support Service](#) provides advice and guidance to schools and youth groups, while the BHSC runs the [Keeping Children Safe Project](#) that supports the safeguarding training needs of the community and voluntary sector.

Healthy Older People [addressing the health and well-being of older people]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 2.2, 3.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

[Making Life Better: A Whole System Strategic Framework for Public Health](#), sets Healthy Active Ageing as a key outcome measure within its key theme Equipped for Life. In line with this objective, DfC has developed the [Active Ageing Strategy](#), which is supported by all government departments.

BHSC provide a network of [Community Nursing services](#) across Belfast that offers nursing care in people's homes along with community health centres, while its [Community Nurse InReach Team](#) provides patients with access to skilled nurses without having to visit hospital. BHSC has also developed a [Community Mental Health Team for Older People \(CMHTOP\)](#) to provide older people with advice and guidance on health issues, including dementia (through dedicated [Dementia Navigators](#)).

PHA's [Choose to Live Better Campaign](#) includes older people and promotes the benefits of physical activity and healthy eating for healthy ageing.

BCC provide a range of [concessionary schemes](#) to encourage older people to use council leisure facilities. The Council has also set up a new all-party working group on ageing to ensure that measures to support older people will be at the heart of all its strategies.

Belfast is a member of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) co-ordinates the delivery of the Age-friendly Belfast Plan

NIHE's [Older People Housing Policy Review Action plan](#) aims to ensure the availability of housing developments for older people that support continued independent living. NIHE is currently piloting projects around the development and use of assisted living technology to meet the future housing needs of older people and developing its evidence base through its participation in the [HAPPI: Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation](#) project.

Reduced Vulnerability [addressing the causes of social exclusion]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 1.2, 3.4, 3.7, 5, 5.6, 10, 16.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

BHSC provides access to basic health services for single homeless people living in temporary hostel accommodation and rough sleeping through its [Door Step Project](#).

PHA aims to tackle food poverty by funding the [Fare Share Programme](#).

NIHE works with relevant external agencies to support and provide assistance for tenants with learning and physical disabilities and those with complex needs, in order to ensure they have the most appropriate housing accommodation and can live independently.

In relation to children and young people, DE delivers several programmes that seek to reduce the negative impact of deprivation on educational attainment levels. Its [Free Schools Meals Programme](#) aims to ensure that all children have the benefit of a hot nutritional meal on a daily basis. DE also provides [Full Service Extended Schools](#) (in North Belfast) and the [Full Service Community Network](#) (in West Belfast) to support and maximise the learning and achievement of children at risk of low educational attainment. The department also provides a [School Uniform Grant](#), the [Educational Maintenance Allowance](#), which is jointly funded by the Department for the Economy, and a [Period Poverty](#) scheme that provides free sanitary products to girls in a small number of primary and post-primary schools.

The Department for Communities has continued to contribute towards tackling poverty as part of its responsibility under the Programme for Government Outcome 'We care for others and help those in need'. The Department for Communities is leading on the development of a new Anti-Poverty Strategy which will aim to tackle poverty, social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on objective need.

Financial assistance is provided to families on lower incomes through the NIHE's [Housing Benefit and Rate Relief](#) and the [Universal Credit](#) social benefit scheme.

In relation to newcomer and migrant communities, EA offer advice and guidance to schools around addressing the needs of newcomer and migrant through its [Intercultural Education Service](#).

The Executive Office is responsible for the delivery of the cross government [Racial Equality Strategy](#) while it has also developed a range of [audio-visual public resources](#) that aim to capture, promote and raise public awareness of the work of local organisations on promoting diversity in society.

Mental Health and Well-Being [addressing the provision of safe and supportive mental health services]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 3.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

Policy development on the development of mental health services in Northern Ireland is led by the DoH. It's upcoming [Mental Health Policy Statement](#) builds on the [You in Mind](#) Regional Mental Health Care Pathway that recognised all treatment and care needs should be personalised and recovery oriented. DoH also lead the [Protect Life 2: Suicide Prevention Strategy](#) that aims to influence attitudes and behaviours around mental health as well as reducing suicide attempts.

BHSCT manages the [Community Mental Health Teams](#), and has designed a [One Point Referral](#) system that is aimed at bringing all first mental health referrals for 18-65 year olds together.

PHA commissions a wide range of services to support people's emotional health and well-being, as well as leading a range of public awareness initiatives around mental health. Its ['Minding your Head'](#) initiative provides resources and information for individuals experiencing mental health issues, while its ['Change your Mind: Mental Health – Ask. Listen. Talk. A simple guide to helping others'](#) campaign provides advice and guidance to those caring for someone with a mental health issue. [Take 5: Steps to Wellbeing](#) initiatives are also being rolled out across Belfast.

To directly assist those facing mental health crises, BCC has introduced the [Safer Talk](#) programme that uses trained Park Wardens and Safer Neighbourhood Officers to provide support.

The [Belfast Recovery College](#) provides a range of freely available courses on mental health.

The EA's Youth Service, along with the PHA, supports the delivery of the [FLARE: Facilitating Life and Resilience Education](#) programme that aims to raise awareness of mental health, resilience and coping strategies among school pupils. PHA and BHSCT have developed the [Roots of Empathy](#) programme for a similar purpose, while schools in Belfast also have access to the [Each Amazing Breath](#) programme that highlights the importance of mindfulness with children.

DoJ, in cooperation with DoH, provide health care provision to individuals in their care in line with the [Health in Justice Strategy and Action Plan](#) that also includes the development of a [PSNI Mental Health Triage](#) system.

Revitalised Public Health Capacity [addressing developments and improvements in public health capacity]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.c

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DAERA are involved with raising public health awareness around environmental issues. Most recently, for example, it launched its [Quarry Water is a Stone Cold Killer](#) campaign that highlighted the dangers of swimming in disused quarries, the health risks posed, as well as the potential risk to life.

DfI has responsibility for the development and promotion of [public service/awareness campaigns around road safety](#), challenging negative driving behaviours such as drink driving, texting and wearing seatbelts⁴.

Innovative public health practice across the city focusses on improving access to public health services and information by placing a range of services within the community setting. PHA has supported the development of [Healthy Living Centres](#) as a model of community based provision of services in communities experiencing disadvantage and health inequalities.

PSNI leads the rolling out of [Support Hubs](#) in collaboration with local councils and a range of agencies to streamline access to information and signpost services to local residents who may be experiencing a range of problems.

The work around the development of public health capacity includes the continuing professional and capacity development training of staff. DoH has a [Workforce Development Unit](#) that focuses specifically on the professional development of all health and social care staff.

PHA is involved in the delivery of public health capacity building training. Its [Public Health training](#) programme provides postgraduate training for doctors who want to specialise in public health medicine.

⁴ While the response to this area addresses the public health awareness campaigns developed by DAERA and DfI, there are further examples of such initiatives and programmes noted in other sections of this report – for example, in the mental health, healthy eating and smoking cessation awareness campaigns developed by the PHA.

There are a wide range of courses available at Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University related to building public health capacity.

Belfast Healthy Cities, with funding from PHA, provide training programmes on health inequalities and hold a series of seminars to increase knowledge on health determinants.

Healthy Diet and Weight [addressing the issues of healthy diet and weight]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

As part of its 'Making Life Better' strategy, PHA is supporting a range of public information campaigns on Healthy Diet and Weight. For example, the [Cook It! initiative](#) is a nutrition programme that has been developed for use in local communities. Working with a range of partners in its delivery, BCC has produced the [Chinese Healthier Menu Toolkit](#), to encourage healthier cooking approaches to this popular cuisine.

DoH's [Obesity Strategy and Outcomes Framework: A Fitter Future for All](#) framework recognises the importance of early intervention for addressing obesity. The PHA is responsible for leading on the non-departmental aspects of the framework through the multi-agency Regional Obesity Prevention Implementation Group. The [Nutrition Matters for the Early Years](#) guidance is an example that is targeted towards those working in childcare provision.

DoH is currently working alongside partners in Healthy Ireland to develop an all-island Childhood Obesity Awareness Campaign that aims to make parents more aware of ways to avoid childhood obesity.

DoH is currently engaged in a [review of nutritional standards](#) of food offered across the health and social care sector in Northern Ireland. This work is being undertaken in partnership with the Food Standards Agency, the PHA and Safefood.

