

Magherafelt District Council
Good Relations Audit



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Section	Page
1. Introduction.....	2
1.1 Terms of Reference.....	2
1.3 Methodology.....	2
2. Good Relations Context & Background.....	4
2.1 Policy/Strategy Document Review.....	4
3. Main Findings.....	14
3.3 Main Themed Findings.....	14
4. Recommendations.....	28
5. Appendices.....	30
5.1 Appendix 1 – Trigger Questions.....	30
5.2 Appendix 2 – Good Relations Survey.....	31
5.3 Appendix 3 – Survey Results & Analysis.....	39

Section 1 – Introduction

Terms of Reference

1.1 Holywell Consultancy was appointed by Magherafelt District Council (MDC) to undertake a series of consultation exercises in order to:

- (1) measure the level of residents satisfaction with its services and
- (2) conduct a good relations audit.

Holywell Consultancy adopted a dual-approach in order to gather information for both elements of this work. At each consultation activity Holywell Consultancy engaged with stakeholders and council staff on both their level of satisfaction with services and good relations issues. It was important during this process not to over-consult with stakeholders, council staff and the community. The dual approach ensured that this did not happen. In addition Holywell Consultancy felt that the dual approach was the best use of time and resources.

This report details the results of the good relations element of the consultation exercise.

1.2 The audit included:

- Consultation with key stakeholders (including elected members) and council staff to identify internal good relations issues within Council.
- Consultation with community groups to measure the impact of the Council's good relations work and Peace III funding.
- Identification of good relations priorities to take forward.

Methodology

1.3 A range of techniques was used to engage with the local community, elected representatives and Council officers to inform the findings of the audit report. These techniques included:

- Good Relations Postal Survey – a postal survey was developed to capture people's opinions on good relations issues within the district. The survey was posted out to 400 community organisations, and businesses in the District, as supplied by MDC. The survey was completed by 68 people, giving a response rate of 17%. A copy of the survey is included in Appendix 2 and the full results from the process are included in Appendix 3.
- Individual Interviews – a range of people were identified for interview to inform the Good Relations Audit. Every effort was made to meet in person with each individual. A total of 12 people were interviewed through the process. The interviews were guided by the 'trigger' questions developed for the audit which are listed in Appendix 1. A full list of those engaged is included in Appendix 5.

- Focus Groups – Three public focus groups were held in the area – one in Maghera, Magherafelt and Draperstown. These were promoted through the Good Relations Officer and advertised in the local press. In addition 2 focus groups were held - one with key Council staff and one with elected members. A total of 60 people were engaged through the five focus groups.
- Desk Research – a range of policies and documents were reviewed to help to inform the audit. Please see Appendix 4 for the focus group details.

Section 2 – Good Relations Context & Background

- 2.1 A brief synopsis of the following documents/policies is included.
- Racial Equality Strategy
 - Previous MDC Good Relations Audits
 - MDC Good Relations Strategy 2007-2010
 - Cohesion, Sharing & Integration (CSI)
 - Community Relations Council (CRC) Response to CSI
- 2.2 Each of these documents/policies has an impact on the good relations situation within the Magherafelt District Council area.

Racial Equality Strategy

Racial Equality in Northern Ireland

The goal of the strategy is, “a society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued, and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection.”

This strategy is comprised of six key aims:

- 1) Elimination of Racial Inequality - *To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.* This will be measured by the percentage decrease in cases on racial grounds and in cases brought to ECNI on racial grounds.
- 2) Equal Protection – *To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.* This will be measured by the implementation of legislations (Hate Crime legislation; Single Equality Bill), percentage reduction in racially motivated crime, scale of bullying in schools, and pro rata level of racially motivated crime compared to other parts of Great Britain.
- 3) Equality of Service Provision - *To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.* This will be measured by percentage of public service staff receiving anti-racist training, applications for and appointment, and base lining current levels of utilisation of benefits/services by minority ethnic people.
- 4) Dialogue - *To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.* This will be measured by the number of events supported to highlight diversity, the impact of a public awareness and education initiative to accompany this Strategy, implementation of a Good Relations Policy from the “Shared Future”, percentage reduction in racial prejudice recorded through public attitude surveys, and impact of Good Relations policies.
- 5) Participation- *To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.* This will be measured by attitude surveys within minority and majority communities,

percentage increase in minority ethnic representatives gaining public appointments, and percentage increase in number of minority ethnic people undertaking volunteering, percentage increase in participants from minority ethnic sector in sporting/leisure activity.

6) Capacity Building - *To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people.* This will be measured by the increase in the coverage of voluntary and community organisations developing initiatives around minority ethnic issues and increase in geographical coverage of minority ethnic voluntary organizations throughout NI.

Racism in Northern Ireland manifests itself in four main ways:

- 1) Racist harassment – assaults, racist graffiti, threatening behaviour, incitement
- 2) Discrimination – direct, indirect harassment, victimization
- 3) Stereotyping
- 4) Systematic/Institutional Racism

Statistics show that racially motivated crime has increased significantly – from 453 in 2003-2004 to 813 in 2004-2005. Though the dominant view has been that NI does not have a race relations problem and the focus has been on religious and political conflict, more and more, concern about racism has become more urgent. NI is now home to migrant workers (an estimated 26,000), asylum seekers, and refugees (an estimated 2,000) from Jewish, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Sikh, Irish Traveller, and other backgrounds.

Previous MDC Good Relations Audits

A previous MDC Good Relations audit was carried out in 2007 to identify perceptions of Council Officers and elected members and all key stakeholders to the approach structure and success of Good Relations in the district and to identify how Good Relations may be enhanced in the future.

Overall 58% of respondents were very satisfied and 30% were satisfied with the Council's Good Relations section. The results of the Good Relations audit formed the basis of the Good Relations Strategy 2007-2010.

MDC Good Relations Strategy 2007-2010

The Good Relations Strategy from 2007 – April 2010 was to deliver the following:

- Shadow programme for new elected members
- Good Relations awareness training for officers
- Good Relations awareness training for elected members

- Development of community open days for elected members
- Utilise schools as a conduit for good relations
- Maintain small grants scheme
- Develop a grants appraisal system
- Community promotion and communications in conjunction with local papers
- Utilise the May festival as a platform for Good Relations
- Youth Council
- Involve ethnic minorities in the community
- Good Relations Officer General Duties
- Develop a Good Relations Strategy and Audit

MDC Corporate Plan 2009-2011

The MDC Corporate Plan 2009-2011 encourages wide ranging and positive change to enable the MDC to put good relations at the core of its work.

The main aim of Magherafelt Council is to:

Improve the quality of life in the Magherafelt district area so it is a better place to live in, work in, invest in and visit'.

The plan outlines the following aims of council:

- To focus on the needs of residents, have a 'can do' attitude, be problem solvers – committed to providing first class services which are responsive to citizens needs and will continue to make sure that the Council is a place where things get done: problem solving where we can;
- To provide value for money and improve services – committed to delivering high quality, value for money services at all time and are committed to continually improving our services;
- To work together – recognising that the Council cannot deliver everything on their own and are committed to working with their partners across the district to ensure its continued success;
- To respect each other, be fair, promote equality and good relations – valuing the diversity of all communities in the district and strive to make sure that everyone shares in its successes. Treating all communities and people equally and working to improve access to our services;

- To act sustainably – committed to the effective and efficient use of all our resources and will promote the principle of sustainability in all their actions; and
- To value our employees – we recognise that one of our key assets is our employees and we will continue to support them in fulfilling their potential.

The main themes of the Corporate Plan are summarised as follows:

- Leadership – influencing the quality of life issues that affect Magherafelt citizens and will work in partnership to develop and deliver a shared agenda that makes Magherafelt District better.
- Economy – supporting businesses to grow and secure investment in the district. Encouraging enterprise and creativity throughout the district and help to make Magherafelt an attractive place to live in, work in, invest in and visit.
- Environment and health – creating a cleaner, greener and healthier environment for Magherafelt citizens. Ensuring adherence with all current and future statutory responsibilities and help secure long term sustainability of the district and its environment.
- Social and cultural – promoting a peaceful, inclusive, safe and welcoming society in the district and build capacity to tackle inequalities and improve relationships. Making best use of council services and facilities and enhance the district by making it safer, healthier and more enjoyable.
- Physical and infrastructure – making sure that structures are built and can be used safely in the district. Improving facilities so that they provide a range of services which best meet local need and improve quality of life.
- People and processes – making best use of resources to provide a range of services that best meet local needs and improves quality of life.

Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) - OFMDFM

Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) is the main overarching strategy which addresses division in Northern Ireland. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) released the CSI strategy document for consultation in July 2010. The CSI strategy is still under consultation.

The aim of the Cohesion, Sharing, and Integration strategy is to: build a strong community where everyone, regardless of race, colour, religious or political opinion, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation can live, work and socialise in a context of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect.

Themes for action include:

Short term – 1) Developing “shared space”; 2) Enhancing community capacity to play a full role in implementing the Programme for CSI; 3) ‘Crisis Intervention’ and the need for a mechanism to co-ordinate multi-agency rapid responses to tackle sectarianism and racial violence and all forms of hate crimes; 4) Ensuring good relations considerations are embedded within all government policy making; 5) Early and strategic intervention to tackle anti-social behaviour and tensions around interfaces; and 6) Promoting CSI through a process of community renewal.

Medium term – 1) The relationship between young people and the community; 2) Providing a new and improved framework for the resolution of public assembly disputes; and 3) Ensuring the sharing of best practice projects aimed at improving cohesion, sharing, and integration across all areas where appropriate and where required.

Long term – 1) Interfaces; 2) Encouraging shared neighbourhoods; 3) Reducing and eventually eliminating segregated services; 4) Tackling multiple social issues effect and entrenching community separation, exclusion, and hate; and 5) Cultural identity, including issues around flags and emblems, mural, bonfires, cultural expression, language, and popular protest.

This programme will affect people by:

1) shared workspaces; 2) mixed-religion education; 3) growing the economy and tackling disadvantage; 4) addressing duplication in health and leisure services; 5) increasing access and education to those furthest removed from the labour market; and 6) engaging the local communities.

This programme will affect places by:

1) Encouraging mixed-religion neighbourhoods; 2) removing places of displays of sectarian aggression and threatening/divisive symbols; 3) supporting the re-imagining communities initiative; 4) welcoming others; and 5) sharing spaces.

These elements are key:

- Public spaces, thoroughfares, community facilities and town centres should be safe, shared and welcoming to the whole community;
- All public authorities, including District Councils, should discharge functions and deliver services equally and inclusively recognising the diverse nature of the community they serve and the barriers which can be experienced by

minority ethnic people in particular;

- Unnecessary duplication of services should be targeted through the enhanced delivery of shared services on the basis of objective need;
- Safe and secure shared community spaces should be developed in a culture of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect; and
- Displays of flags and emblems, graffiti or murals, parades or public assemblies or festivals should be held in an environment which respects individual and community rights.

The programme also hopes to empower the next generation by focusing on the following aims:

- Under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, establishing a major initiative aimed at developing a longer term strategic approach to helping marginalised young people;
- Supporting young people to increase their civic responsibility including facilitating and empowering youth groups to work together on civic responsibility projects;
- Focusing on education and promoting greater understanding of shared values; and
- Establishing multi-agency partnerships between indigenous and minority ethnic and migrant worker communities to address the specific needs of the young people in those populations.

The programme also aims to respect culture by pursuing the following goals:

- Building a peaceful climate of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect;
- Working with and supporting the local community to resolve contentious cultural issues;
- Promoting greater understanding of cultural diversity and expressions of cultural identity;
- Encouraging greater engagement with, and understanding of, cultural diversity and intercultural relations;
- Working to eliminate attacks on cultural, sporting and other symbolic property and monuments; and
- Promoting cultural exchanges, joint events and tourism initiatives.

The programme will also pursue having a secure community by:

- Encouraging community events which reflect cultural diversity and are open, welcoming and inclusive to all;
- Ensuring that all responsible agencies continue to provide a high level of community safety delivered within a rights based framework and an overarching ethos of mutual respect;
- Continuing to promote initiatives based on the principle of mutual respect, which reflect acceptance of cultural diversity and the ways in which it is expressed;
- Building community support networks across community, cultural and minority ethnic groups; and
- Building capacity of the local and minority ethnic communities to support people who have experienced hate crime.

The programme will also pursue having a cohesive community by:

- Zero tolerance for crimes motivated by prejudice and all forms of hate crime,

- whilst actively promoting rights and respect;
- Promoting intercultural work through the Minority Ethnic Development Fund;
 - Building an inclusive community open to all, regardless of their background;
 - Promoting greater understanding between established sections of the community and new arrivals;
 - Working closely with the PSNI, the new Crime Reduction Partnerships and Probation Board in local areas to address racism and hate crime;
 - Encouraging greater understanding of new cultures and new sections of the community; and
 - Developing and supporting workplace initiatives to promote respect and understanding of cultural diversity.

The programme also wishes to support local communities by:

- Continue to support Councils' delivery of Good Relations programmes and funding;
- Ensure that the local community is integral to the Good Relations decision making and implementation process; and
- Nurturing leadership at a local level and empowering the local community to identify solutions to local issues.

Finally, the programme also looks outward by:

- Identifying key exemplar projects which have proven track records of success in promoting good relations;
- Sharing of relevant research and experiences on a North/South, East/West, European and international basis; and
- Mutual promotion of cultural diversity and encouraging better social networks on North/South, East/West, European and international levels.

Community Relations Council (CRC) Response to CSI

The main aim of the Community Relations Council (CRC) is to promote better community relations between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and, equally, to promote recognition of cultural diversity. As a leader in promoting good relations CRC felt it was important to provide a detailed response to the CSI document.

The Community Relations Council (CRC) felt that, despite its title, the document did not sufficiently address issues of cohesion, sharing, and integration – it did not give satisfactory definitions, did not list specific measures that should be taken, and focused on sectarianism and racism instead of a larger range of issues (sexual orientation, age, gender, and disability). The CSI policy should be rooted in a broad legal and political framework to promote the norm of intercultural integrated societies that are open and welcoming to all and rooted in democratic values. Sectarianism is the defining feature of Northern Ireland's political and social landscape, however, and a good relations approach to sectarian, racial, and political divide is vital to seeking equality in NI.

The CSI document should be revised to include:

- a clear vision statement at the beginning;
- a clear definition of the problem;
- an overarching aim to identify the solution;
- a set of objectives which would realise that aim if achieved;
- programmes and projects to implement those objectives concretely;
- the structures/mechanisms needed to provide a coherent framework;
- designated actors to take responsibility for getting the work done;
- a clear statement about resources;
- arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness; and
- review and revision of the strategy in that light.

It should also include a commitment:

- to bring the antagonism of the past to an end, by acknowledging its consequences and injustices and undertaking all necessary change to ensure that they cannot be repeated and
- to build a future in which sectarianism and racism is confined to the past, in which all citizens are treated as equals and in which all disputes are resolved peacefully and through purely political means.

CRC agrees that addressing the physical and community division at interfaces, ensuring and promoting the safety of vulnerable groups, tackling the visible manifestations of intolerance and sectarianism, addressing hate crime, promoting equality and tackling disadvantage, and creating and expanding shared spaces are key elements of good relations. However, they also believe that issues such as economic and social regeneration, community safety, housing, culture and commemoration, and education are also significant. Furthermore, policies are needed in regards to children and young people, education, further education,

housing, re-generation, economy and social economy, parading and public assemblies, shared services and facilities, workplaces, hate crime, race, re-imaging, health, leisure, sport, tourism, rural communities, volunteers, language, community festivals, arts and culture.

