

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**WEST BELFAST
PARTNERSHIP**
PÁIRTÍOCHT
FEIRSTE THJAR

Mission Statement

“To involve people who live and work in West Belfast in generating social, economic, physical and cultural development to ensure West Belfast makes a full contribution to and benefits equally from developments in the city as a whole.”



Unit 11 Curran House, Twin Spires Centre,
155 Northumberland Street, Belfast, BT13 2JF

E-mail: info@wbpb.org Tel: 02890809202
[WWW. Westbelfast-partnership.com](http://WWW.Westbelfast-partnership.com)



[Wbpb Falls Road](#)



[@WestBelfastPB](#)

Company No. – NI033629

Registered Charity Number: NIC 103564

Contents

Mission Statement	2
Contents	3
Health & Wellbeing	4
Building Resilience and Embedding Wellbeing Framework	4
Launch of resilient West Belfast Wellbeing App	4
East West Visit	4
Awards for All	4
Dementia Friendly West	5
Community Planning VCSE Panel	5
Belfast Healthy Cities	5
Social Supermarket	5
Education	6
Sharing the Learning Programme	6
Easter School 2024	7
Belfast City Council City Wide Maths & English GCSE Support Programme	8
Multiply Programme	8
Aisling Education Bursaries 2024	9
Neighbourhood Renewal	11
Economic Development	12
Housing, Environment & Planning	13
Environment Awards 2024	13
West Belfast Greenway Project	14
Weavers Cross/Transport Hub	14
Resilience and Sustainability Board	14
Living here Board	14
Belfast Healthy Cities	14
West Belfast Health Walking Map	14
Contact Information	15

Health & Wellbeing

Building Resilience and Embedding Wellbeing Framework

The Framework has been developed alongside an extensive community engagement process. The analysis and report have been circulated to the Health and Wellbeing Forum. The group are now organising the launch of the Framework and will also be restructured to reflect the implementation of the Framework.

Launch of resilient West Belfast Wellbeing app

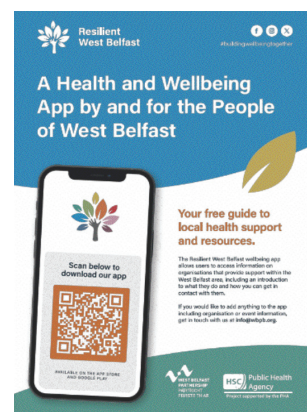
May 2023 saw the launch of the Resilient West Belfast Wellbeing app in St Comgalls. The event was well attended and feedback on the app very positive. The app continues to be updated and maintained by WBPB.

East West Visit

A cross community environmental/health trip was organised along with East Side Partnership. The trip brought young people from East Belfast to tour the St James Farm, proposed greenway, city cemetery and Áras Uí Chonghaile. The aim was to develop relations and learning on urban greenways, the health benefits and shared learning. .

Awards for All

The Education and Health committees have been successful with an application to Big Lottery to develop a wellbeing programme for afterschool's. We are working alongside the afterschool's to develop a Learning for Health programme that will teach resilience, environmental activism and education through health. .



Dementia Friendly West

The West Belfast Health and Wellbeing forum continues to prioritise dementia awareness and support for those living with dementia and their carers. WBPB continue to facilitate and support the group through identifying funding opportunities for carers activities. The group also organised awareness and signposting events.

Community Planning VCSE Panel

WBPB continue to represent on the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise panel, attending VCSE meetings and consultations on the review of the Belfast Agenda. The VCSE panel membership has now been extended.

Belfast Healthy Cities

The coordinator continues to contribute to the Belfast Steering group on greening the city and articulating the case for resources to develop health outcomes.

Social Supermarket

WBPB have successfully secured resources to provide a voucher scheme through Belfast City Council Social Supermarket. Using the WBPB subgroups and networks through health, education and neighbourhood renewal, vouchers have been distributed along with wrap around support provided by partner organisations.

Dementia Friendly West Belfast



West Belfast is becoming a friendlier place for people living with dementia, their families and friends, and for older people.

'Dementia Friendly West Belfast' is a voluntary campaign to improve life for people living with and affected by dementia in this community. The campaign brings together businesses, voluntary and community groups, churches, schools, universities, libraries and more. People living with and affected by dementia have a leading role in this campaign.

Everyone can make a difference.
Please join the campaign to make West Belfast Dementia Friendly

Stay in contact and find out what we are doing
twitter.com/DementiaWestBelfast
email:dementiafriendlywest@wbpb.org
or download the Resilient West Belfast Wellbeing App by following the link.
<https://www.resilientwestbelfast.com>



Education

Sharing the Learning Programme

"West Belfast – a place where they have worked some educational magic!"