DE, in partnership with DoH, has developed the [Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes Policy](#). This policy aims to develop knowledge and skills in relation to understanding healthy eating and healthy lifestyles through curricular activities. Schools also have the discretion around the development of a customised healthy eating policy⁵. DE is presently working with the Food Standards Agency and PHA in order to develop new nutritional standards for all food cooked on site as well as the nutritional offer in schools, with a view to make these operational in September 2020.

Reduced Harmful Use of Alcohol [addressing alcohol consumption and moderation]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.5, 12.8

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DoH has set out the regional framework for reducing the harmful use of alcohol and drugs in the [New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs](#).

⁵ A 2015 survey found that 85% of schools have developed a healthy eating policy.

At local level [Drugs and Alcohol Co-ordination Teams](#) (DACTs) have been established to address alcohol misuse through the development of events, initiatives and resources. PHA is responsible for bringing together Northern Ireland's five DACTs in a Regional Steering Group and has also developed other public guidance including [Focus on Alcohol: You, your child and alcohol](#); and [Alcohol, drugs and older people](#).

BCC, through the Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU), prioritises the tackling of alcohol related health issues within Belfast by advocating for minimum pricing and licensing changes.

BHSCT provides treatment for alcohol addiction through its Community Addictions Teams (CATs) that support people who are undergoing a home detoxification supervised by their GP. BHSCT's Addiction Day Treatment Services (ADTS) offer a range of treatment options for people who require help and support in dealing with their substance misuse.

Within the criminal justice system, the [Alcohol and Drugs: Empowering people through therapy](#) (AD:EPT) programme is provided to deliver a comprehensive drug and alcohol service to individuals in custody through a multi-disciplinary team of health and social care professionals.

Tobacco Control [addressing preventive and cessation measures around smoking]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.a

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

The policy direction regarding smoking at a Northern Ireland level is the DoH's [Tobacco Control Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) that focuses in particular on children and young people; pregnant women and parents; and disadvantaged people.

PHA provides direct assistance to individuals through smoking cessation services such as nicotine replacement programmes that are made available through pharmacies and GPs. PHA also make 'Quit Kits' available free of charge through its [Stop Smoking](#) website and support a number of smoking prevention resources targeting children and young people – such as *Teenage Kicks* and [Smokebusters](#) – that detail the health risks associated with smoking and tips for quitting smoking.

As part of the council's statutory responsibility for enforcing smoking legislation, BCC has produced [Tobacco Retailers Advice](#) articulating the legal requirements and statutory responsibilities retailers have in relation to selling tobacco products. The council also carries out checks on tobacco retailers to ensure they are adhering to the law.

Human Capital [addressing the provision of social, economic and employment opportunities for all people]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 8.5, 8.8, 10.2

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

All organisations and government departments who took part in the engagement exercise acknowledge the relationship between broader social, economic and employment issues and their impact on the health of citizens.

PHA, working alongside the BHDU, promotes this broader understanding of public health in its *Lifelong Learning* strand of work. PHA has developed [Health and Well-Being at Work](#) guidance that focuses on issues related to the physical working environment, and the psychosocial and personal health components of the workplace. Through this initiative, the organisation promotes the WHO's eight step tool for organisations developing a healthy workplace strategy.

[Belfast Agenda](#)'s Working and Learning Board aims to deliver a Belfast Employability Programme and an integrated city programme to address educational underachievement. The Council also manages a range of free support programmes that seek to improve economic and employment opportunities for its residents. The [City for Start-Ups Programme](#) and the [Belfast Enterprise Academy](#) provides support for individuals on developing a business, while the [Belfast Employment Academies](#) offers opportunities for improving skills and employability. Other initiatives include the [Pathway to Construction Programme](#) and the [GCSE Maths and English Support Programme](#).

NIHE aims to improve the economic activity within communities by supporting individuals, as well as organisations, in the development of social enterprise activities through its [Social Housing Enterprises Programme](#).

DoJ has developed a [Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise](#) funding model to upskill prisoners as part of their preparation for release and re-entry into the community.

Social Trust and Social Capital [social interaction and connections]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 10.2. 10.3

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10

DfI recognises that the built environment can play an important role in supporting social interaction and encourages planners to facilitate this by adopting the creation and enhancement of shared space as one of the core principles of the [Strategic Planning Policy Statement](#) (SPPS).

The Executive Office seeks to support the development of facilities that encourage participation in social activities through the ***Strategic Investment Fund***, while its T:BUC strategy aims to encourage social trust by fostering positive community relations through initiatives such as [Urban Villages](#) and [Summer Camps](#).

The Executive Office has also established the [Communities in Transition](#) project that seeks to work in partnership with statutory agencies, including law enforcement and the criminal justice system to build safe and confident communities.

NIHE's [Community Cohesion Strategy](#) aims to support the development of strong and positive relationships between people of different backgrounds.

EA deliver [Shared Education](#) programmes, funded by Peace IV, DE, TEO and Atlantic Philanthropies, that support schools from different sectors to work in partnership and provide opportunities to build a culture of good relations between pupils, staff and the wider community.

PHA seeks to develop social cohesion and trust through various programmes and initiatives such as [Cook It!](#) and [FareShare](#), while BHSCCT offers day care services and supported housing that aim to help older people remain active within their communities.

2.2 Theme Two: PLACE

Designing urban places that improve health and well-being

Healthy places and settings [improving working and living conditions]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 11.1, 11.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11

As part of the Executive Office's [T:BUC strategy](#), the [Urban Villages](#) initiative aims to foster positive community relations by encouraging shared use of spaces and facilities across communities with a history of deprivation and community tension.

DfC's [Belfast Regeneration Directorate](#) works with a wide range of partners to deliver on a range of urban regeneration projects, including public realm improvement and accessibility studies.

DfC sponsors the [Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture and the Built Environment](#) (MAG) with the aim of advising planners and urban design professionals on how to improve the quality of places across Northern Ireland. MAG and DfI have jointly established the [Strategic Design Group](#) (SDG) that aims to showcase examples of good placemaking for example through the development of its [Living Places](#) guidance. DoF, DfC and DfI in 2019 sponsored an Innovation Lab on town centres which developed a number of proposals to make town centres attractive places in which to live, visit and invest. This included consideration of the authenticity and attractiveness provided by the historic environment, which is also a responsibility of DfC.

DfI's [Active Travel](#) agenda promotes the use of public transport and walking and cycling with the support of PHA. This includes the publication of [Northern Ireland Changing Gear – a Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) and [Exercise Explore Enjoy – A Strategic Plan for Greenways](#). DoH also supports place-based demonstration projects that focus on providing tangible physical improvement within local communities.

DAERA has launched a public consultation discussion document on the planned [Environment Strategy](#) that covers a diverse range of issues including air quality, landscape protection and enhancement, water quality, litter, and biodiversity. The department also facilitates the reuse of derelict land.

Working directly with local communities, DAERA supports the [Keeping Northern Ireland Beautiful](#) initiative that aims to promote cleaner, greener and more sustainable environment by improving education in schools, increasing public engagement for communities in need and raising environmental standards for all public environments.

As part of its commitment to ensure that all schools serve all educational needs, EA seeks to improve accessibility, security and the use of green and play spaces within its school estate and to promote educational facilities for wider community use.

NIHE aims to ensure that its housing stock provides secure, healthy and sustainable housing to live in, particularly in relation to meeting the future needs and aspirations of older people.

Healthy urban planning and design [supporting a built environment that promotes access to services]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.9, 11.3

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

The [Regional Development Strategy](#) influences the future distribution of development throughout Northern Ireland, whereas the [Strategic Planning Policy Statement](#) (SPPS) provides the overarching strategic framework for the local planning system. The SPPS provides policies and guidance on a range of important planning topics including housing design, access to services and transport and public spaces, while recognising the impact the built environment has on people's health and well-being.

DfI is responsible for the production of additional regional planning policy and guidance and is currently preparing a new [Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan](#). The objectives of the plan include supporting the outcome of improved health and well-being contained in the BCC's [Community Plan](#) and [Local Development Plan](#) (LDP) by seeking to reduce car traffic and the associated impacts on road safety, air quality and carbon emissions.