The policies should also address our violent past, economics, safety, cultural issues, shared spaces or parallel living, education and young people, young people, housing, interface communities, flags, and community development.

CRC is also not satisfied with the options laid out in CSI. According to them, **Option 1** maintains that all tasks can be carried out by central government. Unless the list of tasks currently understood as the functions of a regional body is dismissed, CRC does not believe this to be possible.

Option 2 suggests that the funding function can be tendered out. This may be possible in the context of an arrangement to maintain the other core functions of a regional body.

Simply dividing current grant aid into a series of tenders will be neither effective nor efficient.

While options 3A and 3B mention CRC directly, the body described appears to be very different from the creative, independent critical friend carrying the confidence of political leadership which the tasks require.

Without further clarification and more detailed information, CRC is currently unable to recommend any of the options under CSI, finding them all to be retrograde and regressive.

By separating the members of the advisory panel from any responsibility for action or access to resources for learning and advocacy there is a risk that political leadership may be mistaken for political control of all independent voice.

CRC's concerns about the models offered for consultation should not be mistaken for an unwillingness of CRC to engage in reform and renewal. Indeed CRC strongly believes that this is the necessary opportunity for that debate to take place.

Conclusion

1. The critical test of the proposals in the CSI document must be: 'Do they work to promote cohesion, sharing and integration?' CRC has concluded that the proposals do not meet this test.

2. The document should include a formal definition of reconciliation aligned to the definition in the EU PEACE III programme already approved by this Executive in 2007.

The EU has been the most significant investor in peacebuilding in the whole region and has developed a coherent framework of learning and analysis. The Executive should remain committed to this vision if the CSI document is to be plausible.

3. Ministerial leadership is an important principle. If this is an inter-departmental document, then the leadership should reside with the Executive led by the First and Deputy First Minister.

4. Arrangements for inter-departmental co-ordination are vital if this is to be more than a paper exercise.

5. CSI must not only be delivered, but developed, learned and advocated for. This is not reflected in the document or in the structures proposed for delivery.

6. Broad civic engagement is vital, with a protected capacity to speak honestly, even

when this runs contrary to short - term political interests. There is a danger that the current proposals confuse political leadership with political control.

7. The role of regional body is far more than that of funding and advice to government. All of the current functions listed for CRC in the last public policy on this area of work need to be retained.

8. The proposals for delivery and funding are all retrograde. CRC believes that they should all be reconsidered if the principle of 'fit for purpose' is to be fulfilled.

9. The programme will not be plausible without a serious resource review and commitment of resources. This goes beyond funding for community based activity into a rethink of much larger and significant budgets such as education, housing, community development, regeneration, justice and culture. Without this rethink, commitment to reconciliation is likely to remain merely rhetorical.

Section 3 – Main Findings

- 3.1 The main findings from the engagement carried out have been themed and displayed below. These findings are not in any order of importance and reflect the opinions and comments that were recorded during the engagement process. Where appropriate, charts detailing the findings from the survey have been included.
- 3.2 It is important to remember that when facilitating an audit on a difficult and sometimes divisive issue such as good relations that the process is likely to reflect problems or issues rather than successes. This is recognition that we live in a divided society and that our perceptions and comments are often shaped by this.

Themed Findings

- 3.3 The main findings from the audit process are displayed under the following main headings:
- Challenges Identified
 - Good Relations Engagement
 - Local Good Relations Environment
 - Addressing Good Relations issues
 - Other Comments

Challenges Identified

The following chart summarises the challenges identified through the audit process.

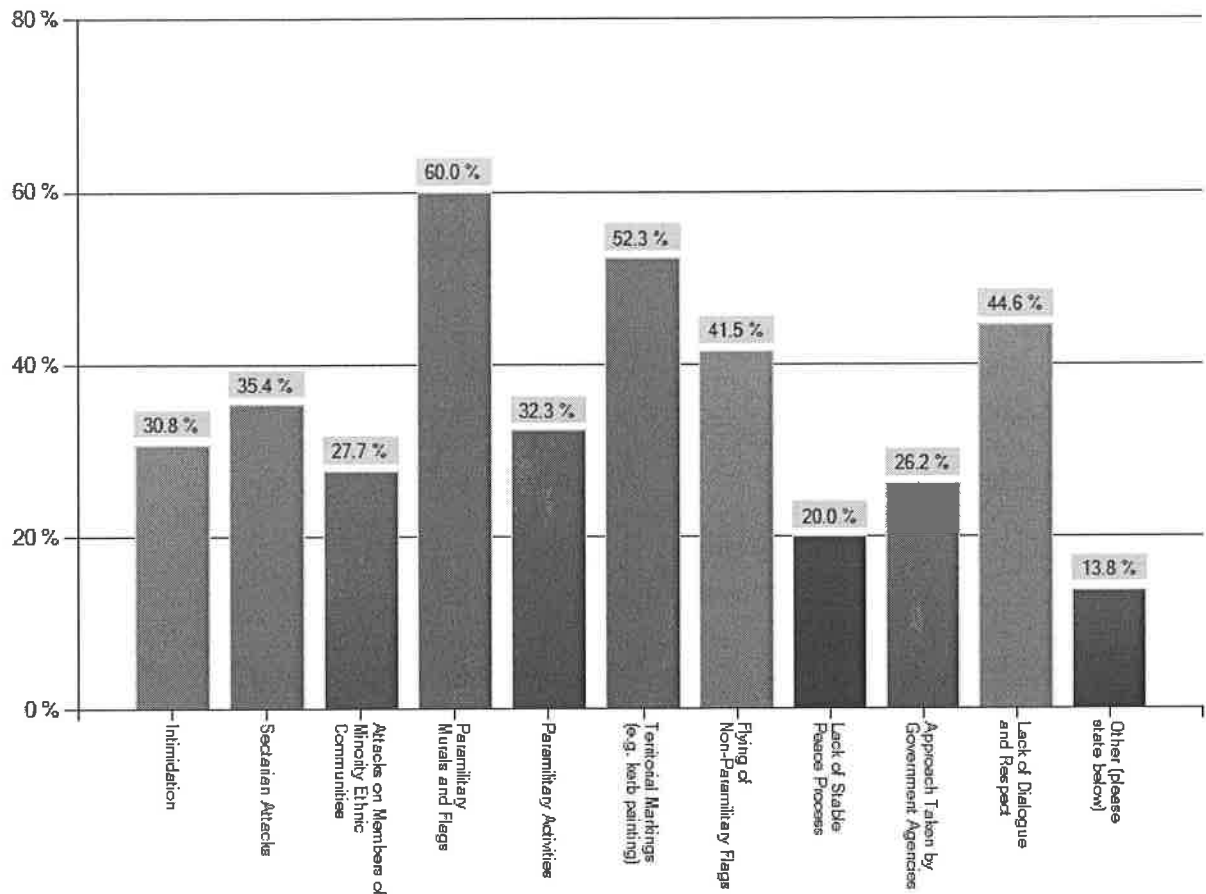


Chart 1 – What do you feel are the major good relations challenges facing the Magherafelt District Council area?

3.4 A brief outline of each has been provided.

3.4.1 **Paramilitary murals & Flags** – the presence of paramilitary murals and flags is widely believed to adversely affect good relations in the community and is the main good relations challenge in the area.

3.4.2 **Flying of non-paramilitary flags** – many respondents referred to the flying of flags particularly the Union flag in the Diamond area of the town and that this is divisive and does not reflect a neutral or shared space for everyone in the town.

3.4.3 **Sectarianism** – although it was acknowledged that the number of reported sectarian attacks has reduced there is a strong sense that sectarianism is still bubbling under the surface and that communities still remain divided.

- 3.4.4 **Neutral space** – a number of people commented that there was a lack of neutral space for people to access in order to carry out cross community work.
- 3.4.5 **Minority ethnic communities** – there is a sense that more needs to be done to reach out to minority ethnic communities. Many feel that there is a lack of real engagement with minority ethnic groups and that members of minority ethnic communities are experiencing feelings of isolation.
- 3.4.6 **Territorial Markings** – 52.3% of the respondents to the survey felt that territorial markings were a major good relations issue facing the MDC area.
- 3.4.7 **Paramilitary activity** – paramilitary activity is still evident in the MDC area. The pressure that the paramilitary groups exert is still having an impact and deters some from taking the step to take part in cross-community activities.
- 3.4.8 **Lack of dialogue and respect** – there was a sense that more work needs to be done to bring traditionally divided communities together. Many indicated that they felt more risks should be taken to bring Catholics and Protestants together to challenge perceptions and to encourage both communities to work in partnership on good relations initiatives.
- 3.4.9 **Rural isolation** – some of those involved in the audit process felt that many who lived in rural areas within the MDC area feel isolated and that there was much more focus on the towns in the area. This is a challenge in trying to promote inclusiveness through good relations work.
- 3.4.10 **Funding and support** - it was felt that community groups carrying out good relations work need more funding from Council in order to continue their work. Groups could do more good relations work if they had longer-term funding.
- 3.4.11 **Community apathy** – a number of people commented on the challenge of trying to motivate and convince people to come on board to try and make a positive change.
- 3.4.12 **Language barrier** – a number of respondents pointed out the difficulties of trying to engage with communities whose first language is not English. This works both ways in that members of minority ethnic communities also find it difficult to communicate their needs to staff in public bodies and community groups.

Good Relations Engagement

The following chart summarises responses to the question with regards to Magherafelt District Council's level of engagement with local community organisations and those representing different religious beliefs, minority ethnic groups and those with different political opinions. Consultees were asked to rate the level of engagement from very good to very poor.

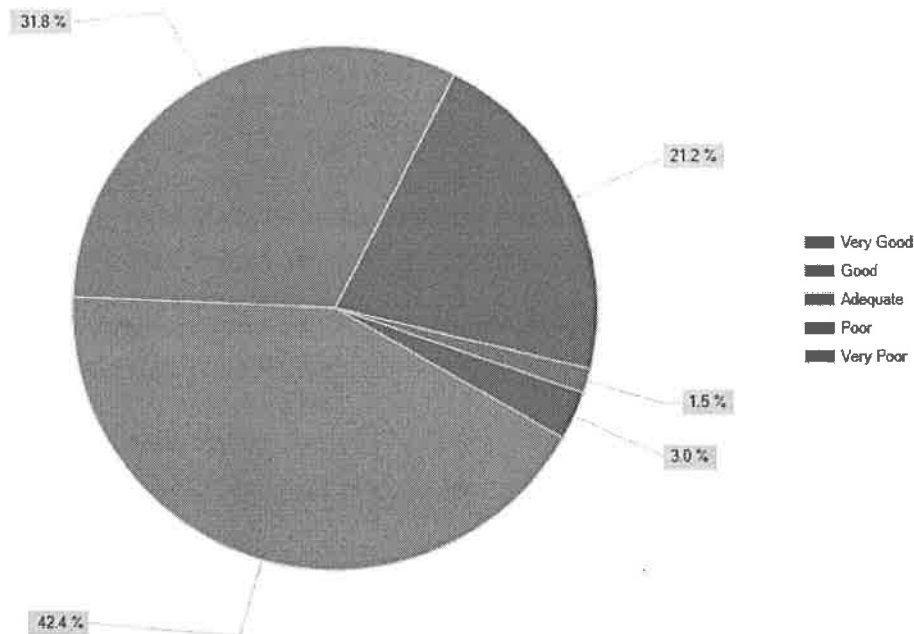


Chart 2 – How would you rate the Council Officers and Elected Members level of engagement with local community organisations and those representing different religious beliefs, minority ethnic groups and different political opinions?

3.4.13 The following points highlight the thoughts of respondents which were raised during the engagement process with regard to the level of engagement with community organisations:

3.4.14 Good Efforts on Good Relations – many people felt that the Council is making good efforts towards addressing good relations within the Council area. There was much praise for Sean Henry the Good Relations Officer and his help and support has had a significant impact on the local community. However, there was a sense that elected representatives should have a more hands-on approach/become more involved in community work and not just turn up at events. There was also a sense that the Council tends to shy away when contentious issues arise.

3.4.15 A positive response was also reflected in respondents choice on which best demonstrates their level of satisfaction with the Council's Good Relations efforts.

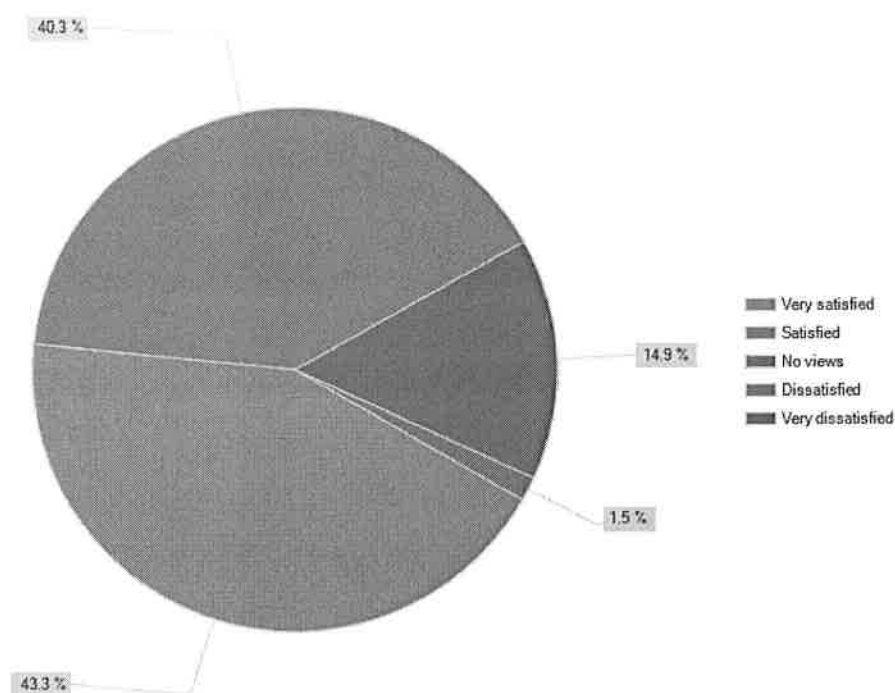


Chart 3 – Please indicate which option best demonstrates your satisfaction with the Council's Good Relations efforts?

Approximately 83% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the Council's good relations effort.

3.4.16 Developing good relations – the following is a summary of comments that were received to the question which local and regional organisations do you feel have a leading role in developing good relations in the area and are not in any order of importance:

- Community & voluntary groups
- Magherafelt District Council
- Sports groups
- Churches
- Schools
- Community Relations Council
- Good Relations Officer, MDC
- PSNI

- **Community/Voluntary groups** - Respondents believed that these groups have most responsibility for developing good relations in the area.
- **Magherafelt District Council** - Council was the second largest choice by participants as an organisation which should take a lead role in developing good relations in the area.
- **Other Groups** Sports groups, schools/colleges, and churches were also felt to be key contributors to good relations in the area.

Local Good Relations Environment

Those engaged through the audit process were asked if they felt there had been any changes in terms of prejudice towards certain groups over the last five years. The chart below summarises their responses.