2,196

Children, Parents & Grandparents
taking part in
Nursery Parent & Child Programmes

Parents supporting their child's learning
Parents & children reading at home

Sharing the Learning with

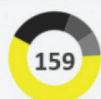
East Belfast
South Belfast
North Belfast
Greater Shankill
Belfast City Council
St Mary's University College
Collaborating Organisations Network
Learning Cities Network
Stranmillis College

929 KS2 pupils and staff taking part in the
Irish News Critical Literacy Young Readers
Programme

GCSE Maths & English Supports

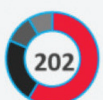


Students supported
in Maths

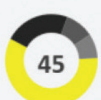


Students supported
in English

Maths & English GCSE Easter School & Bolt-on Classes



Students supported
in Maths

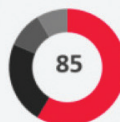


Students supported
in English

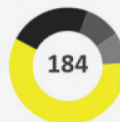
**Community After Schools
Literacy & Numeracy Supports**
169 children & parents

3310 KS2 pupils taking part in
Accelerated Reader/ FRECKLE Maths
Increase of 5.7 months in average reading age
Over 250 Word Millionaires

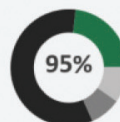
Support for pupils in Years 8 – 10



Literacy
Supports



Numeracy
Supports



Better Subject
Understanding

931 pupils in **Primary – Post Primary**

Transition Programme

98% of children felt happier moving from Primary to
Post Primary school

*65.7% of GCSE students achieved 5
or more GCSEs A*-C including Maths
and English*

*65.6% of pupils achieved 3 or more
A Levels grade A*-C*

*94..% of pupils achieved 2 or more A
Levels grades A*-C*

Easter School 2024

Our annual Maths and English GCSE Easter School 2024, in partnership with the Department of Education, St Mary's University College and Full Service Community Network was a resounding success.

This year a total of 210 students availed of supports, with 133 students in St Mary's University College and an additional 77 students who could not attend the Easter School coming along to bolt-on classes in the evenings and on Saturdays.

12 St Mary's University College student teachers worked on the Easter School as support staff, which gave them valuable work experience, and they were an absolute credit to the College.

Thanks to Professor Peter Finn, Eilis McAteer, Geard Curley, Gareth Connolly and John Brolly from St Mary's University for their hard work and support in helping make the Easter School possible.

Most of all thank you to all the students who continued to work on their Maths and English during their Easter holidays
#FabKids #KeepLearning



Belfast City Council City Wide Maths & English GCSE Support Programme

WBPB has once again led a successful consortium of community partners across the city to provide GCSE revision classes in Belfast on a cross community basis. City Wide partners include EastSide Learning, Belfast South Community Resources, Forward South and Greater Shankill Partnerships with West Belfast Partnership Board having responsibility for delivery in west and north Belfast.

We are delighted that the programme will be delivered until August 2025, following a successful bid for resources.

Area	Target Nos.	No. of English Completed	No. of Maths Completed	Total Number of students receiving support
North	60	29	47	85
South	60	45	62	112
East	60	19	35	57
Shankill	20	0	22	22
West	50	42	37	87
Total	250	135	203	363

Multiply Programme

WBPB are delighted to have secured MULTIPLY funding for delivery of the MULTIPLY programme from the Department for the Economy via Belfast City Council. We will be working with city-wide partners to deliver the following:

- **Bring Your Grown Up:** Interactive Workshops and Parent Child Maths Cafes
- **Engaging Mature Learners:** Tech Seniors and Cooking with Numbers
- **Maths for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL)-** Steps to Numeracy:
Supporting the Newcomer Community, Training for Trainers and Community Based Workshops with parents and kids
- **Numeracy Bootcamps:** Basic Life Finances

The programme will support the Economic Vision for a regionally balanced economy with good jobs and increased productivity. Numeracy is a vital skill and the Multiply programme will boost the competence and confidence of over 3,000 adults regionally and in turn enhance their opportunities for further training and employment.



MULTIPLY

Funded by
UK Government



Belfast
City Council

Aisling Education Bursaries 2024

Congratulations to our Recipients and Thanks to our Sponsors

On Monday 9 September, the west Belfast community celebrated 25 years of the Aisling Education Bursaries in St Mary's University College, Falls Road.