BCC is responsible for implementing the LDP and working alongside planners and developers to ensure that urban developments' incorporate high quality design and energy efficient solutions.

NIHE work closely with planners to ensure that new housing schemes consider access to services.

EA produces Area Plans to ensure that all its educational facilities meet local needs.

DfI's [Concessionary Fares Scheme](#) makes access to public transport easier for members of the community who are deemed most at risk of social exclusion such as older people and people with a disability.

A [Hospital Travel Costs Scheme](#) is available to people on a low income and enables them to claim back travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment.

Healthy Transport [public transport, traffic congestion and road safety]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 11.2

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

DfI and the Transport Holding Company are responsible for public transport services across Northern Ireland. They recognise that many public transport journeys incorporate active travel and have health benefits.

As part of DfI's [Sustainable Travel Agenda](#), public transport vehicles and EA's school transport vehicles are being replaced by eco-friendly vehicles that reduce carbon emissions, while planning guidelines and policy restrict the availability of car parking in new urban developments. DoH promotes the health related benefit of initiatives that are part of this agenda including Active Travel programmes and Greenway developments.

DAERA has been working on developing a draft Clean Air Strategy. This involves close collaboration with other Departments and officials continue to work together to finalise the draft

discussion document on the Clean Air Strategy. Once complete, Minister Poots will consider the options for issuing the draft Clean Air Strategy discussion document for public consultation.

DAERA also aims to raise awareness among farmers of the potential of new technologies in reducing air pollution in the agricultural industry.

DfI carries out ongoing development work on the physical infrastructure to tackle traffic bottlenecks as well as to improve the safety and efficiency of the road network. Measures include: enhanced bus lanes; Park and Ride facilities; collision remedial measures; improved pedestrian crossings and traffic calming schemes such as the 20mph speed limit introduced in Belfast city centre.

DfI works alongside the PSNI on clearing obstructions on roads (e.g. breakdowns/minor traffic collisions) to ease traffic congestion with the help of the [Traffic Information and Control Centre](#).

Upgrades to the traffic control systems including vehicle detection technology; bus priority lanes; Puffin crossings for pedestrians, and Toucan crossings for cyclists also help to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

DfI has responsibility for developing public awareness around the use of sustainable modes of transport and road safety for drivers, for example through its [Share the Road to Zero](#) website.

Road safety campaigns focus on drink driving, carelessness and inattention, speeding and target young people in particular. Lessons on road safety and public transport are all integral aspects of the NI Curriculum's Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Area for Learning and organisations can avail of the [Road Safety Calendar](#). The [Skooter practical training resource](#) aims to develop skills among children around observing potential dangers and crossing the road safely and is offered to primary schools from socially deprived areas.

The [Cycling Proficiency Scheme](#) delivers training in schools on road safety using the National Standards for Cycle Training and Road Safety Advice. The [Junior Road Safety Officer](#) scheme provides a range of resources to allow primary schools to nominate pupils as Junior Road Safety Officers who work to help promote road safety issues within the school and the local community. DfI and PHA jointly fund an Active School Travel programme, supporting pupils to walk and cycle to school. The [Environmental Noise Directive \(Directive 2002/49/EC\)](#) (END) aims to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. It focuses on the impact of such noise on individuals, complementing existing EU legislation, which sets standards for noise emissions from specific sources. The END requires that noise mapping and action planning to be undertaken every five years. DAERA coordinates this work.

District Councils are required to review the air quality within their districts. Where standards or objectives are not achieved or are not likely to be achieved, a district council can declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The relevant standards and objectives can be found in the [Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 2007](#). Following designation, an Air Quality Action Plan must be prepared.

BCC promotes the issue of improving air quality throughout the planning process by developing guidance for developers and consultants and requesting occasional air quality assessments, while it also aims to tackle the issue of noise pollution in line with the [Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act](#).

Green spaces [increased access to green spaces]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 11.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11

PHA promotes the physical and mental health benefits that come with the use of green spaces through programme such as [Couch to 5k](#). The [SPPS](#) (Strategic Planning Policy Statement) promotes the environmental benefits of green spaces, but also the opportunities they provide for social interaction, and shared community and recreational activities. EA place particular emphasis on the development and effective use of green spaces for play and recreational purposes for children.

A part of the remit of the Executive Office's [Urban Villages](#) initiative is the development of shared urban green spaces that are accessible to all members of the community.

At local level PHA is currently exploring ways to join up parks in North Belfast to facilitate improved access to green spaces.

NIHE aims to facilitate the development of new green spaces by providing appropriate land.

BCC manages parks within the city and aims to improve access to these green spaces through the organisation of various events, such as [Park Runs](#) and outdoor classrooms for younger people. BCC also aims improve the physical access to and the safety of green spaces and has published a draft [Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan](#) and a draft [Open Spaces Strategy](#) to bring forward a programme of works.

Energy and health [clean energy and energy health inequalities]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.9, 11.6, 12.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

Government departments and public sector bodies are responsible for ensuring that their facilities meet regulated standards on energy efficiency. DoH, for example, applies the [Health Technical Memorandum](#) to the design, installation and operation of its health care facilities. EA uses various clean energy solutions within its educational facilities, including underground heating, efficient use of natural light, and energy efficient appliances. NIHE apply sustainable housing guidelines on new builds and rehabilitation of existing stock. NIHE also seeks to pilot zero carbon housing initiatives.

BCC ensures that national and regional building regulations are adhered to across Belfast, including regulations on energy performance of buildings. It also issues [energy performance certificates](#) that include recommendations for improving energy ratings.

PHA seeks to address the causes and treat the symptoms of fuel poverty through its funding of the [National Energy Action](#) (NEA) charity that enables vulnerable householders to access financial assistance for heating their homes and promotes the importance of domestic energy efficiency.

2.3 Theme Three: PARTICIPATION

Fostering greater participation and partnerships for health and well-being

Healthy older people [prevention of loneliness and isolation]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 2.2, 3.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

As a designated WHO Age Friendly City, BCC is part of the [Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership](#) (HASP) that has developed an [Age Friendly action plan](#) to address issues around social isolation including the organisation of an arts festival for older people and older volunteer awards.

The council has developed a month long programme of activities for elderly people (such as cinema visits, walking tours, walking football, quizzes, tea dances) to provide them with opportunities for connecting with each other and to celebrate the contribution of older people to the city. The council has also designed a guide and toolkit aimed at bringing younger and older generations together.

The Executive Office's [Social Investment Fund](#) has enhanced the opportunities for older people to come together in the community by supporting the development of a range of facilities that specifically address the needs of older people, for example, community cafes.

BHSCT delivers [day care services](#) at a number of Day Centres that aim to help older people to stay within their community by maintaining social life skills. In addition, BHSCT operate a number of [residential homes](#) where care is provided for people aged over 65 years who have physical and cognitive impairment.

Supported housing aims to ensure each tenant can live as independently as possible and provides a range of social activities that give tenants a chance to enjoy each other's company and stay connected with the local community. NIHE provides funding for a range of initiatives to help prevent loneliness among older people through its [Community Cohesion Unit](#). Through its Community Safety Team, NIHE also provides the Good Morning Down programme that aims to reduce feelings of isolation among elderly residents by conducting a daily telephone call among other services.

PHA fund a number of organisations that aim to reduce loneliness and social isolation such as [Engage with Age](#); [Get Out, Get Active](#); [Volunteer Now](#) and the [CLARE Project](#),

DAERA works with the Belfast Hills Partnership to help address the issues of social isolation and loneliness among the farming community.

DfI established the [Concessionary Fares Scheme](#) to promote access to public transport for members of the community who are most at risk of social exclusion such as older people.

The EA has appointed school governors with a focus on engaging with older people in the community.

Reduced vulnerability [social inclusion and improved life opportunities]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 1.2, 3.4, 3.7, 5, 5.6, 10, 16.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

DfC's [Access to Work](#) scheme seeks to overcome employment related obstacles faced by people with disabilities, while its disability programme [Workable](#) provides specialist employment programmes designed to support pupils with disabilities into employment.

DfC also match fund disability projects supported by the [European Social Fund](#) that aim to provide employability and vocational skills training and accredited qualifications to people who are economically inactive and/or have a disability, while the [Parkanaur College](#) was established as a vocational training facility for people with significant disabilities.