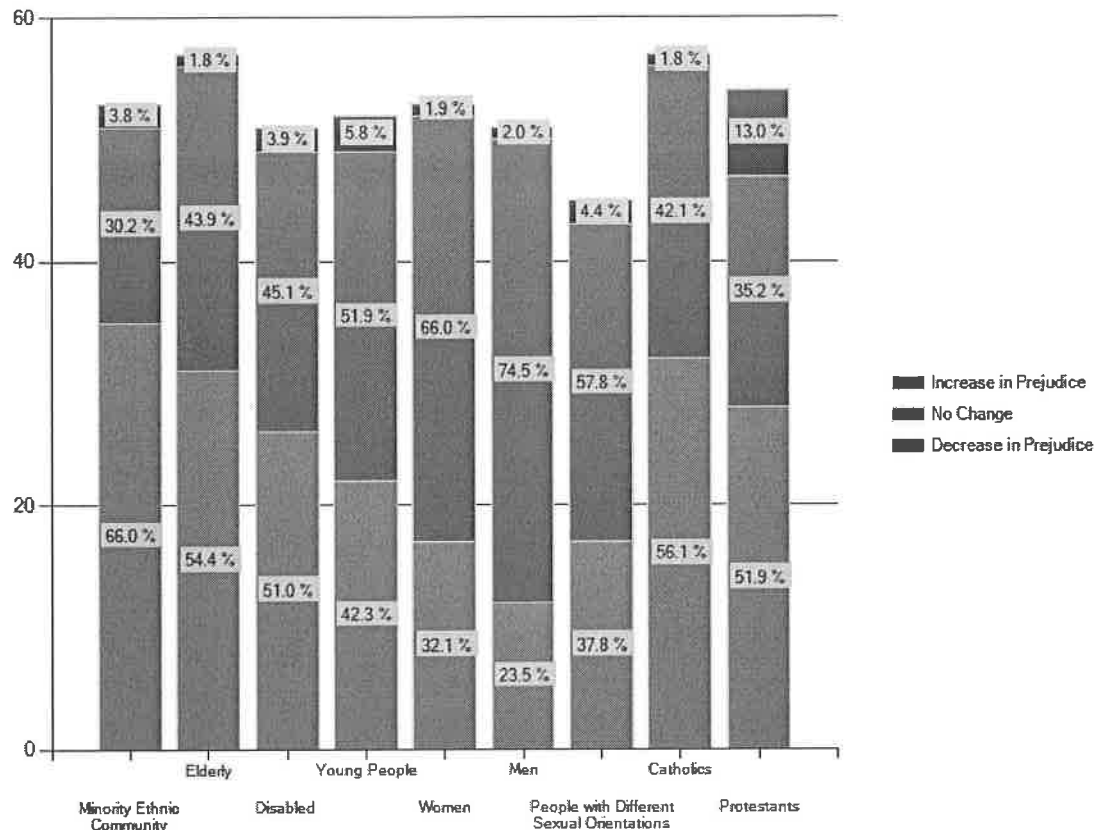


Chart 4 – Good Relations Environment in Magherafelt District Council Area.

The following are the top three responses to each option:

Decrease in prejudice towards:

1. Minority ethnic community
2. Catholics
3. Elderly

No change towards:

1. Men
2. Women
3. Young people

Increase in Prejudice towards:

1. Protestants
2. Young People
3. Minority ethnic communities, people with a disability, or people with different sexual orientation.

Those engaged through the process were asked to consider whether they felt that relations had improved, deteriorated or remained the same over the last four years, since the time of the last audit. The comments gathered under each of the option include:

Relationships Have Improved

- Improved in the cross-community sector.
- Improved due to funding from Council but largely due to the efforts from community groups.
- Definitely, with the help of Peace III funding.
- Vastly improved – Sean Henry has made a huge impact – bold enough to make change.
- Have improved at all levels – community, political and migrant worker community.
- Improved – Irish playgroups mix with Protestant playgroups in Tobermore now.

Relationships Have Remained the Same

- It has remained the same.
- In some ways yes improved, in other ways it has deteriorated (particularly now during election time).
- Things have generally remained the same.

Other Comments

- Flags issues have still to be dealt with.
- Work needs to start at a young age – that is where the difference will come from.
- With minority groups, they are only engaging with Council at the International Dinner; they feel isolated and not safe in the Maghera area.
- Racism is the new sectarianism.
- There is a sense that things improve for a while – at peak times of year.

Peace III Funding

Consultees were asked what they believe the benefits of Peace III funding have been.

Themed Comments

The following are groups of comments that were received to the question. These have been grouped in order of theme and are not in any order of importance.

Increased cross-community contact

- Local groups now have a chance to meet and put each other's points across.
- Both religions working together.
- Sharing experiences with each other by attending events organised by groups.
- Allowed initial steps to be taken in respect of encouraging communities within Magherafelt District to work together and develop understanding.
- Better interaction between Catholic and Protestant areas.

Ability to provide services to community

- Peace III as well as other funding is vital for community groups. It gives them the chance to interact with the wider community and to provide essential initiatives that can help develop skills and training to people who otherwise would not be able to avail of funded activities. such funding is invaluable to the day to day running of a successful community group.
- Projects and opportunities provided which we would not otherwise have experienced. Clear knowledge of your neighbour from a different religious background.

Increased awareness/acceptance of cultural diversity

- A greater number of initiatives have allowed people to meet and to be aware of the various groups and the amount of cultural diversity that exists in the district.
- As a local councillor I work with 25 community groups/bands and these groups have moved forward to respect other cultures.
- Many are now more tolerant of the cultural diversity when they know something of the others culture through sharing e.g. visits to Orange Halls, GAA, dance, music etc.
- Promoting awareness and tolerance of other groups.

Increased membership from diverse groups

- The availability of subsidies for small groups has enabled membership of such groups to be open to all, independent almost of their issues.

Enhanced social climate

- The social climate is enhanced - more optimistic.
- Becoming a better community for all.
- Greater involvement and pride by residents in local community. Celebrative of who/what we are.

- People have obtained a better quality of life through this money and have helped others to offer reconciliation in religious divides to accept each other's culture.

Increased respect/tolerance/acceptance

- Respect and tolerance for each other.
- The benefits have been that the community are now able to work together, show respect for each other and acceptance of each others culture.
- Peace III funding has been very important - it has enabled some groups to make a statement and decreased the feeling of not belonging.
- Has enabled people to look beyond traditional values and teachings and see everyone is equal and can be trusted.

Help with grass-roots initiatives

- Many groups have been able to undertake single identity and cross community/cross border projects. These are mostly led by people on the ground. Too few councillors are actively engaged at community level.
- Providing local communities with financial assistance to further community relations projects.
- Local organisations can access the funding to organise events, raise awareness etc. if specific issues that effect them or that they need to be raised and dealt with in their area. Rather than having one large campaign which may not be an issue in all areas.
- Peace III funding enabled groups to form and stabilise.
- Peace III funding has allowed local community groups to develop links with other groups and establish a point of contact to discuss mutual projects.

Youth/Schools

- The funding and support had a huge impact as it has helped us to hold events that benefit and educate the children and the cross community group that we work alongside.
- Youth projects - more tolerance in hard-line loyalist/nationalist areas e.g. Leekagh.
- We have seen the benefit of Peace III funding through projects with primary schools. Seven local Catholic schools have been taken to the battle field of the Somme - enlightening them as to the part played by their community.
- Children are being permitted to mix with other schools/organisations and to discover that they are very similar in many aspects and to learn other traditions without feeling threatened or parents fearing a loss of identity.

Difficulties/challenges

- It is bringing people together but there is always a minority who are hell bent on causing havoc and they need to be sorted before anything can be taken forward.
- Groups have benefited in the District. Difference becomes more evident at marching season when you think it is OK and then you realise it is not. Problem is that those estates in Magherafelt that get Peace III funding but can

still fly intimidating flags and create "no go" areas - for some members of the community was the money wasted?

Observations

Community groups Funding for these groups and grass-roots initiatives is key to allow them to reach more people, organise more events, provide more services, and increase the community's exposure to diverse groups.

Marginalised groups Peace III initiatives has given minority groups a chance to share their culture and feel a sense of belonging and an increased respect from the community.

Youth Projects that involve the youth and schools are seen as crucial to good relations in the area.

Awareness Some respondents were unsure what initiatives were funded by Peace III or how to access the funding.

Addressing Good Relations Issues

Respondents were asked to rank the importance that MDC should place on addressing issues arising from political, religious or racial differences. The following chart illustrates their responses:

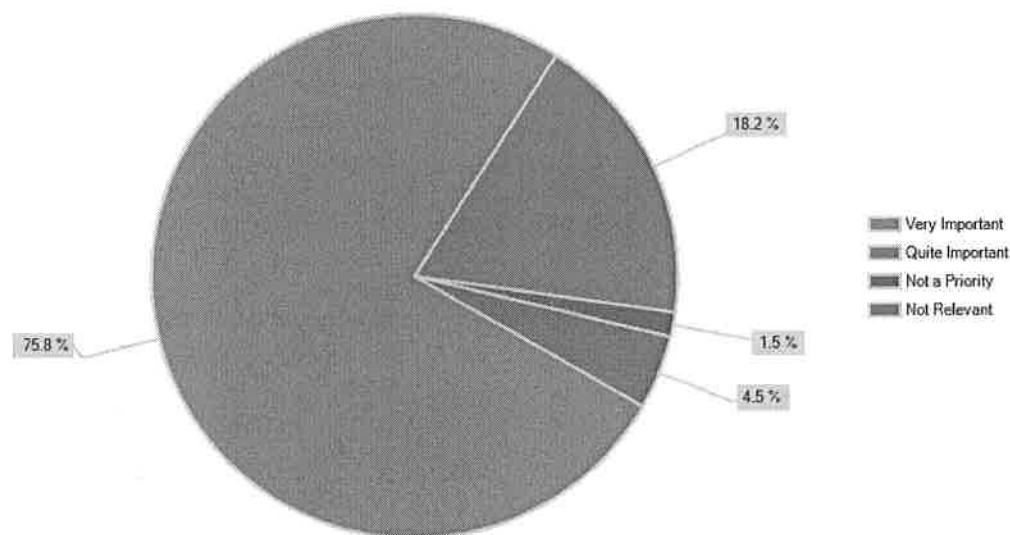


Chart 5 – Importance that MDC should place on addressing good relations issues

Leadership - 94% of respondents believed that addressing these issues was an important role of Council in order to maintain peace in the community. Many felt that Council should lead the community in these initiatives.

Approach to Good Relations

Respondents were asked to rate the level of importance of certain approaches to good relations:

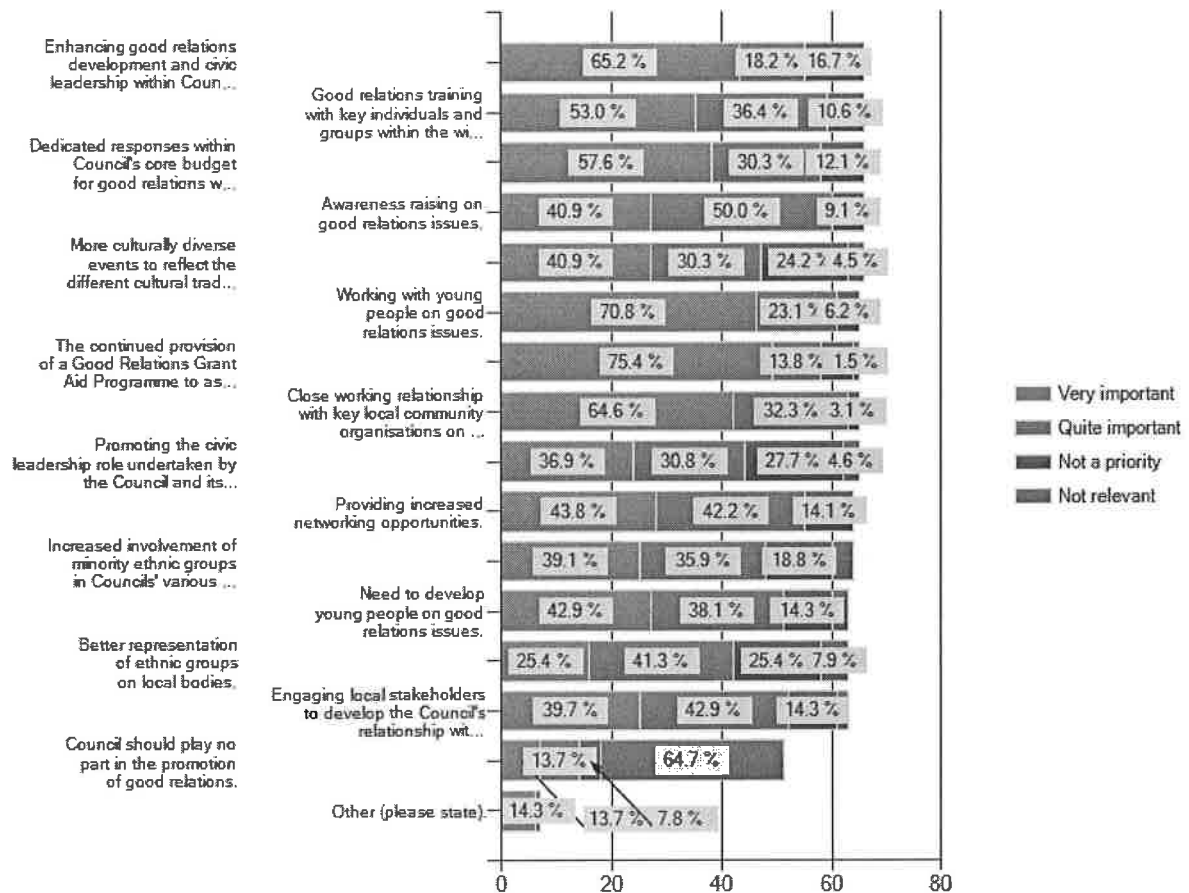


Chart 6 – Approaches to dealing with good relations in the MDC area.

The following are the top five responses to each option.

Very Important

1. The continued provision of a Good Relations Grant Aid Programme to assist local community organisations.
2. Working with young people on good relations issues.
3. Enhancing good relations development and civic leadership.
4. Close working relationship with key local community.
5. Dedicated responses within Council's core budget for good relations work.

Quite Important

1. Awareness raising on good relations issues
- 2/3. Engaging local stakeholders to develop the Council's relationship with the local community.
- 2/3. Providing increased networking opportunities.

4. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
- 5/6. Need to develop young people on good relations issues.
- 5/6. Good relations training with key individuals and groups within the wider community.

Not a priority

1. Promoting the civic leadership role undertaken by Council and its elected representatives.
- 2/3. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
- 2/3. More culturally diverse events to reflect the different cultural traditions within the district.
4. Increased involvement of minority ethnic groups in Council's various activities.
5. Enhancing Good Relations development and civic leadership within the Council.

Not Relevant

1. Council should play no part in the promotion of good relations.
2. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
3. Increased involvement of minority ethnic groups in Council's various activities.
- 4/5. Promoting the civic leadership role undertaken by Council and its elected representatives.
- 4/5. More culturally diverse events to reflect the different cultural traditions within the district.

Those who engaged with the audit process were asked what mechanisms they felt could be put in place to address good relations issues. The following is a summary of the responses:

- Setting up a Good Relations Forum to address good relations issues such as flags and emblems.
- Organising more international days/welcome events which focus on bringing minority ethnic groups together.
- Gaining more support from the elected representatives for the Good Relations Officer's work.
- Devising a flags policy.
- Finding accessible neutral venues for good relations work.

