

## Belfast Centre Stage at World Health Organization Conference



Photo (L to R) Justine Daly, Turley Associates; Caroline Scott, Belfast Healthy Cities; Jonna Monaghan, Belfast Healthy Cities; Suzanne Miller, Belfast Healthy Cities; Damian Connolly, Belfast City Council; Joan Devlin, Belfast Healthy Cities; Dr Karen Casson, Ulster University and Cllr Gerry McCabe.

Belfast has participated in the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities Business and Technical Conference in Kuopio, Finland. The event, which is an annual conference of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and Network of European National Healthy Cities Networks, took place from Wednesday 24 June to Friday 26 June.

This was the first conference of Phase VI (2014-2018) of the WHO European Healthy Cities and it focused on the theme of 'Political Choices for Healthy Cities'. The theme was chosen in support of the Athens Declaration for Healthy Cities 2014, which underlined the leadership role of local governments and the need for those bodies to become more actively engaged in designing and implementing policies and plans for better health and equity for all.

Members of the Belfast Healthy Cities Board of Directors and Staff Team contributed to the scientific programme of the conference, presenting case studies of good practice from Belfast on topics including the emerging WHO theme of Health Literacy. There was also an opportunity to introduce to other cities the new healthy urban environment resource 'Reuniting Planning and Health', which was developed by Belfast Healthy Cities in partnership with the Town and Country Planning Association.

The Belfast delegation included Councillor Gerry McCabe, Damian Connolly, Belfast City Council; Dr Karen Casson, Ulster University and Justine Daly, Turley Associates.

Cllr McCabe welcomed the opportunity to participate in the programme saying,

'It has been valuable to learn more about the range of work that goes on across Europe to improve health and wellbeing. It is good to see the City of Belfast at the centre of that work, contributing to the development of new approaches and ways of thinking that have a benefit for everyone.

We can learn a lot from our European partners and bring that learning home to benefit the people of our city.'

Abstracts from the conference will be available from the [Belfast Healthy Cities website](#) in August.

### **Notes**

Belfast has been a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network for more than 25 years. The WHO European Healthy Cities Network consists of cities around the WHO European Region that are committed to health and sustainable development: nearly 100 cities and towns from 30 countries.

### **Links to Belfast Healthy Cities resources**

[Reuniting Planning and Health Resource](#)

[Abstracts page](#)