BHSCT supports [Reablement](#) as a person-centred approach that helps people to perform their daily life activities so that they can remain living independently within their own home. The BHSCT [Care Management](#) programme works across a number of service areas to support people in their own homes for as long as possible by creating a care plan based on the individual's needs. [Homecare/Home Help Services](#) such as intensive homecare provide personal care and/or domestic services to individuals to enable them to remain at home.

BHSCT's [16+ Transition Service](#) is a specialist service that seeks to support young people who have been in residential care or foster care or have received other social services with moving towards leading independent adult lives by providing advice, financial and practical support around accommodation, education, training, life skills and personal development. The scheme provides young people leaving care with support in becoming independent through the ***GEM Scheme; Employability Forum; and Accommodation Programme.***

The Probation Service, in partnership with NIACRO (Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders), delivers the [ASPIRE](#) project that works with marginalised young men who are at risk of becoming involved in criminality/paramilitary activity to prevent and reduce offending.

DoJ has developed a [Victims Charter](#) which sets out the entitlements and services that victims of crime can expect to receive from a range of service providers, while its [Witness Charter](#) sets out the support available for witnesses who are involved in the prosecution of a crime. DoJ also runs a programme in collaboration with DE that seeks to improve imprisoned fathers' relationships with their young children through play.

DE leads on the [Getting Reading to Learn](#) programme that aims to encourage parents to become involved in their child's early learning by empowering them to create and sustain positive home learning environments. The programme seeks to provide a conduit through which children with already identified learning or behavioural issues can receive targeted supports including Health Visitors, Speech and Language therapists or Physiotherapists. DE has also developed the [Bright Start](#) grant scheme that aims to help reduce the costs of childcare.

EA runs a dedicated [Transition Service](#) to assist children with Special Educational Needs or a disability with preparing for life after formal education.

EA's [Schools of Sanctuary](#) programme is an award scheme that is aimed at promoting schools as safe places where cultural diversity is accepted and celebrated.

The Executive Office's [Minority Ethnic Development Fund](#) aims to assist ethnic minority groups with the promotion of good relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds.

BCC supports the [Refugee and Asylum Seekers Forum](#) and a migrant resettlement forum with the delivery of programmes that seek to help newcomers adjust to life in Belfast.

NIHE's [Community Involvement strategy](#) aims to provide tenants with a platform for getting involved in the practice and delivery of NIHE's services. [Housing Community Networks](#) provide the means for the NIHE and communities to work together towards mutually agreed outcomes.

BCC funds a range of community centres that offer facilities to host crèches; SureStart centres; internet and iPad training; and housing advice programmes. It should be noted not all services in the facilities are funded by BCC. SureStart, for example, is wholly funded by EA.

The Bobbin café in City Hall is run as a social enterprise that provides people with learning difficulties with opportunities for social interaction and skills development by providing them with employment.

Increased physical activity

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 11.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

[Sport Matters](#) is a cross-departmental NI strategy for sport and physical recreation. One of the key pillars of this strategy is increasing participation. Research indicates that since the launch of Sport Matters in 2009 the curve has been turned in terms of participation in sport and physical recreation. There have been significantly increased rates amongst the population as a whole and amongst under-represented groups such as females, people with a disability, older people and people from areas of greatest need since the strategy began. A successor strategy to Sport Matters is currently being developed which will continue to place an emphasis on increasing participation in sport and physical activity, particularly amongst under-represented groups.

[A Fitter Future For All – Outcomes Framework 2015-2019](#) is the cross-Departmental framework for preventing overweight and obesity across the life course of the population of Northern Ireland. This framework contains a range of short, medium and long term outcomes to be delivered over the period 2012-2022.

PHA lead the non-departmental aspects of the framework through the multi-agency Regional Obesity Prevention Implementation Group.

The framework aims to encourage physical activity among school children and this is pursued through the [Active School Travel](#) programme that promotes walking, cycling or scooting for travel to school purposes. [The Daily Mile](#) encourages pupils to walk a mile together during the school day. The PHA has rolled out a regionally consistent Physical Activity Referral Scheme with councils. PHA also supports the [Couch to 5k](#) running plan that helps inactive people to gradually increase their amount of physical activity, while its [Choose to Live Better](#) campaign promotes the benefits of physical activity among older people by providing examples of simple activities.

BCC, in partnership with General Practitioners, facilitates free access to leisure facilities as part of a GP referral scheme. It develops sport facilities through its [Support for Sport](#) scheme.

With support from Sport Northern Ireland's (Sport NI) [Every Body Active 2020](#) programme, BCC aims to encourage citizens to become more physically active, in particular vulnerable or under-represented groups including women and people with a disability. The [Teenage Kicks](#) dance initiative was established to promote physical activity among young people.

As part of its leisure transformation programme, the Council's [Aquatics strategy](#) aims to increase the number of pool visits per year by offering school swimming lessons and encouraging swimming as an activity among women, older people and people with disabilities.

Belfast Health Development Unit (BH DU) runs the [Active Belfast](#) programme that aims to support innovative and sustainable projects that support people to be physically active.

Transformed services delivery [inter-agency working and people-centred care]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 17.17

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DoH is focused on addressing the health needs of people on the 'cliff edge' – e.g. migrants, prisoners, homeless people. The department developed a [Homeless health hub](#) pilot to improve health and social care services for people who are homeless by offering easy access to GP services, nurses, dental care and podiatry.

Funded through DAERA's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme and PHA, NHSCT use a mobile health assessment vehicle that offer [Farm Families health checks](#) at farming markets to make this service more accessible to farmers and their families.

PHA has supported the development of [Healthy Living Centres](#) that showcase a community-led approach to health improvement by providing services and support in communities experiencing disadvantage and health inequalities.

[Primary Care Talking Therapy and Well-being hubs](#) have been set up to provide a new pathway for patients suffering from mental health issues by providing counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), group therapy, life coaching and signposting to other support services.

PHA seeks to work with partners based in communities to develop initiatives and programmes that meet local needs through its [Community Development](#) schemes.

Increased health literacy

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 4, 4.7, 10.2

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12

The Executive Office's [Communities in Transition](#) project aims to help people understand and navigate health and social care services by signposting and producing health information leaflets.

As part of the Belfast Connected Community Care initiative, BHSCT is developing information materials around physical activity and nutrition that will be co-produced with communities in different languages.

DoH, PHA and NIHE support the delivery of [Health Literacy Communication Training for Health Professionals](#), by Belfast Healthy Cities, which seeks to support health care professionals in developing more effective communication of health messages.

BCC promote a number of initiatives that aim to build up people's awareness around health behaviours, including the production of a [Healthier Menu Toolkit](#). The Council also runs the [Healthy Nosh for Less Dosh](#) programme that allows registered nutritionists to deliver a session on how to cook healthy food for less. BCC has developed the [Seniors Info resource](#) and the [Take 5: Steps to Wellbeing](#) leaflet that aims to raise public awareness of (mental) health and well-being.

Culture and health

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 11.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

BCC has developed a [Cultural strategy](#) that aims to enable a sense of diversity and belonging among its residents by encouraging them to participate in the city's different cultural components.

EA's music service aims to promote the physical and mental health benefits associated with playing music and encourage children and young people to learn music through conducting lessons in schools, organising weekly orchestras and providing a dedicated learning facility in the form of the [Belfast School of Music](#).

NIHE aims to fund cultural community initiatives as part of its Community Cohesion initiative.

2.4 Theme Four: PROSPERITY

Improving community prosperity and access to common goods and services

Community resilience

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 11, 16.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

DfC's [People and Place Strategy](#) seeks to address the complex and multi-faceted nature of deprivation in communities and reduce economic inequalities across Northern Ireland. DfC provides financial support to [Neighbourhood Renewal](#) projects across Northern Ireland, some of which are aimed specifically at improving public health outcomes, educational attainment, skills and employability of people living within the most deprived communities.

Neighbourhood Partnerships have been established as a vehicle for partnership working across councils, statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector.

DfC and the [European Social Fund](#) jointly fund projects that provide employability and vocational skills training and accredited qualifications to those economically inactive and/or people with a disability. The Department offers [Employment Support to all](#) people including those with a disability to access or retain employment.