Section 4 – Recommendations

Recommendations

Based on the main findings of this report Holywell Consultancy makes the following recommendations regarding the future delivery of good relations work by Council in the Magherafelt District Council area. These recommendations are not listed in any order of priority.

- 4.1 Magherafelt District Council should continue to take a leadership role in addressing good relations issues within the District. In particular MDC should focus on the following good relations priorities as raised during the consultation process:

- Paramilitary murals and flags
- Territorial markings
- Lack of dialogue and respect
- Flying of non-paramilitary flags
- Sectarian attacks

Holywell Consultancy recommends that MDC set up a Good Relations Forum in order to deal with the above good relations issues. Members of this forum should include key community and voluntary representatives, key MDC Good Relations staff and key representatives from relevant statutory agencies. The development of a Good Relations Forum will ensure an effective platform for MDC to highlight and promote good relations. It will also facilitate partnership working with the council, community and voluntary sector and relevant statutory agencies in order to address good relations issues. A Forum will also help to keep lines of communication open between council, elected representatives and community organisations.

- 4.2 The positive impact of the work of the MDC Good Relations Officer and the Good Relations department was frequently highlighted during the consultation process. This department should continue its current open and inclusive approach to delivering good relations work.
- 4.3 MDC should continue to support community groups through the Good Relations MDC Grant Aid programme.
- 4.4 MDC should work with community and voluntary representatives to identify more neutral spaces for community groups to carry out good relations activities/events.
- 4.5 MDC elected representatives should be encouraged to become more active/involved in community activities and events. In order to sustain the positive impact of the good relations work in the MDC area Councillors should

also be encouraged not to shy away from the hard issues but to try and deal with the complexities of cross-community engagement when they arise.

- 4.6 MDC should work towards building capacity within the community and voluntary sector in the Magherafelt area in order to reduce dependency on direct support from MDC.

Section 5 – Appendices

Appendix 1 – Trigger Questions

- 5.1 The following are the agreed ‘trigger’ questions that were used at the interviews and focus group sessions.



**Magherafelt District Council
Good Relations Audit March 2011
Trigger Questions**



Holywell Consultancy Ltd.

1. What is your involvement with/connection to Magherafelt District Council (MDC)?
2. What do you think are the main good relations challenges facing the MDC area?
3. Does MDC actively engage with local community organisations and those representing different religious beliefs, minority ethnic groups and those with different political opinions? If so, how does this happen?
4. Do you feel that relations have improved/deteriorated over the last four years, since the last Good Relations Audit Exercise, between people of different religions, political opinions or racial groups?
5. What other mechanisms, if any, do you feel should be put into place by MDC, or other organisations (please name at least 3), to address good relations issues?
6. What steps should be taken to make the Magherafelt area a place of welcome for people from all different political opinions, racial groups and religious beliefs?
7. Do you plan to do anything to create/build good relations within the area?
8. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Appendix 2 – Good Relations Survey

5.2 The following is the content of the survey questionnaire that was promoted to all community organisations in the area for their completion.

MAGHERAFELT DISTRICT COUNCIL

GOOD RELATIONS AUDIT SURVEY FORM JANUARY 2011

Magherafelt District Council has commissioned Holywell Consultancy to conduct a good relations audit in order to assist the Council in developing its Good Relations Strategy. Good Relations and the legislation around Good Relations encourages public sector organisations to tackle sectarianism and racism.

This questionnaire has been designed to:

- Gauge the opinion of local people on good relations issues
- Assess how the public of the Magherafelt District Council area feel that the Council addresses good relations issues
- Identify future good relations issues to be addressed by Magherafelt District Council

All responses submitted to Council are anonymous – Magherafelt District Council will not be able to determine the identity of anyone who has returned a completed form.

The form should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete and your input into this process would be greatly appreciated.

Please return this survey in the envelope provided by 11th March 2011.

Jeśli potrzebujesz ankietę w języku polskim, proszę skontaktuj się z Davina McCartney w Magherafelt District Council pod numerem tel.: 028 79397979

Jei pageidaujate šio tyrimo lietuvių kalba, prašom kreiptis į Davina McCartney iš Magherafelt rajono tarybos telefonu 028 79397979

如果你要求這項調查翻譯為中文請聯絡Magherafelt地區理事廳的Davina
麥卡特利女仕028 79397979

1) What is your connection/involvement with Magherafelt District Council?

Elected Councillor	
Council staff	
Community worker	
Participant in Good Relations funded project	
Other (please state)	

2) Which local and regional organisations do you feel have a leading role in developing good relations in your area?

--

3) How would you rate the Council Officers and Elected Members level of engagement with local community organisations and those representing different minority ethnic groups, religious and political beliefs effectively?
(Please circulate your selection)

Very Good	1
Good	2
Adequate	3
Poor	4
Very Poor	5

Please use this space to comment on your response

- 4) Please tick the box which best demonstrates your satisfaction with the Council's Good Relations efforts?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	No views	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Please tick					

- 5) Do you feel that the Magherafelt District has changed in terms of prejudice towards the following groups over the last five years? Please tick the relevant box

	Decrease in prejudice	No change	Increase in prejudice	Comment
Minority ethnic community				
Elderly				
Disabled				
Young people				
Women				

Men				
People with different sexual orientation				
Catholics				
Protestants				

- 6) What additional mechanisms do you feel should be put in place by Magherafelt District Council to make the area a place of welcome for all?

Please use this space to comment on your response

- 7) Please rank how important addressing issues arising from political, religious or racial differences within the Council area is to you/your organisation.
(Please circle your selection)

Very important	1
Quite important	2
Not a priority	3
Not relevant	4

Please use this space to comment on your response

- 8) Please rank the importance that Magherafelt District Council should place on addressing issues arising from political, religious or racial differences. (Please circle your selection)

Very important	1
Quite important	2
Not a priority	3
Not relevant	4

Please use this space to comment on your response

- 9) What do you feel are the major good relations issues facing the Magherafelt District Council area?

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Intimidation	
Sectarian attacks	
Attacks on members of minority ethnic communities	
Paramilitary murals and flags	
Paramilitary activities	
Territorial markings e.g. kerb painting	
Flying of non-paramilitary flags	
Lack of stable peace process	
Approach taken by Government agencies	
Lack of dialogue and respect	
Other (please state)	

10) Using the scale below, please prioritise the following suggested approaches to dealing with good relations issues in the Magherafelt District Council area.

1 – Very important **2 – Quite important** **3 –**
Not a priority **4 – Not relevant**

Enhancing Good Relations development and civic leadership within Council	1	2	3	4
Good relations training with key individuals and groups within the wider community	1	2	3	4
Working with young people on good relations issues	1	2	3	4
Need to develop and implement policy on the use of shared space within the District	1	2	3	4
The continued provision of a Good Relations Grant Aid Programme to assist local community organisations	1	2	3	4
Dedicated resources within Council's core budget for good relations work	1	2	3	4
Providing increased networking opportunities	1	2	3	4
Awareness raising on good relations issues	1	2	3	4
Close working relationship with key local community organisations on good relations issues	1	2	3	4
More culturally diverse events to reflect the different cultural traditions within the district	1	2	3	4
Increased involvement of minority ethnic groups in Councils' various activities	1	2	3	4
Promoting the civic leadership role undertaken by Council and its elected representatives	1	2	3	4
Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies	1	2	3	4
Engaging local stakeholders to develop the Council's relationship with the local community	1	2	3	4
Council should play no part in the promotion of good relations	1	2	3	4
Other (please state)	1	2	3	4

11) What do you believe have been the benefits of the Peace III funding to the Magherafelt District Council area?

12) Are there any other comments around good relations that you would like to make?

Thank you very much for completing this survey.
Individual forms are anonymous and will be treated with strictest confidence.

Equality Monitoring Information

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires us to request some information about you. Please tick the boxes that are relevant to you.

		✓			✓
Gender	Female		Marital Status	Divorced	
	Male			Living Together	
	Transgender			Married	
		Separated			
				Single	
		✓			✓
Age Group	18-24		Political Opinion	Nationalist	
	25-34			Republican	
	35-44			Unionist	
	45-54			Loyalist	
	55-64			Socialist	
	Over 65			Other (state):	
		✓			✓
Racial Group	White		If 'White' selected please select your nationality	Irish	
	Indian			British	
	Pakistani			Northern Irish	
	Chinese			Lithuanian	
	Bangladeshi			Polish	
	Black African			Portuguese	
	Black Caribbean			Russian	
	Irish Traveller			Latvian	
	Other (state):			Filipino	
				Other (state):	
		✓			✓
Religious Belief	Protestant		Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	
	Roman Catholic			Homosexual	
	Other Christian			Bisexual	
	Other Faith				
	No Religious Belief				
		✓			✓
Disability	A person has a disability if s/he has "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities" Disability Discrimination Act 1995				
	I have a physical disability				
	I have a sensory disability				
	I have a learning disability				
		✓			✓
Dependants	I have personal responsibility for the care of a child				
	I have personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability				
	I have personal responsibility for the care of a dependent elderly person				

Appendix 3 – Survey Results & Analysis

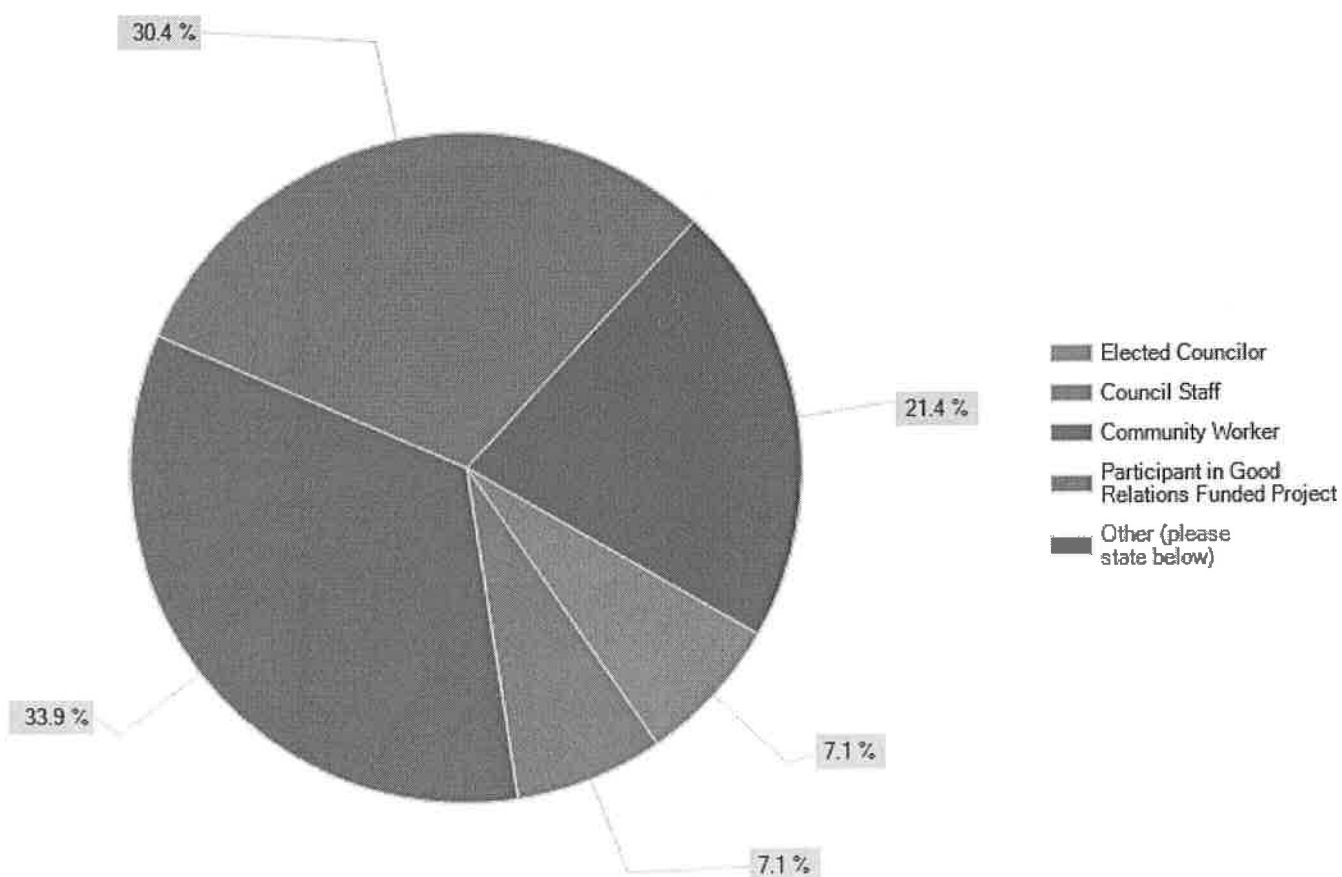
5.3 The following tables, charts and comments detail the main findings from the online survey which was completed by 68 people.

Question

Question One – What is your connection/involvement with Magherafelt District Council?

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to this question.



Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regard to this question.

What is your connection/involvement with Magherafelt District Council?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Elected Councillor	7.1%	4
Council Staff	7.1%	4
Community Worker	33.9%	19
Participant in Good Relations Funded Project	30.4%	17
Other (please state below)	21.4%	12
Other (please specify)		17
	<i>answered question</i>	56
	<i>skipped question</i>	12

Question

Question Two – What local and regional organisations do you feel have a leading role in developing good relations in your area?

Themed Comments

The following is a summary of comments that were received to the question and are not in any order of importance.

- Community & voluntary groups
- Magherafelt District Council
- Sports groups
- Churches
- Schools
- Community Relations Council
- Good Relations Officer, MDC
- PSNI

Observations

- **Community/Voluntary groups** Respondents believed that these groups were the most responsible for developing good relations in the area, showing a strong commitment to grass-roots initiatives in the area.