Jim Donnelly, Chair of West Belfast Partnership Board welcomed recipients and sponsors and thanked the 103 sponsors who this year donated an incredible £138,500 to 217 local people to enable them to begin or continue their education and training.

2024

Aisling Bursaries
Sparántachtaí na hAislinge



Special Thanks

to our 103 sponsors
who donated £138,500

Congratulations

to the 217 recipients!

Incredible Amount

Since the Aisling Bursaries began in 2000,
1466 people have benefited from an incredible
£1,044,500 in sponsorship.

£138,500
DONATED
THIS YEAR

217
RECIPIENTS
THIS YEAR

SINCE 2000
£1,044,500
HAS BEEN
DONATED

.....

This year we were delighted to welcome First Minister, Michelle O'Neill MLA as keynote speaker and Minister for the Economy, Conor Murphy MLA as guest speaker.

“ *The Aisling Education Bursaries reflect the power of education and strength of community, empowering people to reach their full potential and planting the seeds for a bright, more equitable future. Well done to the West Belfast Partnership Board for their hard work and dedication over the past 25 years and I wish every success to everyone who has received this award.* ”

First Minister, Michelle O'Neill MLA



“ *The Aisling Education Bursaries reflect the best values of the community. Many people have contributed to this Bursary initiative, and I'm delighted that this year my Department has also made a donation to the fund. The Bursaries represent an investment in the future, and I wish all of the recipients every success in their forthcoming studies and future careers.* ”

Minister for the Economy, Conor Murphy MLA



Also speaking at the event were Professor Peter Finn KG, Principal of St Mary's University College and past recipients, Alison McCrudden and Terry Quinn.

“ *At St Mary's University College we recognise and commend the role of the local community, through the agency of the Aisling Education Bursaries initiative, in supporting the educational journeys of young people. Our institution is delighted to be associated with the Aisling Bursaries.* ”

Professor Peter Finn KG, Principal of St Mary's University College



“ *My education journey had many twists and turns and challenges along the way. To begin studying for a degree in my mid 30's as a mature student filled me with absolute dread. In 8 years, I graduated with a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree and was now a qualified City Planner! For me receiving an Aisling Bursary wasn't just about the financial support - it was the fact that my community believed in me.* ”

Terry Quinn, past recipient



“ *I was one of the first people to receive an Aisling Bursary 25 years ago. Receiving my Aisling Bursary said to me that someone believed in me, and I felt incredibly supported to return to education, so much so that Brassneck have been sponsoring the Aisling Bursaries for the last eight years!* ”

Alison McCrudden, past Aisling Bursary recipient



Neighbourhood Renewal

WBPB, continue to co-ordinate and lead the 36 Neighbourhood Partnerships across the North as well as the 5 Neighbourhood Partnerships across west Belfast. Throughout the year WBPB have taken a leadership role in the review of the People and Place Strategy and were instrumental in providing support during the recent unrest and racist attacks in the city. To this end WBPB have provided practical support to individuals and business and have helped to organise counter protests to the far right racist demonstrations.

WBPB have also led from the front in terms of campaigning and lobbying for newcomer families and businesses. Through the west Belfast NR Forum and its work with the 36 NR partnerships WBPB have brought motions to the Assembly, met with the Labour Relations Agency, the Equality Commission, the Permanent Secretary, the Head of the Civil Service and the Deputy Permanent Secretary.

We have continued to convene monthly meetings of both the West Belfast Forum and the 36 NR Partnerships, with WBPB acting as the secretariat for both. Throughout the year WBPB have worked very closely with the 5 Neighbourhood partnerships across west Belfast to identify needs of the groups within each partnership, to enable the Partnership to develop a community plan in relation to identified needs with the locality.

In addition, the Forum has also had representations from Gems NI, Belfast Works Connect and BCC in regard to Employability programmes for West Belfast. The Forum have also lobbied the Deputy Permanent Secretary for Communities, John Smith, as well as the newly appointed DfC committee in Stormont on behalf of NR workers across the North. In 2024, the Forum also held a further meeting with the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Health to ensure the new People and Place Strategy had buy-in and support from all executive departments.



Economic Development

Over the last year WBPB have continued to work very closely with Belfast City Council in promoting the Employment Academies. These academies include the Car Academy, Transport Academy, and Fibre Academy, in which WBPB are a named delivery partner, providing employment support to participants.

Throughout the year WBPB have helped upskill 83 participants. Out of the 83, 8 participants dropped of the programme for various health reasons with the remaining 75 completing the Fibre Training. Out of the 75 participants 66 have gained full time employment, equating to an into employment rate of 88%.