BCC's [Inclusive Growth Strategy](#) aims to ensure that every resident sees a benefit from urban development and economic growth within the city, while its participation in the Rockefeller Foundation's [Resilient Cities](#) programme and related appointment of a [Commissioner for Resilience](#) is aimed at providing a robust framework for making the city's population more resilient in the future.

DAERA's [Environment Fund](#) supports projects that help deliver key environmental outcomes across Northern Ireland, while its [Rural Support Network](#) supports rural businesses with addressing environmental challenges.

EA is currently working to facilitate the wider use of schools as community facilities which can be utilised outside school hours and during summer holidays.

DE's [Priorities for Youth Policy](#) aims to develop the cognitive and interpersonal skills of young people within a more relaxed, non-formal learning environment such as youth centres, while its [Youth Service Workforce Development Plan](#) provides a range of training for Youth Service workers on topics such as autism behaviour management, trauma informed practice and circle of courage training.

BHSCT uses a range of models of care, such as [Restorative Practice](#), [Social Pedagogy](#) and [Therapeutic Crisis Intervention](#), to support young people with conflict-related issues and encourage them to take an active role in their care experience. The Trust also provides accommodation for young people who cannot live at home where staff work alongside other professionals to support young people in their development needs.

NIHE aims to sustain tenancies by supporting tenants to find appropriate housing that matches their needs.

Through the **Strategic Investment Fund**, the Executive Office has funded the [Employment East](#) project that seeks to improve access to employment for disadvantaged people living in East Belfast

Healthy older people [financial protection for elderly people]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 2.2, 3.4

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DoJ, in collaboration with a range of sectors, delivers a range of awareness campaigns, for example, the [ScamWise](#) campaign, that aim to inform older people about the risks posed by scamming and bogus callers.

NIHE provides housing benefits to eligible older age residents including financial mitigation measures for the loss of benefits due to the 'Bedroom Tax'.

BCC operate the [Stay Warm](#) fuel stamp scheme that helps householders save for home heating oil by spreading the cost of their fuel.

PHA and BCC work together alongside BHSCT and Bryson Energy to provide the [Home Safety and Repair Scheme](#) that allows a handyman to visit and provide checks, information, and advice on how to make the home safer.

NIHE promotes community handymen as part of its social enterprise funding that aim to help tenants into self-employment.

Mental health and well-being [social inequity, poverty and isolation]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 3.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DoH has developed a number of [Recovery Colleges](#) that aim to provide educational courses and workshops specifically designed to promote self-management, well-being and recovery to anyone with an interest in mental health and well-being including service users, family members and staff. These colleges combine expertise from mental health professionals and peer trainers with real life experience of mental health challenges.

DE supports the PHA's [Youth Engagement Service](#) that aims to provide young people with specific and targeted support around mental health and well-being, while its Youth Service delivers [Facilitating Life and Resilience Education](#) to raise awareness of mental health, resilience and coping strategies among young people.

DoJ aims to develop a court system that is sensitive to the complexities faced by defendants with challenging mental health concerns.

NIHE aims to improve the mental health of its tenants by providing debt advice, through funding community programmes and social enterprise projects, and supporting people into self-employment or apprenticeship training. NIHE also trains all its officers to signpost access to mental health services through its engagement with tenants.

Healthy housing and regeneration [housing standards]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 11.1

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11

NIHE applies housing standards (including energy standards) to all affordable housing developments to ensure that all tenants live in secure and healthy housing⁶. In addition, NIHE aims to improve the environmental sustainability of its housing stock by introducing solar panels and developing a pilot scheme for zero carbon housing.

Healthy urban planning and design [street design and mobility]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 11.3

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

Through the **Strategic Investment Fund's** capital investment programme, the Executive Office aims to support the development of a built environment that facilitates easy access to services.

⁶ More detail regarding housing is found in Section 3: Place.

The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) for Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland was established in September 2007 by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL). Since the reorganisation of the NI Executive Departments MAG sits within the Department for Communities. MAG's primary role is to advise the Minister for Communities on the implementation and development of the Architecture and the Built Environment policy with a focus on promoting the highest quality of places for all those involved in using and shaping them.

PHA has contributed to the development of the [Belfast Active Travel](#) programme that seeks to improve public health outcomes by encouraging active methods of travel among the population. It also funds the Sustrans' [Community Active Travel](#) programme and Belfast Healthy Cities' [Walkability Assessment](#) scheme that aim to encourage people to take up walking and cycling as part of their daily activities.

The [Active School Travel](#) programme promotes walking and cycling among school pupils and their parents, while the [Workplace Active Travel Scheme](#) seeks to encourage walking and cycling as a mode of transport for commuting purposes by promoting a cycle-friendly accreditation scheme among employers in Belfast and providing a range of services for their employees.

The [Active Travel Challenge](#) seeks to underpin these efforts by recognising those workers who use sustainable methods of transport.

BCC manages the [Belfast Bikes](#) scheme that provides access to bicycles across the city. BHSCF facilitated the expansion of the scheme to the three main hospitals in the city.

DfI provides training to school pupils on cyclist road safety and bicycle maintenance through its [Cycling Proficiency Scheme](#), while DE's [Home to School Transport](#) review aims to ensure the development of a more sustainable and green model for home-school transport.

DfI's current [Sustainable transport agenda](#) aims to improve the safety and efficiency of the road network through the implementation of physical improvements schemes such as enhancement of bus lanes; Park and Ride facilities; traffic calming measures (such as the Belfast City Centre 20mph zone); and controlled pedestrian crossings. The department also aims to establish accessible, safe and attractive bicycle routes through the development of a [Belfast Bicycle Network](#).

Health and well-being as an indicator of success

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

The Northern Ireland Executive has published the Programme for Government Framework which focuses on the major societal outcomes that the Executive wants to achieve and provides a basis for all sectors to contribute to the development of plans and actions.

Outcome 4 of the Framework is: **We enjoy long, healthy, active lives.** Under this outcome the Executive is committed to:

- Creating an excellent health service; ensuring people get the right treatment at the time of need.

- Implementing excellent public health strategies and interventions which aid people to live healthier lives and give them the means to do so.
- Providing people with the right information to allow them to make educated and informed choices about how to live their lives in a healthier way.
- Providing children with the best start in life, supporting parents in their role.
- Tackling poverty and deprivation.

The Framework includes a set of indicators to measure progress towards this outcome.

Transformative economic models for equitable, sustainable development

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 12.4, 12.5, 12.6

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2

DfI is committed to supporting a greener economy by working to achieve a reduction of congestion on roads and improved use of public transport and higher rates of walking and cycling. This endeavour includes the use of new technological solutions.

As part of PHA's tendering process, all services provided by external organisations are judged on their quality together with their cost effectiveness.

Ethical investment for health-promoting, equitable and sustainable development [investments of public funds such as pensions]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 12.6, 12.7

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2

During the engagement exercise, no specific programmes or initiatives relating to this theme were highlighted.

Universal social protection floors at the local level [social security]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 1.3, 3.8

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12

DfC administers the [Universal Credit](#) social security benefit that replaces a range of previous benefits, including child tax credit. Various departments including DoH and NIHE have worked with DfC to facilitate the implementation of mitigation measures that protect benefit claimants from some of the anticipated negative financial impact of Universal Credit.

Commercial determinants of health [resolving tension between commercial and health benefits]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 12.4, 12.5, 12.6

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2

As part of its efforts to promote the use of sustainable food sources, the PHA recommends to source fish for catering purposes in all health and social care facilities from sources that meet the Food and Agriculture Organisation's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

2.5 Theme Five: PEACE

Promoting peace and security through inclusive societies

Health as a Bridge for Peace [health services and community relations]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 3.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

The Executive Office has statutory responsibility for promoting racial equality and its [Good Relations and Social Change](#) strand commits to building a society in which racial equality and diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected. The department has developed and manages the [Racial Equality Strategy](#) that provides a framework for all government departments to tackle racial inequalities. A range of [audio-visual resources](#) have been prepared to promote the work of local organisations in this field. The Executive Office has also set up the [Minority Ethnic Development Fund](#) that aims to support voluntary and community organisations working to promote good relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds.