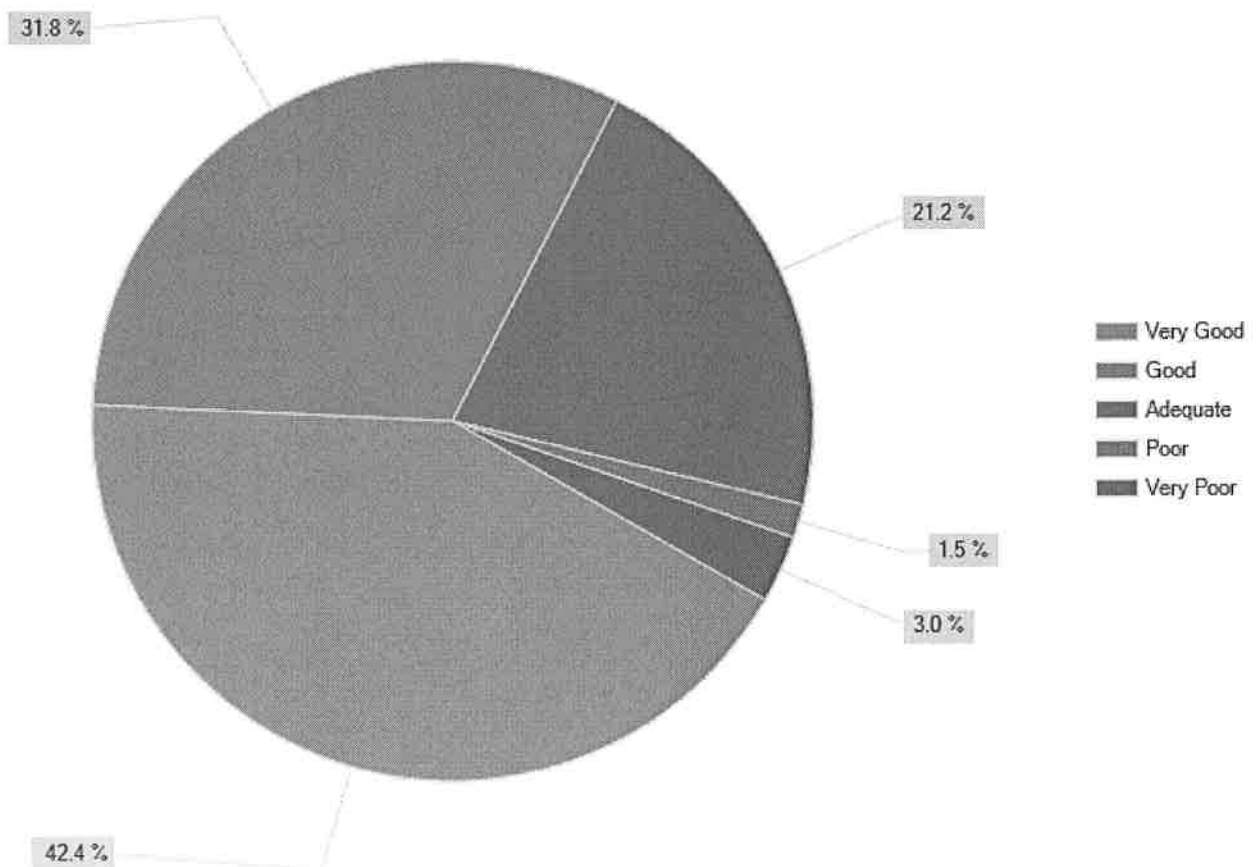
- **Magherafelt District Council** Council was the second-largest responses, demonstrating that many people feel positive about Council's commitment to good relations.
- **Other Groups** Sports groups, schools/colleges, and churches are also key contributors to good relations in the area.

Question

Question Three – How would you rate the Council Officers and Elected Members' level of engagement with local community organisations and those representing different minority ethnic groups, religious, and political beliefs effectively?

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to the question.



Themed Comments

The following are groups of comments that were received to the question. These have been grouped in order of theme and are not in any order of importance.

Good Relations Officer

- Anne Forde and Sean Henry are very active in engaging with all community groups and do an excellent job.
- Council Officer Sean Henry has been a tremendous asset.
- Good Relations grant very useful in this respect but still of limited value.
- Good Relations Officer - good level of engagement with all groups, does job well.
- Good Relations Officer approachable and always happy to explain issues.
-

Council

- Council Officers always promote good relations.
- Council staff very helpful.
- Councillors keen to engage with those in voluntary associations.
- I found some are not always so good at responding to issues when requested to.
- Too much party politics and not enough work on the ground from councillors.

Elected Officers

- Elected members attend all functions when invited.
- Elected members have been willing to help when asked.
- Elected Members - some are very active, others don't get involved with funding for grants, they just attend some events.
- Elected members take high profile roles in public functions and when necessary muster support for causes they perceive to be of communal interest or concern.
- Too often they work down party lines and forget they serve the community

Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regard to this question.

How would you rate the Council Officers and Elected Members level of engagement with local community organisations and those representing different minority ethnic groups, religious and political beliefs effectively?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Good	42.4%	28
Good	31.8%	21
Adequate	21.2%	14
Poor	1.5%	1
Very Poor	3.0%	2
Please use this space to comment on your response.		35
<i>answered question</i>		66
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Observations

Positive Response Approximately 74% of respondents believed Council Officers and Elected Members were doing a very good or good job of representing diverse groups.

Good Relations Office All comments about the good relations office and officer were positive.

Council Comments about Council itself were largely positive; difficulties were found when councillors bring personal politics into their work.

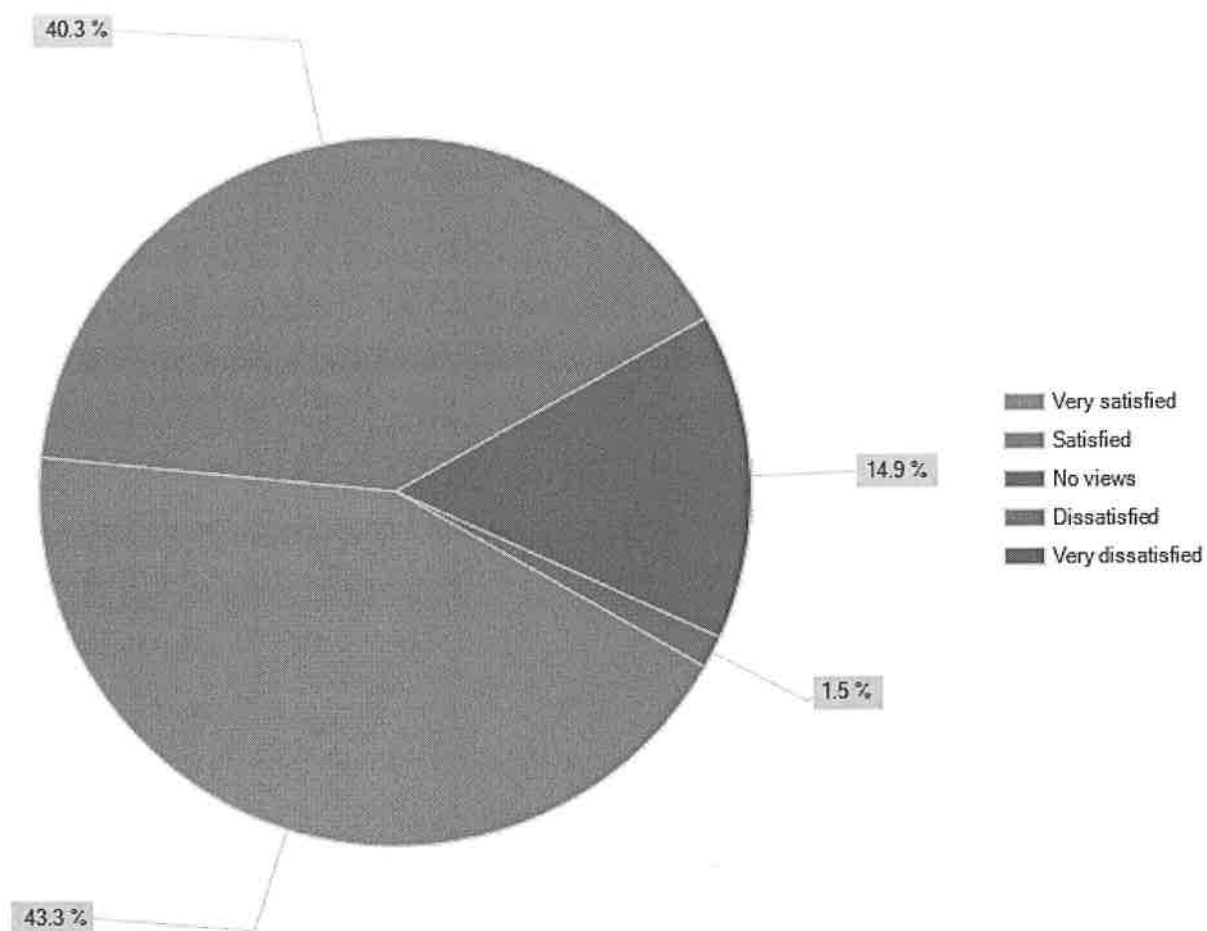
Elected Officials Many respondents perceived that elected members attended events for publicity and should enact a more pro-active approach to engagement.

Question

Question Four – Please tick the box which best demonstrates your satisfaction with the Council's Good Relations efforts.

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to this question.



Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regards to this question.

Please tick the box which best demonstrates your satisfaction with the Council's Good Relations efforts.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	43.3%	29
Satisfied	40.3%	27
No views	14.9%	10
Dissatisfied	1.5%	1
Very dissatisfied	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		67
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Observations

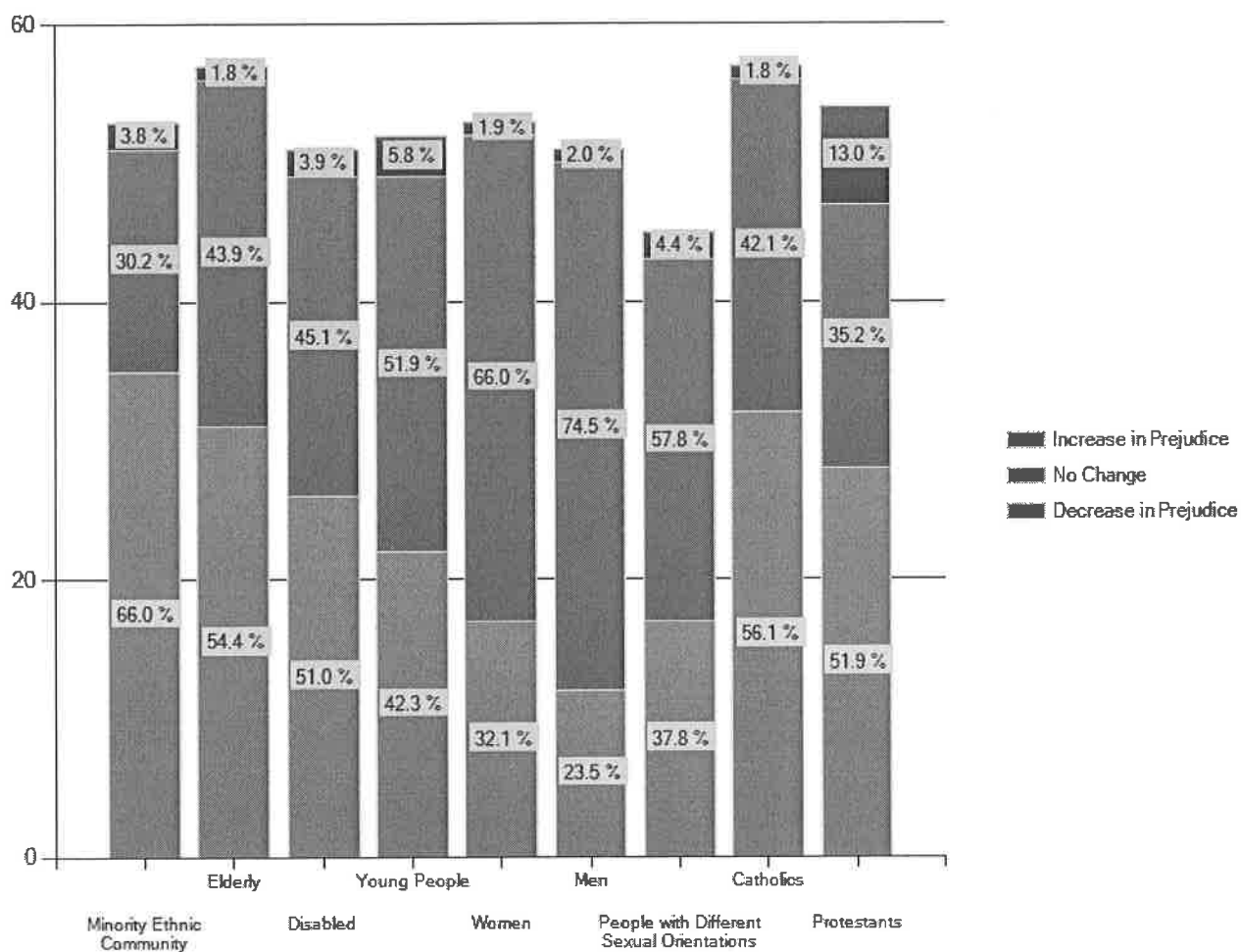
Positive Response Approximately 83% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the Council's good relations efforts.

Question

Question Five – Do you feel Magherafelt District has changed in terms of prejudice towards the following groups over the last five years?

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to the question.



Themed Responses

The following are the top three responses to each option.

Decrease in Prejudice

1. Minority Ethnic Community
2. Catholics
3. Elderly

No Change

1. Men
2. Women
3. Young People

Increase in Prejudice

1. Protestants
2. Young People
3. Minority Ethnic Community, Disabled, People with Different Sexual Orientations

Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regard to this question.

Do you feel that the Magherafelt District has changed in terms of prejudice towards the following groups over the last five years? Please tick the relevant box				
Answer Options	Decrease in Prejudice	No Change	Increase in Prejudice	Response Count
Minority Ethnic Community	35	16	2	53
Elderly	31	25	1	57
Disabled	26	23	2	51
Young People	22	27	3	52
Women	17	35	1	53
Men	12	38	1	51
People with Different Sexual Orientations	17	26	2	45
Catholics	32	24	1	57
Protestants	28	19	7	54
Comments				22
<i>answered question</i>				63
<i>skipped question</i>				5

Question

Question Six – What additional measures do you feel should be put in place by Magherafelt District Council to make the area a place of welcome for all?

Observations

Flags/Sectarian symbols Many respondents had an issue with the presence of flags, painted kerbs, and other sectarian symbols, especially those in common public areas, such as the Magherafelt town centre.

Town Centre In addition to the sectarian symbols, it was suggested that the town centre receive a “face-lift” to appear more welcoming and to encourage visitation.

Irish Language The use of Irish Language, especially on road signs, continues to be a contentious issue in this community.

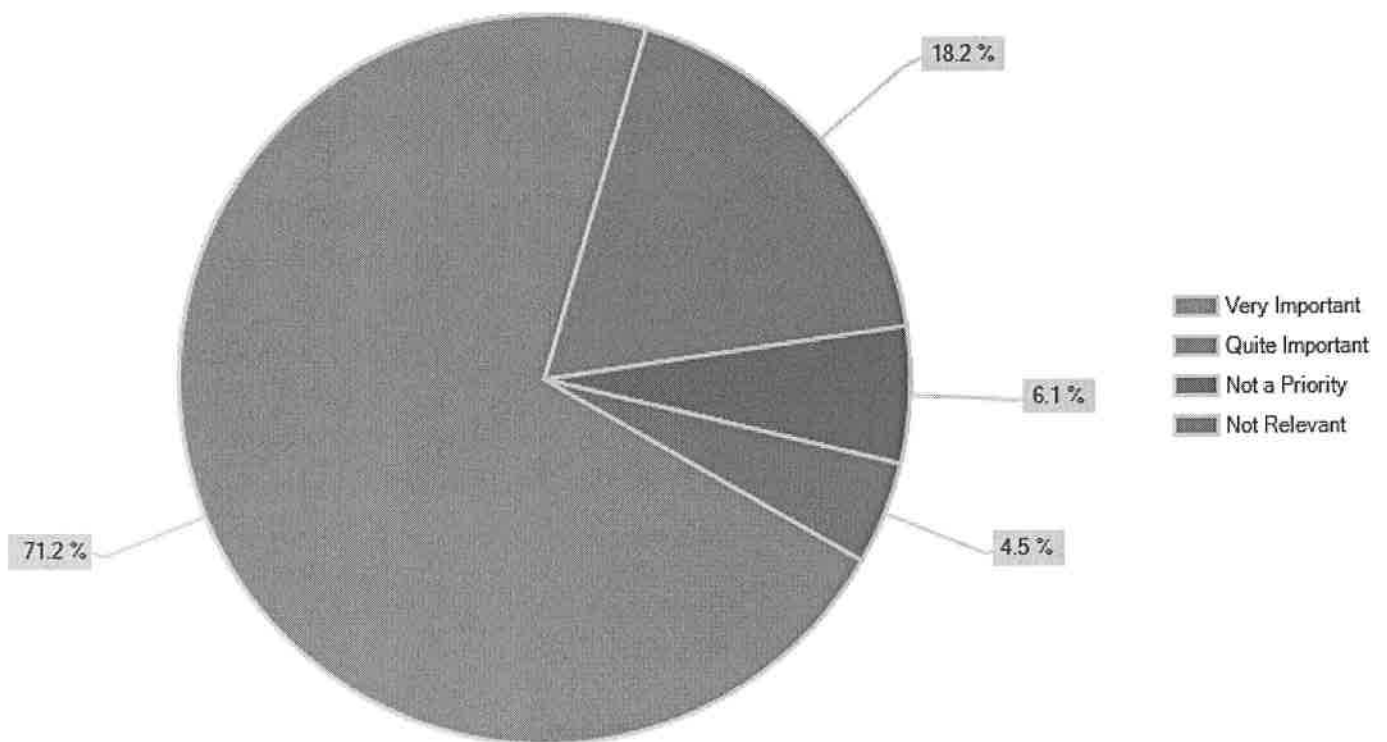
Celebrations of traditions Rather than not have celebrations or neutralising them, it was suggested that these diverse traditions be celebrated and that tolerance/respect could be increased with more education surrounding them.