WBPB have also partnered with BCC and other local training providers to help and assist residents secure a place on the other BCC Employment academies named above and have been directly involved in providing training to over 60 participants for transport specific training, namely within the Taxi and Bus industry via PSV and PCV theory training to tackle the high levels of economic inactivity.

WBPB are also represented at the Community Planning Partnership at BCC and attend the various sub board meetings of the Community Planning Partnership while disseminating information to other community groups across west, while at the same time championing the Community Wealth Building & Inclusive Growth Strategies of Belfast city council.

Throughout the year WBPB, through the Economic Development subcommittee were granted mamebership for Area Partnership Representation on the Labour Market Partnership which has been established by Belfast City Council.

WBPB in conjunction with Ortus hosted Invest NI in April 2024, where businesses had the opportunity to speak to client and business advisors from the Ambition to Grow and Go Succeed programmes.



Housing, Environment & Planning

Community Environment Awards 2024

Every year the West Belfast Partnership Board celebrates the work of local communities who have strived to improve, protect and enhance the environment in the west of the city. We believe our much coveted Environment Awards encourage the community and public agencies to take ownership and responsibility for protecting the environment and making West Belfast a better place to live, work and play.

We are very grateful to our sponsors for their contribution to the Awards and it is only through your support that this event is possible.



Congratulations to our Community Environment Award Winners 2024 and Thanks to our Sponsors:

Translink Belfast Transport Hub Environment Award:
De La Salle College - Community Greenhouse Initiative

Ark Education Award:
St Louises Comprehensive College - Bee Garden

Bryson Recycling Award:
Gort Na Mona Men's Shed

Translink Belfast Transport Hub Community Award:
**Spar Mount Eagles and Mount Eagles /
Lagmore Youth & Community Association -
Mount Eagles Square Redevelopment**

West Belfast Partnership Public Art Award:
John Mallon - Beauty on Our Doorstep

Renee Crawford,
Chair of the West Belfast Partnership
Environment Sub Group,
said of the Awards:



“ I would like to thank the community groups and organisations who submitted an application for this year's Community Environment Awards. I congratulate all of them for their enthusiasm, invention and dedication to improve the West Belfast environment, and in turn to help educate the younger generations on the importance of physical development, restoration, and regeneration of west Belfast. ”

West Belfast Greenway Project

Work continues to develop the West Belfast Greenway. A public consultation event was held in Áras Uí Chonghaile supported by the HEP group.



Weavers Cross/Transport Hub

Meetings have been held between community representatives, Translink and Weavers Cross developers. The meetings discussed the lack of social benefits to surrounding communities or links with employment opportunities. Several meetings have taken place over the past number of months on specific opportunities arising from the development.



Resilience and Sustainability Board

HEP committee continue to be represented at these meetings.

Living Here Board

HEP sub committee continue to be represented at these meetings.

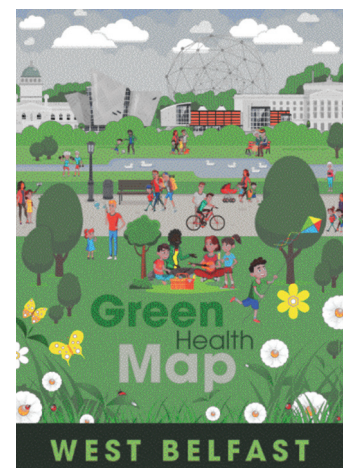


Belfast Healthy Cities

WBPB continues to contribute to the city-wide steering group to deliver the greening the city action plan.

West Belfast Health Walking Map

WBPB have developed a healthy walking map to encourage and enhance opportunities for residents of all abilities to become more active. The West Belfast Green Walking map was launched in Falls Pavilion on 17 October in conjunction with the Environmental Awards. The launch was attended by Belfast Healthy Cities and community and statutory agencies across west Belfast. Similar maps have now been developed in Upper Springfield and Colin areas on the back of the launch.





**WEST BELFAST
PARTNERSHIP**
PÁIRTÍOCHT
FEIRSTE THÍAR

Unit 11 Curran House, Twin Spires Centre,
155 Northumberland Street, Belfast, BT13 2JF

E-mail: info@wbpb.org Tel: 02890809202
[WWW. Westbelfast-partnership.com](http://WWW.Westbelfast-partnership.com)



[Wbpb Falls Road](#)



[@WestBelfastPB](#)

Company No. – NI033629

Registered Charity Number: NIC 103564



WEST BELFAST PARTNERSHIP PÁIRTÍOCHT FEIRSTE THJAR