DfC will lead on the development of a Disability Strategy, a Gender Strategy and a Sexual Orientation Strategy which will aim to tackle the barriers and challenges that people can face.

PHA runs the **LGBT – Creating Inclusive Workplaces** e-learning programme that aims to make workplaces more inclusive.

The development of social cohesion and connectedness is fostered indirectly through a number of other PHA programmes, such as the Cook It Campaign; FareShare; Roots of Empathy; and Hidden Harm Programme.

PHA is developing an **Integration Strategy for Newcomers and Refugees** that seeks to address cultural sensitivities around services offered by engaging with these population groups directly. As part of the [Belfast Connected Community Care](#) initiative, PHA engages with a wide range of communities in the co-production of information materials around physical activity and nutrition.

In order to assist with the understanding of health related issues that the migrant population faces, BHSCT and PHA, working with BHDU, have produced best practice guidance around the legislation that governs the areas of immigration, work, social services and access to social security entitlements, including housing.

BCC's [Good Relations Strategy](#) aims to promote equality across the city and to encourage an appreciation of cultural diversity between people from different religious, political and racial backgrounds. Part of the Council's [Peace IV Programme](#), the [On the Right Track!](#) programme is designed to combine sport and good relations to maximise benefits to participants, clubs and community groups and promote peace and reconciliation.

Peace through Healthy Places

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 11.3

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

The Executive Office's [Together Building United Communities](#) (T:BUC) programme aims to support the building of a shared community in order to allow for the development of children and young people, the growth of a safe community and the fair expression of culture. The removal of interface barriers, by 2023, features as a core aspiration in the programme. Under the programme a number of initiatives are pursued that include environmental improvement schemes and [Summer Camps](#). Through the BHSCT, DoH supports the work undertaken around the removal or repurposing of interface barriers by supporting local communities to deal with the psychological impact.

DfI provides high level guidelines for creating inclusive spaces where all members of the society can feel welcome through the [Strategic Planning Policy Statement](#) (SPPS) that includes 'Creating and Enhancing Shared Space' as one of its core principles. The SPPS also acknowledges that planning can play an important role in promoting healthy living and tackling inequality through facilitating shared play, sporting activities and interaction with others.

As part of its [Community Cohesion Strategy](#), NIHE aims to build confidence, increase dialogue and respect, as well as mutual understanding, by working with communities to develop stronger, safer and united neighbourhoods. The organisation employs a Race Relations Officer and Good Relations Officers to assist with the implementation of the strategy.

Violence and Injury Prevention

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 16

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11

[Policing and Community Safety Partnerships](#) (PCSPs) have been established to address crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour through a range of projects and initiatives.

As a result of the Fresh Start Agreement, Tackling Paramilitarism is a principal commitment of the Executive. The [Organised Crime Task Force](#) (OCTF) provides a strategic multi-agency forum for tackling organised crime .

DoJ works in conjunction with other departments to deliver the [Action Plan for Tackling Paramilitarism, Criminality and Organised Crime](#). The action plan focusses on the long term prevention of paramilitary behaviour; building capacity across the community to support transition; and building confidence within the Justice System. Examples of initiatives taken forward as part of the action plan are the [Ending the Harm](#) public awareness campaign; the development of [CCEA teaching resources](#) around active citizenship; as well as the EA's delivery of capacity building programmes for teachers and youth workers who support children at risk of paramilitary activity.

DoH, in collaboration with DoJ, supports initiatives that have a health focus such as the [Substance Misuse Courts](#) and the [Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy](#).

EA's [Children and Young People's Services](#) promotes restorative justice practices, while youth workers are employed to engage with young person directly to empower them to achieve their goals.

DoJ has established a [Sexual Violence Reduction Group](#), while the department is progressing work on a victim advocacy service, domestic homicide reviews, and behavioural change programmes through its [Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy](#). The department has also piloted Domestic Violence Behavioural Change Programmes in collaboration with the Probation Board and consideration to rolling this out is ongoing. PHA has developed an information campaign that seeks to empower frontline workers in children's services to support children and young people affected by parental problems around alcohol and other drug use.

BCC has been awarded the ONUS [Safe Places](#) accreditation that recognises its efforts to provide safe places across the city where victims of domestic violence or domestic abuse can access appropriate services. The council has also adopted a [Workplace Charter on Domestic Violence](#) and runs a trusted colleague scheme that encourages victims to speak out and access professional assistance.

Human Security [emergency planning]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 11, 16

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

DfI has developed and tested processes and procedures for coordinating responses to emergency events.

DAERA has produced a range of emergency and contingency plans that seek to address environmental crises such as pollution incidents and flooding events.

DoJ is involved in multi-agency contingency planning for addressing civil emergencies such as potential public disorder.

PHA, in conjunction with the DoH, has produced extensive and well-rehearsed processes and procedures for addressing health emergencies.

NIHE has an emergency unit that aims to deal with emergency situations around housing.

BCC has developed contingency plans in conjunction with the relevant statutory authorities to respond to emergency situations.

Health Security [developing international health relations]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.8

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

DoH is the principal department responsible for managing any public health crises such as infectious diseases, food security and disruption to medical supply chains.

PHA maintain surveillance arrangements to identify and respond to outbreaks of infection.

As part of the DoH's responsibilities, the department manages the [Regional Health Command Centre](#) and ensures that all regional guidance is closely aligned with the national development policies such as the [Northern Ireland Civil Contingencies Framework](#).

BHSCT works to reduce public health emergencies by protecting children and young people through its [School vaccination programme](#).

Mental Health and Well-being [mental health and community relations]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3.4, 3.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 8, 12

As part of the Executive Office's [Action Plan for Tackling Paramilitarism, Criminality and Organised Crime](#), the [Communities in Transition](#) project was developed with the aim to support communities with the transition away from paramilitary activity, criminality and organised crime by building capacity and developing partnerships across civil society and community divisions. The action plan recognises that women play an important role within communities for building a society within which its members feel safe and confident.

The [Women Involved in Community Transformation](#) project helps women develop the skills to work with community and voluntary groups. As part of this project DfC delivered the **Engage** project in conjunction with the Probation Board and Start 360, aimed at ensuring women in the criminal justice system are equipped with the resilience to withstand the pressure from paramilitary influence when they rehabilitate within their communities.

2.6 Theme Six: PLANET

Protect the planet from degradation, leading by example, including through sustainable consumption and production

Climate Change mitigation and adaptation [changing approaches to tackle climate change impact]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 13.2

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2

The Northern Ireland Executive has published the Programme for Government Framework which focuses on the major societal outcomes that the Executive wants to achieve and provides a basis for all sectors to contribute to the development of plans and actions.

Outcome 2 of the Framework is: **We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment**

The Executive in the Framework has set out its commitment to contributing to valuing the place we live in by:

- Protecting the natural and built environment.
- Reducing the local and global impact of our consumption and production.
- Working with business to reduce energy and resource intensity.
- Working with business to minimise its impact on the environment through intelligent regulation.

- Supporting people to live more sustainably.
- Promoting the growth of the knowledge economy.
- Working to increase respect for the environment.
- Helping to improve the quality of the places in which people live, work and play.
- Increasing access to clean, high quality, green spaces.

DoH works to energy efficiency standards across all its estate and technologies/instruments used within health services.

NIHE applies [sustainability requirements](#) on energy sources, heating, ventilation, and lighting on all its housing stock. The organisation is also the statutory authority in Northern Ireland for Housing Energy Conservation.

PHA places significant focus on the promotion of sustainable forms of living through its support of a number of projects, for example by encouraging active travel through its work with Sustrans.

DfI is working to encourage more sustainable transport options such as walking or cycling and has a programme of work to replace the existing stock of public transport and school transport vehicles with low-carbon emission alternatives.

In addition, DfI is liaising with Northern Ireland Water to encourage the use of more sustainable treatment technologies, which would use less energy and reduce operating costs.

DfI is also working with a range of other key stakeholders to develop policy to improve storm water management with the aim of reducing flood risk during high intensity rainfall events. For example, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are promoted as a measure to manage storm water in a more natural and sustainable way.