Question

Question Seven – Please rank how important addressing issues arising from political, religious, or racial differences within the Council area is to you/your organisation.

Chart

The chart below details the responses to the question.



Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regard to this question.

Please rank how important addressing issues arising from political, religious or racial differences within the Council area is to you/your organisation.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	71.2%	47
Quite Important	18.2%	12
Not a Priority	6.1%	4
Not Relevant	4.5%	3
Please use this space to comment on your response.		26
<i>answered question</i>		66
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Observations

Importance of addressing the issue 89% of respondents believed that addressing issues pertaining to political, racial, or religious differences was a very important or quite important responsibility of Council.

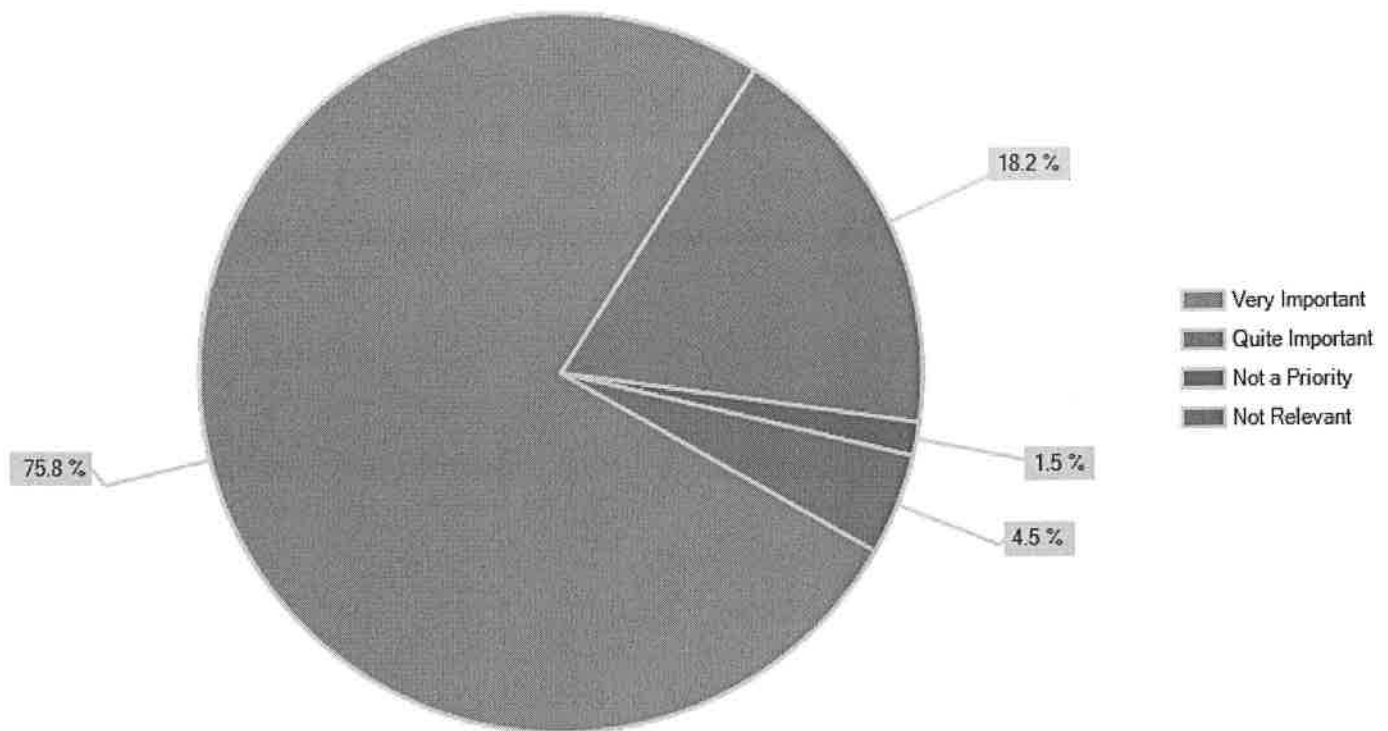
Not a priority Those who did not see this as important were either happy with the relationships within their groups, were party of single identity groups, or were involved with issues that affected all.

Question

Question Eight – Please rank the importance that Magherafelt District Council should place on addressing issues arising from political, religious, or racial differences.

Chart

The chart below displays the Responses to the question.



Observations

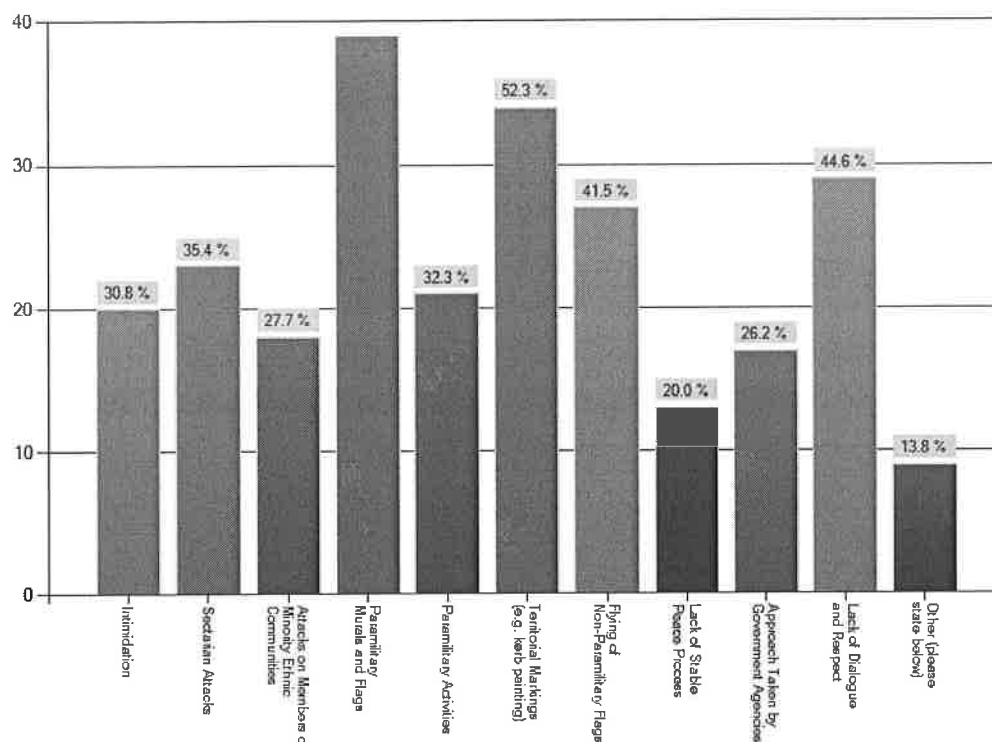
Leadership 94% of respondents believed that addressing these issues was an important role of Council to maintain peace in the community. Many felt that Council should lead the community in these initiatives.

Question

Question Nine – What do you feel are the major good relations issues facing Magherafelt District Council?

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to this question.



Themed Responses

The follow are the top five responses to the question:

Top Responses

1. Paramilitary murals and flags
2. Territorial markings (e.g. kerb paintings)
3. Lack of dialogue and respect
4. Flying of non-paramilitary flags
5. Sectarian Attacks

Statistical Information

The table below details the statistical information with regard to this question.

What do you feel are the major good relations issues facing the Magherafelt District Council area?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Intimidation	30.8%	20
Sectarian Attacks	35.4%	23
Attacks on Members of Minority Ethnic Communities	27.7%	18
Paramilitary Murals and Flags	60.0%	39
Paramilitary Activities	32.3%	21
Territorial Markings (e.g. kerb painting)	52.3%	34
Flying of Non-Paramilitary Flags	41.5%	27
Lack of Stable Peace Process	20.0%	13
Approach Taken by Government Agencies	26.2%	17
Lack of Dialogue and Respect	44.6%	29
Other (please state below)	13.8%	9

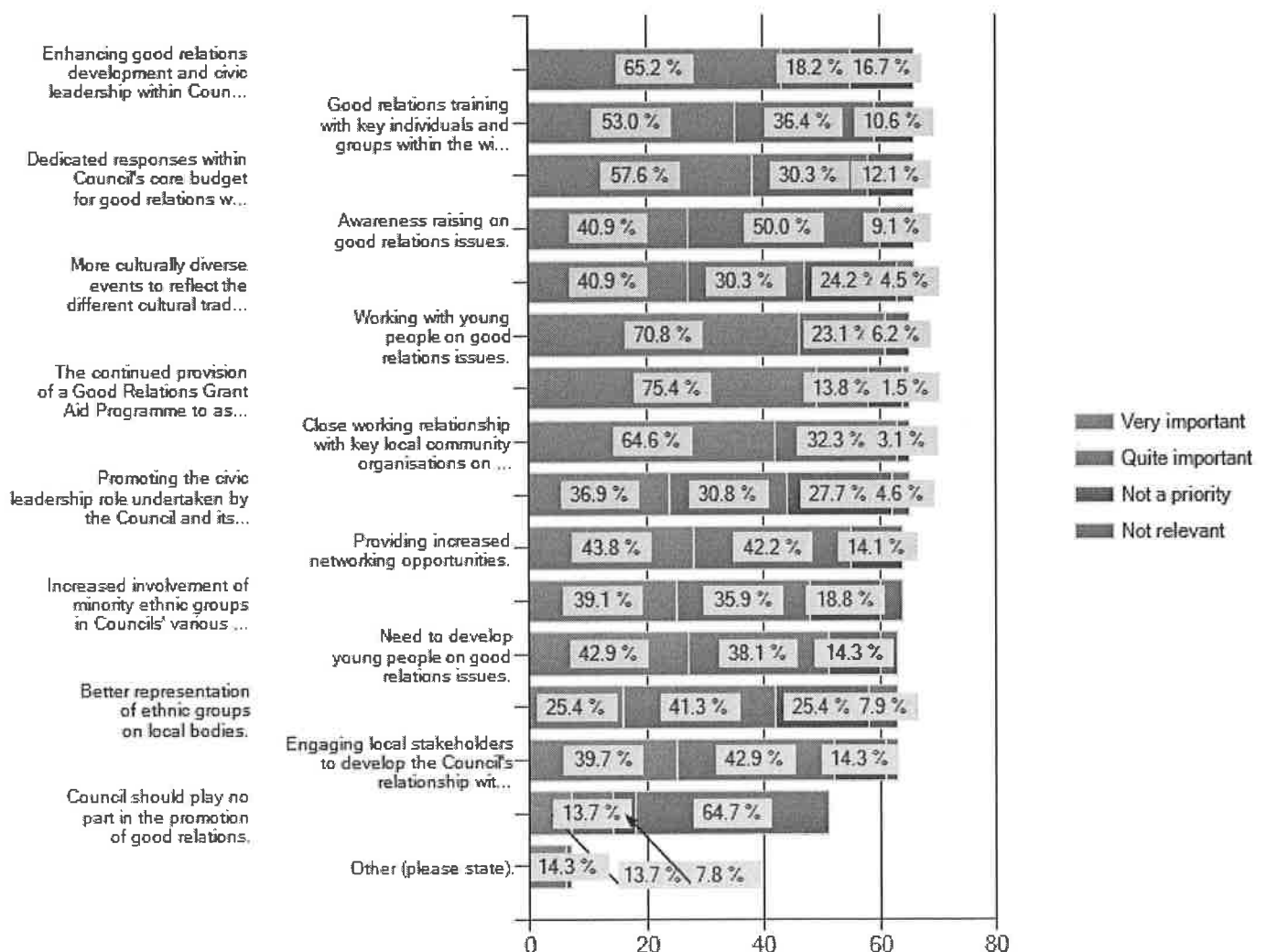
Other (please specify)	13
	<i>answered question</i> 65
	<i>skipped question</i> 3

Question

Question Ten – Using the scale below, please prioritise the following suggested approaches to dealing with good relations issues in the Magherafelt District Council area.

Chart

The chart below displays the responses to this question.



Themed Responses

The following are the top five responses to each option.

Very Important

1. The continued provision of a Good Relations Grant Aid Programme to assist local community organisations.
2. Working with young people on good relations issues.
3. Enhancing good relations development and civic leadership.
4. Close working relationship with key local community.
5. Dedicated responses within Council's core budget for good relations work.

Quite Important

1. Awareness raising on good relations issues
- 2/3. Engaging local stakeholders to develop the Council's relationship with the local community.
- 2/3. Providing increased networking opportunities.
4. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
- 5/6. Need to develop young people on good relations issues.
- 5/6. Good relations training with key individuals and groups within the wider community.

Not a priority

1. Promoting the civic leadership role undertaken by Council and its elected representatives.
- 2/3. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
- 2/3. More culturally diverse events to reflect the different cultural traditions within the district.
4. Increased involvement of minority ethnic groups in Council's various activities.
5. Enhancing Good Relations development and civic leadership within the Council.

Not Relevant

1. Council should play no part in the promotion of good relations.
2. Better representation of ethnic groups on local bodies.
3. Increased involvement of minority ethnic groups in Council's various activities.
- 4/5. Promoting the civic leadership role undertaken by Council and its elected representatives.
- 4/5. More culturally diverse events to reflect the different cultural traditions within the district.

Question

Question Eleven – What do you believe have been the benefits of the Peace III funding to the Magherafelt District Council area?

Themed Comments

The following are groups of comments that were received to the question. These have been grouped in order of theme and are not in any order of importance.

Increased cross-community contact

- Local groups now have a chance to meet and put each others points across .
- Both religions working together.
- Sharing experiences with each other by attending events organised by groups.
- Allowed initial steps to be taken in respect of encouraging communities within Magherafelt District to work together and develop understanding.
- Better interaction between Catholic and Protestant areas.

Ability to provide services to community

- Peace III as well as other funding is vital for community groups. It gives them the chance to interact with the wider community and to provide essential initiatives that can help develop skills and training to people who otherwise would not be able to avail of funded activities. such funding is invaluable to the day to day running of a successful community group.
- Projects and opportunities provided which we would not otherwise have experienced. Clear knowledge of your neighbour from a different religious background.