At local level, BCC has used its [Local Development Plan](#) to encourage the application of a range of climate change mitigation measures within future urban development, for example through its emphasis on Building Environmental Resilience. The Council has also set up a new all-party working group on climate change to ensure that mitigation and adaptation measures will be at the heart of all its strategies.

BCC has appointed a [Resilience Commissioner](#) for Belfast who is currently developing a resilience strategy for the city that includes a specific focus on climate change adaptation.

Protecting biodiversity and transformed urban places

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 15.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2

In September 2019, DAERA launched a draft [Environment Strategy](#) that looks at a diverse range of issues including air quality; landscape protection and enhancement; water quality; litter; and biodiversity.

“The NI Executive’s Sustainable Water – A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040) aims to protect and improve biodiversity. It also aims to improve the quality of the water environment including bathing water”.

“DfI promotes the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as the preferred method of storm water Drainage. SuDS provide significant biodiversity and amenity benefits, particularly in urban environments, over and above their drainage function.”

BCC draft [Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan](#) has adopted improved biodiversity within the city as one of its core principles, while its [Physical investment programme](#) allocates £325m to around 350 projects that contribute to making Belfast a better place to live, work, visit and invest. These projects include the development of a range of natural / green spaces and recreational facilities.

DAERA works directly with local communities and housing estates in the [Live Here Love Here](#) programme that aims to encourage people to keep their local environment clean and more sustainable through initiatives such as [The BIG Spring Clean](#).

The [Keeping Northern Ireland Beautiful](#) charity promotes initiatives such as the Borough Cleanliness Survey; NI Litter Survey and the Marine Litter Survey. It also promotes the improvement of environmental standards by supporting international certification schemes including the Blue Flag Beach; Green Coast Awards; Green Flag Awards; Eco-Schools; Young Reporters on the Environment; and EcoCampus.

PHA funds a number of community gardens and allotments projects.

Health promoting and sustainable municipal policies [reviewing city policies and delivery of services]

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 6.2, 6.5, 11.3, 11.6, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11

DfI aims to encourage organisational change on sustainable practices among its contractors by including sustainability clauses in all its contracts.

BCC is developing a framework that evaluates investment on social value and thereby aligns with the ambitions of the [Belfast Agenda](#). Social value is currently a consideration in the leisure centre transformation programme; employability activities; and social enterprise sector support, while social clauses are integrated within relevant procurement processes.

NIHE has adopted a procurement policy that promotes the use of apprentices as part of any tendered work carried out to its estate.

Waste, water and sanitation

Linked to Sustainable Development Goals: 3, 10.2, 11.3, 11.a, 17.17

Linked to Programme for Government Outcomes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

The NI Executive’s Sustainable Water - A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040), aims to deliver a sustainable water sector in Northern Ireland. This includes providing high quality drinking water, managing flood risk and drainage in a sustainable manner and improving the quality and levels of water in the environment from the source right through to the sea.

The Living with Water Programme (LWWP) is a multi-agency initiative headed by DfI to develop a Strategic Drainage Investment Plan for Belfast to protect against flood risk, enhance the environment and support economic growth. The LWWP is challenging key

stakeholders to work in an integrated way to find more cost-effective and sustainable drainage and wastewater solutions to address the growing problems in Belfast.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), as part of DAERA, is responsible for regulating waste and dealing with environmental crime, while the department also raises awareness of recycling schemes among the public. DAERA is also responsible for legislation and regulation around drinking water quality.

BCC is responsible for ensuring full legal compliance around waste disposal and meeting recycling targets, along with ensuring the reduction of waste going to landfill in line with EU requirements. This involves developing public awareness campaigns and piloting initiatives that aim to change recycling behaviours, including its [Cloth Nappy Scheme](#).

DoH has specific policies and standards/regulations in place to ensure the safe disposal of hazardous clinical waste.

DfI aims to apply lessons from the [Blue-Green Cities Initiative](#) that seeks to provide solutions for drainage issues and reducing flood risk by recreating natural water cycles that bring water infrastructure and green spaces together. The interdepartmental Stormwater Management Group (co-chaired by DAERA and DfI) promotes the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). NI Water has recently been provided with the power to refuse a surface water connection if alternative means of dealing with surface water had not been considered, thereby encouraging the implementation of SuDS.

NIHE has appointed dedicated officers in each region with responsibility for reviewing water supply and assessing the potential spread of disease through water taps.

3. PHASE VII ANALYSIS – Priority development areas for Phase VII

3.1. Theme One: PEOPLE

Investing in the people who make up our cities

The situational analysis highlighted that an extensive range of programmes on **early years** exist in Belfast delivered by statutory, voluntary and community organisations. Although the impact of the built environment on the health and well-being of children and young people is increasingly being recognised, relatively few initiatives are in place to address this issue. There is a need to place increased emphasis on issues including tackling household dysfunction and enhancing support for vulnerable parents.

Older people are being supported through a wide range of programmes and initiatives, while specific programmes are also in place to address the burden of ill health experienced by other **vulnerable populations** including migrants.

Mental health and well-being, and in particular suicide prevention, has been generally acknowledged as an important public health issue and programmes have been put in place to deal with the impact of social isolation and the legacy of the conflict (troubles). At the same time, strategies and actions have not always led to improved mental health and well-being and a need for more effective interventions still exists. There is a recognised need to include users in the design and delivery of mental health services.

A range of initiatives are in place to enhance **public health capacity**. Community organizations/citizens are supported through Healthy Living Centres and efforts have been made to make health facilities more accessible to end users. During the engagement exercise, agencies and departments identified a continued need for effective intersectoral working to tackle the underlying determinants of poor health.

The promotion of **healthy diet and weight** is gaining significant traction. There is a recognised potential to enhance the promotion and implementation of sustainable food policies.

The prevention of **harmful use of drugs, tobacco and alcohol** has been given significant policy attention and a number of guidance and prevention programmes are in place.

Agencies and departments acknowledge the importance of skills development for boosting health and well-being and a number of programmes are in place to help improve the knowledge and skills of citizens.

The importance of **social trust and social capital** for achieving good health and well-being is widely acknowledged and promoted through a range of social cohesion strategies and programmes, although it is acknowledged there is a requirement for ongoing focus on this area.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the Phase VII Workshop highlighted the good practice which was taking place across the City of Belfast in the theme of **People** and considered that a major focus during Phase VII should be to ensure added value to existing programmes. Priority areas for action included:

- Focusing on **Healthy Early Years** including a focus on parenting
- A continued focus on **Healthy Older People**, reflecting the demographic profile of the

- city
- Improving the **Mental Health and Well-being** of citizens
- Building **Public Health capacity** for communities and organisations
- Linking initiatives with **Community Planning** processes

3.2 Theme Two: PLACE

Designing urban places that improve health and well-being

The situational analysis highlighted significant programme development and investment on the priority issues within this theme. There is a clear recognition of the need to deliver **healthy urban planning and design** emerging among public agencies and community sectors.

The situational analysis also identified the need for a whole of government approach to **healthy placemaking**, and that the community planning process and the Local Development Plan have presented new opportunities for doing this.

Combatting the detrimental impact of car dependency, particularly in terms of air quality and road safety, is now recognised as a priority and various programmes and initiatives are in place to reduce the use of private vehicles. However, the levels of car use in the Belfast area are high, particularly among the large number of daily commuters to the city.

Recognition of the benefits of integrated sustainable **healthy transport** systems and improved access and use of **green and blue spaces** is now emerging across agencies and departments. There are a growing number of programmes and initiatives on these issues but there is a recognised need for further development to deliver public health benefits, particularly when compared with experience in other cities in Europe.

Acknowledgement of the need to develop child and age friendly environments is growing and there is the potential to enhance coordinated action on these priority areas.

Reducing fossil fuel dependency and increasing **energy efficiency** of buildings and modes of transport is now widely being pursued by agencies and departments, but there is a need to enhance action in this area if global goals to tackle climate change are to be realised.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the Phase VII Workshop considered that participation of the City of Belfast in the WHO Healthy Cities Network provided the opportunity to learn from the experience of other cities in the Network on tackling issues identified under the theme of **Place**. Priority areas for Belfast during Phase VII included:

- Promoting **Health and Well-being in all Urban Design Policies**
- Promoting **Public Transport**
- Promoting **Inner City Living**
- Investing in **Infrastructure** to meet the needs of a modern city
- Combatting the major issue of **Air Pollution** in the city
- **Greening the City** through creating open spaces and tree planning
- Making the city **Child-friendly** and **Age-friendly**
- Tackling **Fuel Poverty**

3.3 Theme Three: PARTICIPATION

Fostering greater participation and partnerships for health and well-being

The situational analysis highlighted that an extensive range of programmes exist in Belfast on the priority issues within this theme. The well-being of **older people** and other **vulnerable groups** is being supported through a wide range of programmes and initiatives although initiatives to tackle social isolation and relating to gender differences require further development.