Increased awareness/acceptance of cultural diversity

- A greater number of initiatives have allowed people to meet and to be aware of the various groups and the amount of cultural diversity that exists in the district.
- As a local councillor I work with 25 community groups/bands and these groups have moved forward to respect other cultures.
- Many are now more tolerant of the cultural diversity when they know something of the others culture through sharing e.g. visits to Orange Halls, GAA, dance, music etc.
- Promoting awareness and tolerance of other groups.

Increased membership from diverse groups

- The availability of subsidies for small groups has enabled membership of such groups to be open to all, independent almost of their issues.

Enhanced social climate

- The social climate is enhanced - more optimistic.
- Becoming a better community for all.
- Greater involvement and pride by residents in local community. Celebrative of who/what we are.

- People have obtained a better quality of life through this money and have helped others to offer reconciliation in religious divides to accept each other's culture.

Increased respect/tolerance/acceptance

- Respect and tolerance for each other.
- The benefits have been that the community are now able to work together, show respect for each other and acceptance of each others culture.
- Peace III funding has been very important - it has enabled some groups to make a statement and decreased the feeling of not belonging.
- Has enabled people to look beyond traditional values and teachings and see everyone is equal and can be trusted.

Help with grass-roots initiatives

- Many groups have been able to undertake single identity and cross community/cross border projects. These are mostly led by people on the ground. Too few councillors are actively engaged at community level.
- Providing local communities with financial assistance to further community relations projects.
- Local organisations can access the funding to organise events, raise awareness etc. if specific issues that effect them or that they need to be raised and dealt with in their area. Rather than having one large campaign which may not be an issue in all areas.
- Peace III funding enabled groups to form and stabilise.
- Peace III funding has allowed local community groups to develop links with other groups and establish a point of contact to discuss mutual projects.

Youth/Schools

- The funding and support had a huge impact as it has helped us to hold events that benefit and educate the children and the cross community group that we work alongside.
- Youth projects - more tolerance in hard-line loyalist/nationalist areas e.g. Leckagh.
- We have seen the benefit of Peace III funding through projects with primary schools. Seven local Catholic schools have been taken to the battle field of the Somme - enlightening them as to the part played by their community.
- Children are being permitted to mix with other schools/organisations and to discover that they are very similar in many aspects and to learn other traditions without feeling threatened or parents fearing a loss of identity.

Still difficulties/challenges

- It is bringing people together but there is always a minority who are hell bent on causing havoc and they need to be sorted before anything can be taken forward.
- Groups have benefited in the District. Difference becomes more evident at marching season when you think it is OK and then you realise it is not. Problem is that those estates in Magherafelt that get Peace III funding but can

still fly intimidating flags and create "no go" areas - for some members of the community was the money wasted?

General

- Good Relations Programme in Magherafelt District Council has been visible and even a group like ourselves who are not directly involved in good relations are aware of it. Gradual changes have started to make a difference.
- We only have to look around us to see the benefits.

Observations

Community groups Funding for these groups and grass-roots initiatives is key to allow them to reach more people, organise more events, provide more services, and increase the community's exposure to diverse groups.

Marginalised groups Peace III initiatives has given minority groups a chance to share their culture and feel more belonging and respect from the community.

Youth Projects that involve the youth and schools are seen as crucial to good relations in the area.

Awareness Many respondents were unsure what initiatives were funded by Peace III or how to access the funding.

Question

Question Twelve – Are there any other comments around good relations that you would like to make?

Themed Comments

The following are groups of comments that were received to the question. These have been grouped in order of theme and are not in any order of importance.

Council/Elected Members

- I believe if all elected representatives worked with local people and groups we could make this country a better place for everyone, offering respect for each others traditions.
- Magherafelt District Council has always shown good relations.
- Keep up the good work. I feel that Magherafelt District Council have been one of the more successful councils in this area of good relations.
- Keep up the good work. Great improvement in good community relations locally. Well done and thank you.

General Good Relations

- Instil confidence in the community and culture. Be active and engage plus examine your beliefs.
- Love thy neighbour.

Funding for Good Relations

- Good Relations policies should be compulsory to any group that is seeking any kind of funding.
- Keep assisting local clubs who are promoting good relations.
- Funding and organisation is the key to furthering good relationships were adults and children have opportunities to work together closely.
- Funding community groups very important so that good community relations can be built upon.

Challenges to Good Relations

- Protestant very keen to engage on mutual issues but feel isolated and discriminated against as a minority community.
- The questionnaire makes absolutely no reference to the intolerance of the Irish Language. This is a very important part of good relations that has been and continues to be ignored.
- More rules/control over flags and emblems. All estates should be safe areas for all people or the money should be withdrawn.
- Celebrating other events, e.g. World Mental Health Day, No Smoking Day, etc. instead of 12/7 or 17/3. Suicide Awareness Training. More needs to be done for young people in smaller towns/villages - they have nowhere to go in the evenings and never mix with other teenagers from other religions.
- Good Relations with teenage children is only available around Magherafelt and isn't given out to the wider community.
- Need to look at practical actions and encourage greater interaction between communities. Schools and playgroups important and need to be involved.
- Until May the local councillors and politicians will walk the party line for votes so no major moves will be made before then. It is up to local groups to provide the momentum
- There is a slow movement at ground level towards better relations. This is a slow, painful and difficult process. Those in power are too quick to hide or run away when issues get thorny. We need more openness, courage and honesty otherwise it is just a sticking plaster.
- Greater awareness needed in the locality.
- Need to illustrate what Peace III is doing and not on the internet. We are a senior citizens group and don't use the internet.

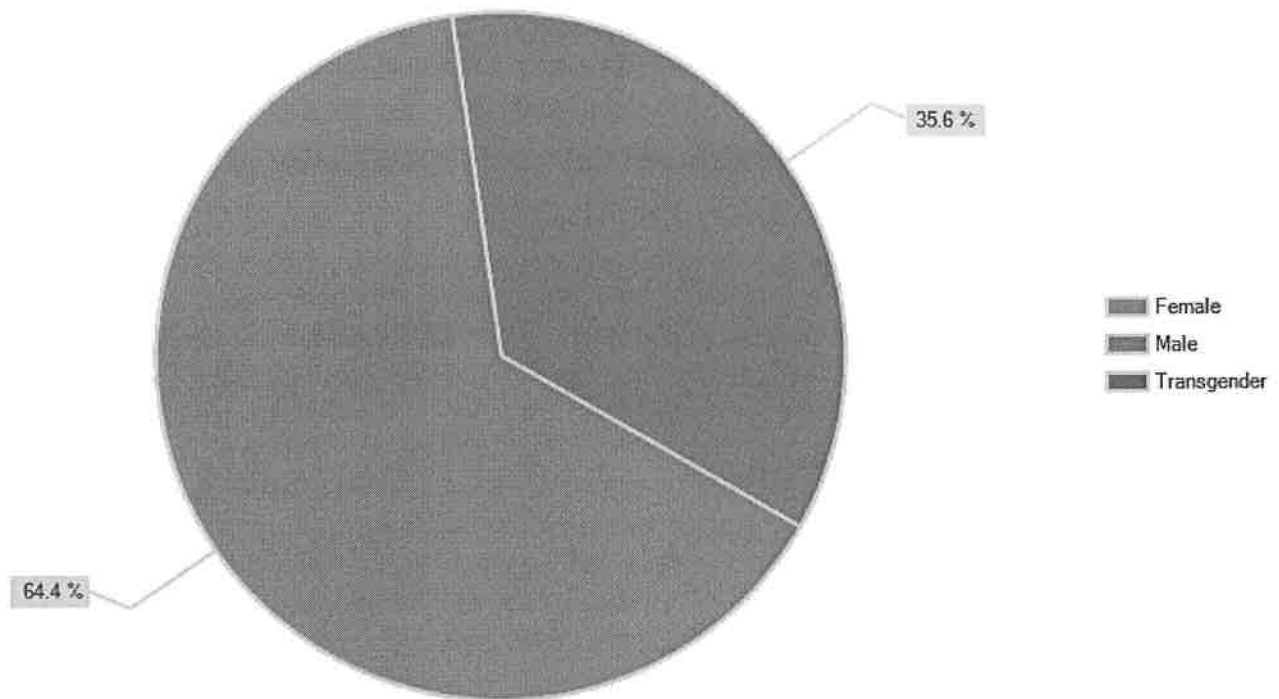
Good Relations Office

- Very good, Good Relations Office.
- We would like to highlight and praise the dedication and hard working ethos of Sean Henry, Good Relations Office.
- The Good Relations staff especially Sean Henry have made themselves known to the public and are very well regarded by all denominations.
- The Magherafelt District Council Good Relations Officer is dedicated and excellent in post. Well liked and respected throughout the community.

Respondent Analysis

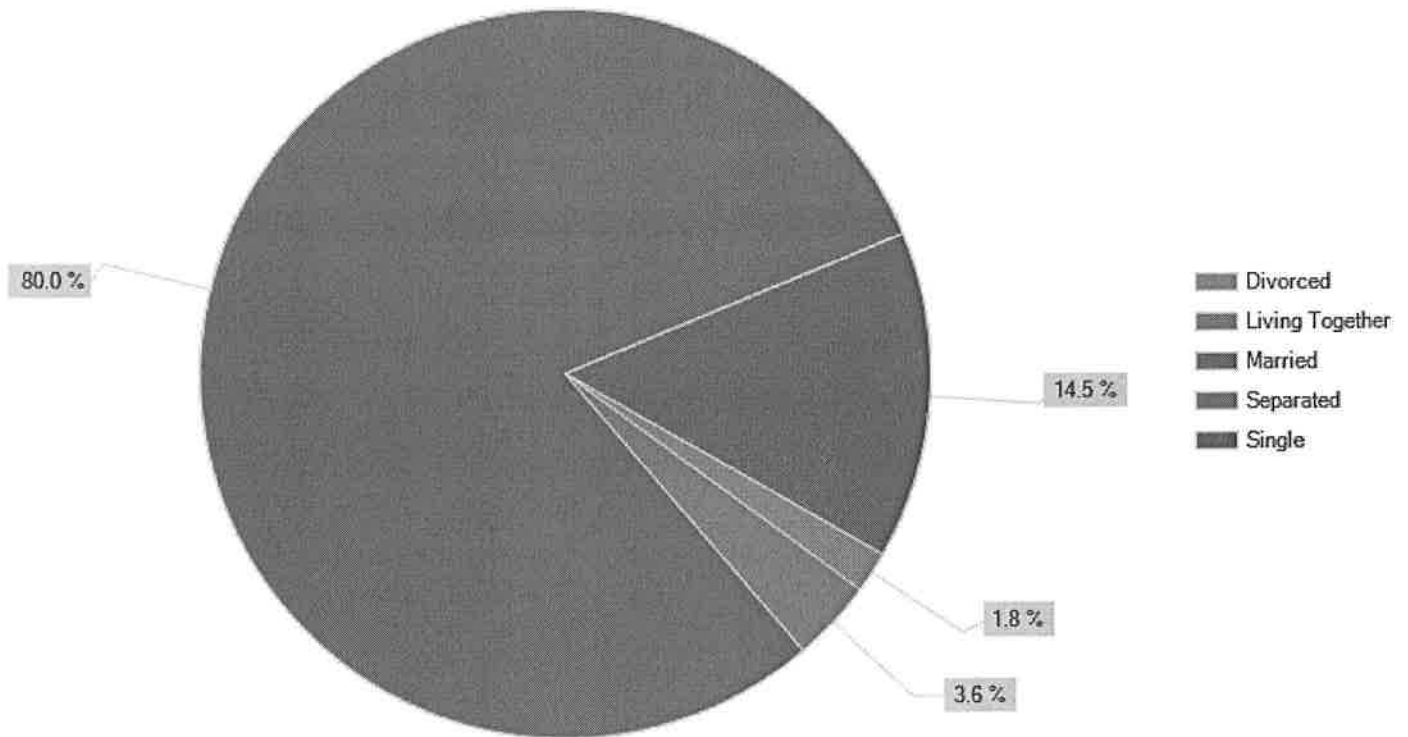
The following charts and tables contain information on the demographic breakdown of those people that responded to the survey.

Question One – Gender?



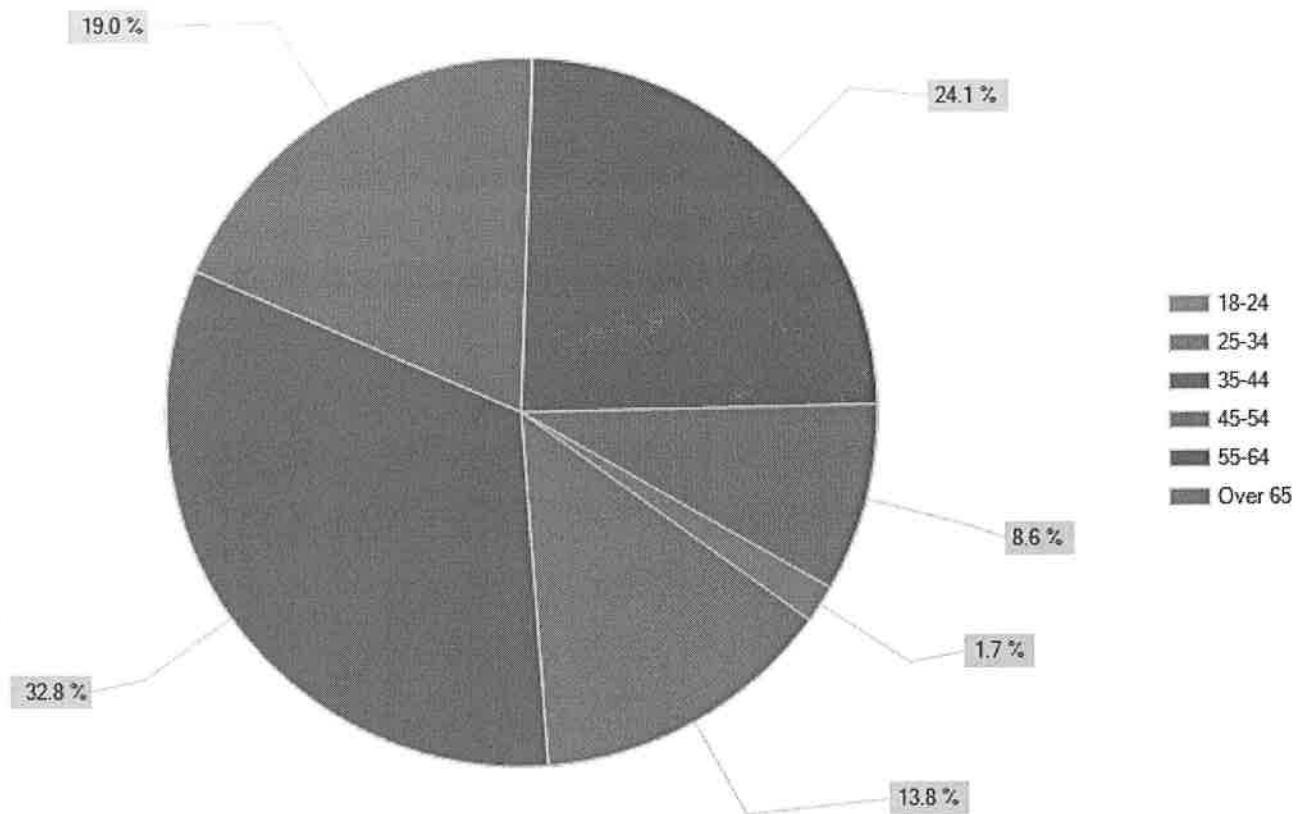
Gender		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Female	64.4%	38
Male	35.6%	21
Transgender	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		59
<i>skipped question</i>		9

Question Two – Marital Status?