It is recognised that the participation of **vulnerable population groups** is underrepresented in relation to public involvement in the development of services.

Participation in **physical activities** is being recognised by agencies and departments as a way to boost social interaction and a sense of belonging in the community, particularly in the context of post-conflict reconciliation. Multiple programmes and initiatives that seek to promote social interaction by offering opportunities for engaging in physical activity are in place, although there is a recognised need to improve the uptake of these programmes among vulnerable groups.

Recent strategic and institutional changes have helped to **transform models of health care** and to deliver local services that have the potential to improve general health and well-being and reduce inequalities. However, it is acknowledged that whole of government, whole of society integrated approaches with strong political leadership require strengthening.

Improving **health literacy**, although relatively new to the city as a concept, is now increasingly being acknowledged by Health and Social Care services as a way to empower those experiencing health inequalities to improve their health and well-being. However, most programmes are at an early stage of development and there is still a need to build capacity within organisations.

Understanding of the importance of **cultural diversity** within Belfast is growing, particularly in relation to using culture to improve community relations, however, recognition of the cultural determinants of health could be enhanced.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the Phase VII Workshop recognised the importance of current initiatives in relation to the theme of **Participation** and highlighted the potential of the **Community Planning process** to involve citizens in improving health and well-being in the city. They suggested that there was the potential for improved alignment of existing programmes to enhance outcomes. Case studies and demonstration projects were recommended to share good practice. Priority areas for Phase VII included:

- Building **Connections with communities** and avoiding multiple and overlapping consultation processes
- **Co-production with communities** when shaping priorities and programmes
- **Increase capacity across sectors** to co-produce and engage with citizens/communities
- Enhancing **Engagement strategies with children and young people, and with older people** and **intergenerational approaches**
- Focusing on the **Health benefits of Cultural activities**
- Building on the success of **Health Literacy action** which started in Phase VI

- Building resilience and self-efficacy in individuals and communities to enable them to take responsibility for their own health.

3.4 Theme Four: PROSPERITY

Improving community prosperity and access to common goods and services

The situational analysis highlighted the work underway in Belfast on the priority issues within this theme. The importance of **creating resilient communities** which empower people living within them to deal with adverse health impacts and sustain their own health is acknowledged by all agencies and departments. A range of programmes and initiatives is in place to build resilience amongst communities. However, high levels of inequalities still exist across socio-economic groups.

Programmes that provide social and economic protection for **older people** are in place, and focus on issues such as fuel poverty.

The impact of deprivation on **mental health and well-being**, has been widely recognised. Programmes have been put in place that seek to build coping strategies for individuals and to provide educational courses to promote self-management, well-being and recovery to anyone with an interest in mental health and well-being including service users, family members and staff.

Healthier homes and workplaces are being pursued by the application of housing standards to new builds and retrofits, although there is a recognised potential for more action in this area.

The relevance of active transport for creating healthier neighbourhoods is now widely recognised by agencies and departments and a range of programmes and initiatives that promote more sustainable forms of transport including walking and cycling now exist. However, there is the potential to explore other ways of using the design of the built environment to boost public health.

Health and well-being measures are now included as indicators as indicators of progress in the Programme for Government. There is the potential to establish indicators which could be employed to measure progress at local level during Phase VII.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the workshop identified the need for a new focus on the links between improved health and well-being of citizens and the **Prosperity** of the city during Phase VII. They recognised that, while inclusive growth is a key city priority, there is a major risk that this will not be shared equally across the city. Priority areas identified for Phase VII included:

- Planning to ensure that the **City infrastructure** is in place to allow the desired increase in population to be provided with the services they will require.
- **Engaging citizens and communities** in a dialogue as to what prosperity means to them and how it can be enhanced
- **Engaging with young people in the city** to encourage them to remain in Belfast in the future and to take up opportunities in education and employment
- **Engaging with employers** to develop improved health and well-being for their employees and their families
- **Enhance the health improvement role of current initiatives** wherever possible
- **Learn from the experience of other cities** to ensure that enhanced city prosperity

brings improved health and well-being for citizens

3.5 Theme Five: PEACE

Promoting peace and security through inclusive societies

The situational analysis highlighted that a wide range of programmes exist in Belfast on the priority issues within this theme. Many strategies and programmes are in place which seek to deal with the impact of the conflict on good community relations, while also working to include other communities such as immigrants.

A number of programmes and initiatives are in place to support communities at risk of the effects of paramilitary behaviour and to reduce levels of violence and strengthen community cohesion through **place-based solutions** that seek to enhance access to shared facilities. It is increasingly recognised that there is a long term impact for the mental health of citizens arising from the period of conflict.

Strategies have been developed to tackle organised crime and support systems have been developed for victims of crime. Services have been developed to raise awareness and provide support in relation to domestic abuse.

Agencies and departments are generally well equipped for **emergency preparedness** and response to ensure human security, while strategies are in place for managing public health crises.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the Phase VII workshop recognised an important challenge in taking forward the theme of **PEACE** is to build a more integrated city for all the citizens of Belfast. There is a clear need to break down barriers between communities; to build the resilience of citizens; and to create shared spaces. Identified priorities included:

- **Enhancing the safety of citizens** through the physical design of spaces and buildings and the design of public transport systems
- **Creating shared spaces** which are welcoming and where citizens feel a sense of ownership including the city centre
- Focusing on the **Links between mental health and well-being and the design of neighbourhoods and urban spaces**
- **Connecting inner-city communities** through physical and social links
- **Sharing and learning from the experience of other cities**

3.6 Theme Six: PLANET

Protect the planet from degradation, leading by example, including through sustainable consumption and production

The situational analysis highlighted that most priority issues within this theme are emerging as public policy priorities within the Belfast context. Efforts to **mitigate climate change** focus on improved energy efficiency of buildings and transport. There is a recognised potential to

build on current initiatives and to tackle issues including air pollution

There is a growing awareness of the importance of **protecting biodiversity**, and the role of planning to support this. Programmes and initiatives that support biodiversity can be developed further during Phase VII.

There are specific policies and standards in place to ensure responsible disposal of **waste and maintain water quality**. Recycling standards have led to an increase in recycling rates.

There is a recognised potential to enhance the use of health and sustainability impact assessments for policies in relation to this theme.

Priority issues identified at Phase VII Workshop

Participants at the Phase VII Workshop recognised that Climate Change required a major focus for action across all sectors. This work is being led for the city through the appointment of the Resilience Commissioner. Identified priority areas for Phase VII included:

- **Promoting energy efficiency in homes** with a particular focus on vulnerable people
- **Encouraging sustainable transport** with a decrease in car dependency
- Increase **Green Space** provision
- Provide **Flood alleviation** schemes
- Encourage **Less dependence on meat and dairy products** in the diet
- Act to improve **Air quality**

4 Conclusions and Next Steps

Completion of a situational analysis is a requirement for all cities applying to participate in Phase VII of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network. The analysis is designed to consider the starting position of the city in relation to the themes which will be taken forward by cities as members of the network.

The analysis for the City of Belfast has been prepared through engagement by Belfast Healthy Cities with Government Departments and statutory agencies. It has also been informed by a workshop hosted by the Lord Mayor of Belfast attended by all sectors in the city. Belfast Healthy Cities is very grateful to everyone who contributed to this exercise.

The situational analysis has revealed that there is a wealth of strategic and operational actions underway in Belfast which are relevant to the Phase VII Themes. There are recognised areas in all themes which can be developed further to enhance the health and well-being of our citizens

Learning from the experience of other cities is a key opportunity provided by membership of the network. Belfast looks forward to active participation with WHO and the other members of the network in taking forward the identified priority themes for Phase VII.