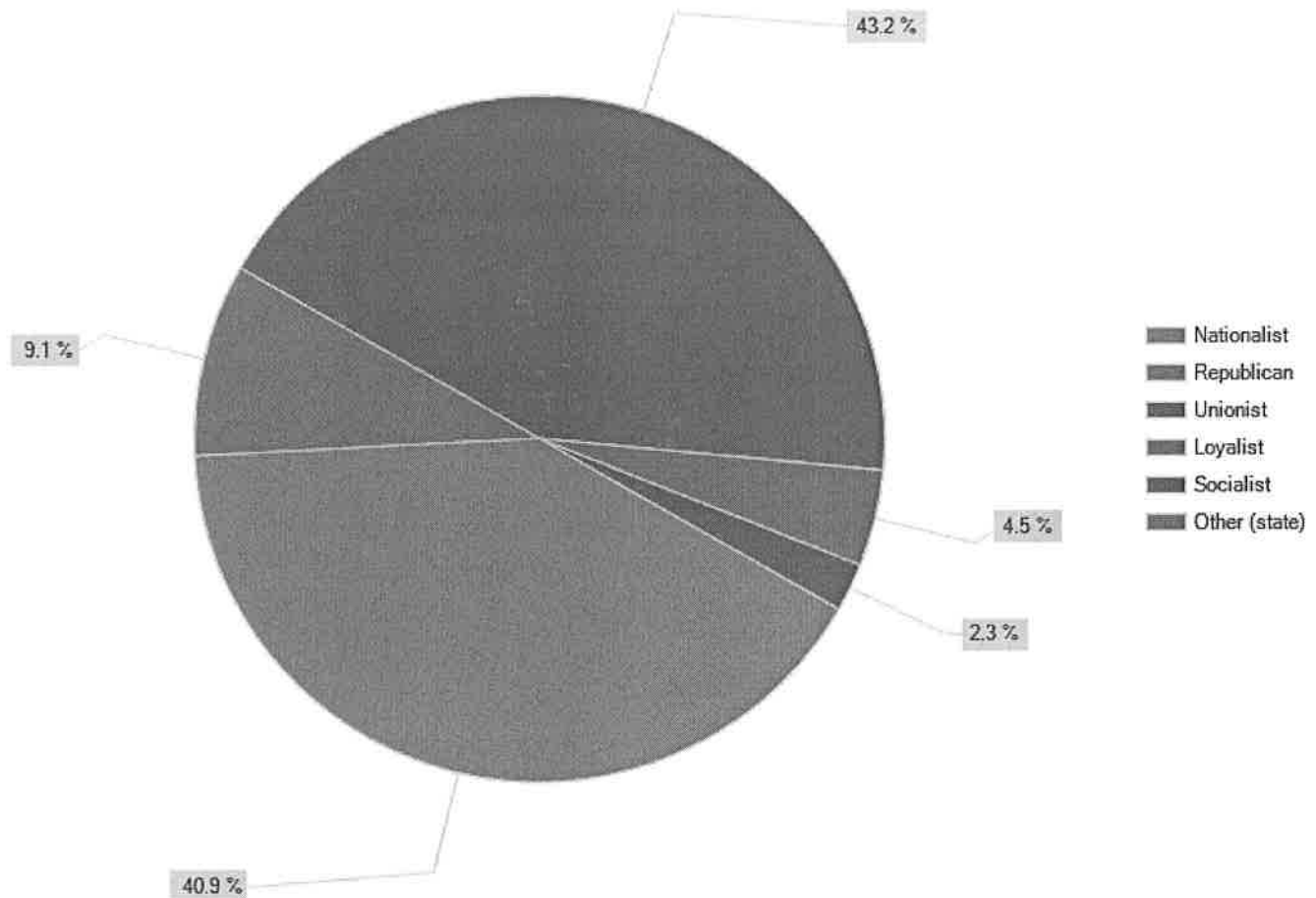
Marital Status		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Divorced	1.8%	1
Living Together	3.6%	2
Married	80.0%	44
Separated	0.0%	0
Single	14.5%	8
<i>answered question</i>		55
<i>skipped question</i>		13

Question Three – Age Group



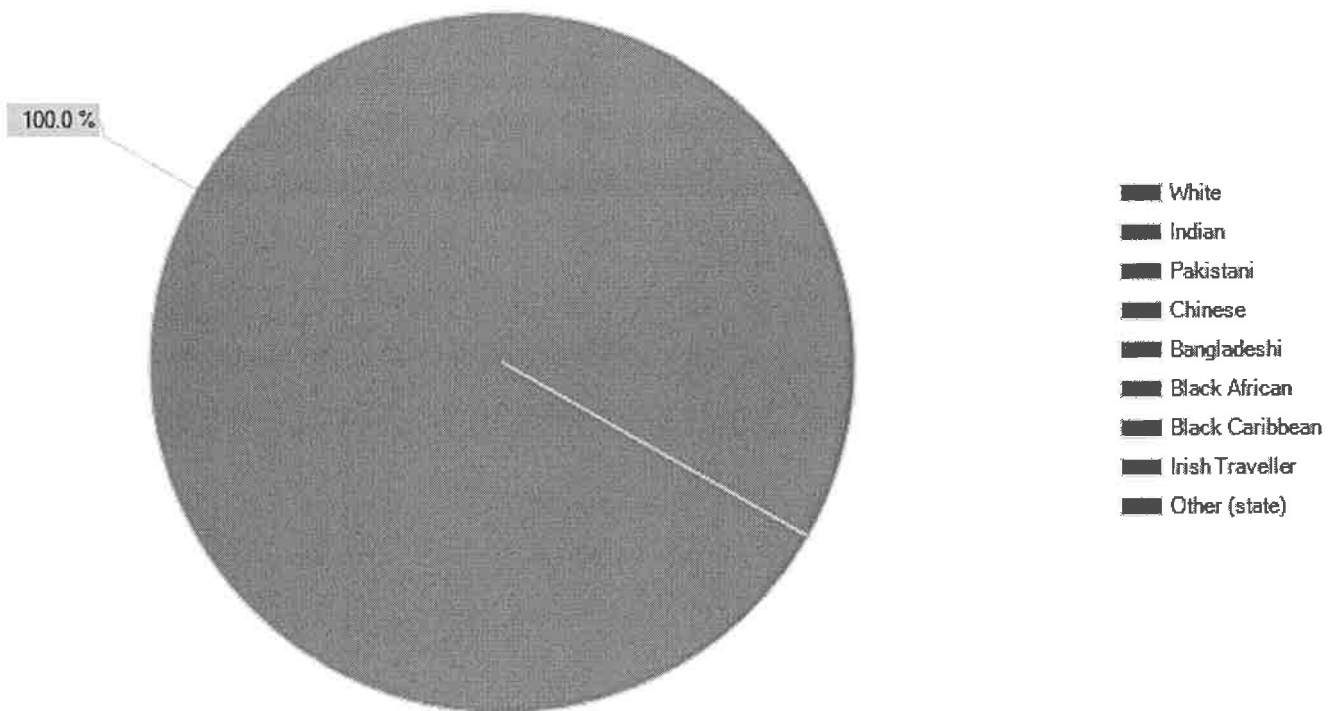
Age Group		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18-24	1.7%	1
25-34	13.8%	8
35-44	32.8%	19
45-54	19.0%	11
55-64	24.1%	14
Over 65	8.6%	5
<i>answered question</i>		58
<i>skipped question</i>		10

Question Four – Political Opinion



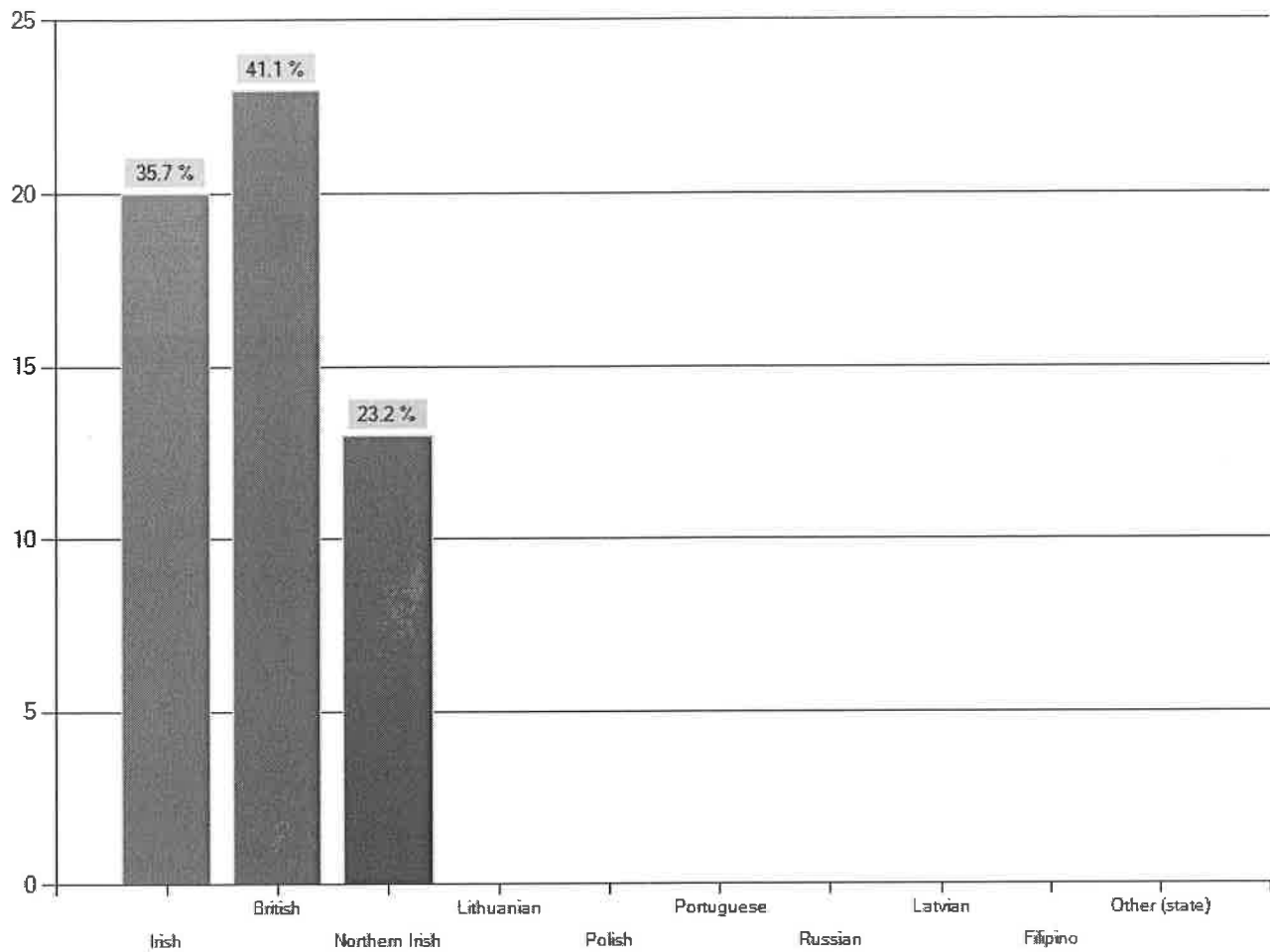
Political Opinion		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Nationalist	40.9%	18
Republican	9.1%	4
Unionist	43.2%	19
Loyalist	4.5%	2
Socialist	2.3%	1
Other (state)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		44
<i>skipped question</i>		24

Question Five – Racial Group



Racial Group		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
White	100.0%	55
Indian	0.0%	0
Pakistani	0.0%	0
Chinese	0.0%	0
Bangladeshi	0.0%	0
Black African	0.0%	0
Black Caribbean	0.0%	0
Irish Traveller	0.0%	0
Other (state)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		55
<i>skipped question</i>		13

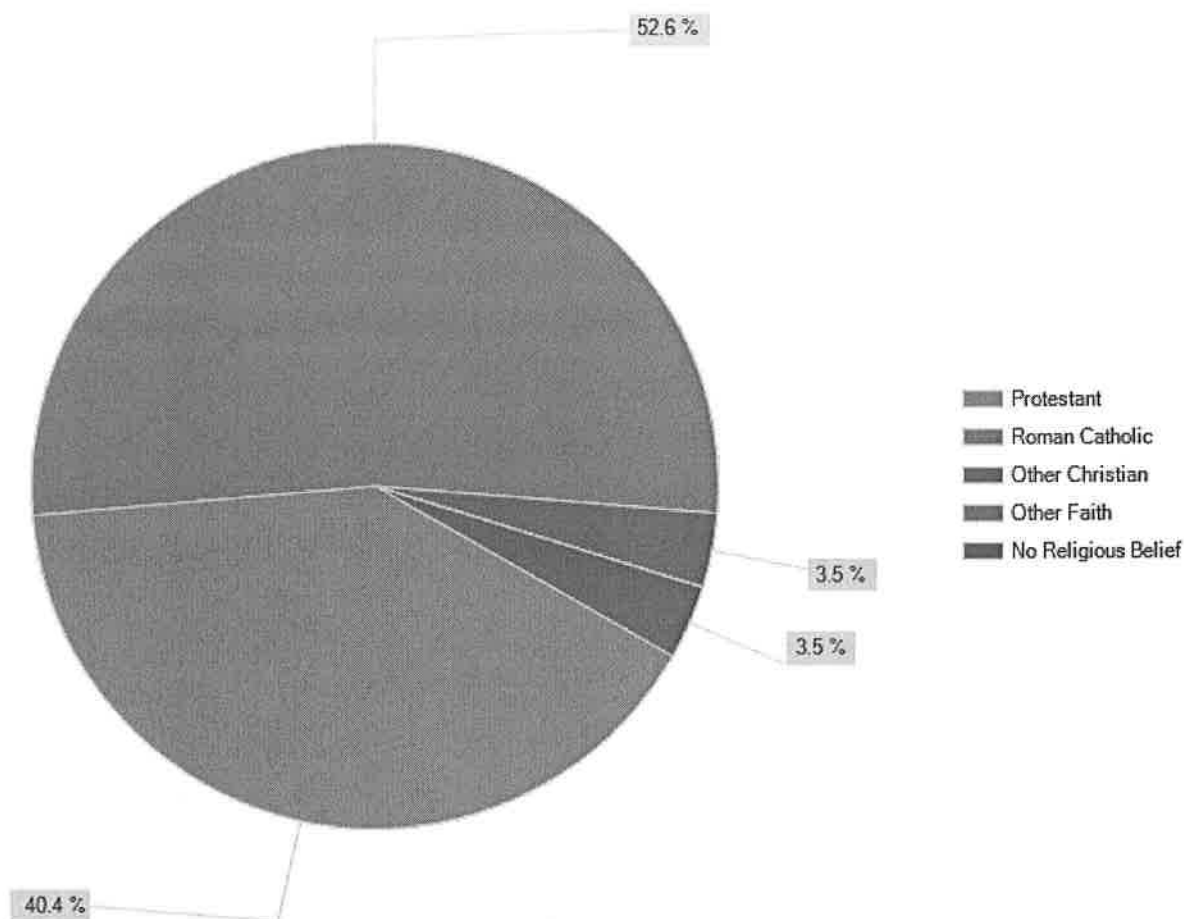
Question Six – If “white” selected, please select your nationality



If "White" selected, please select your nationality.

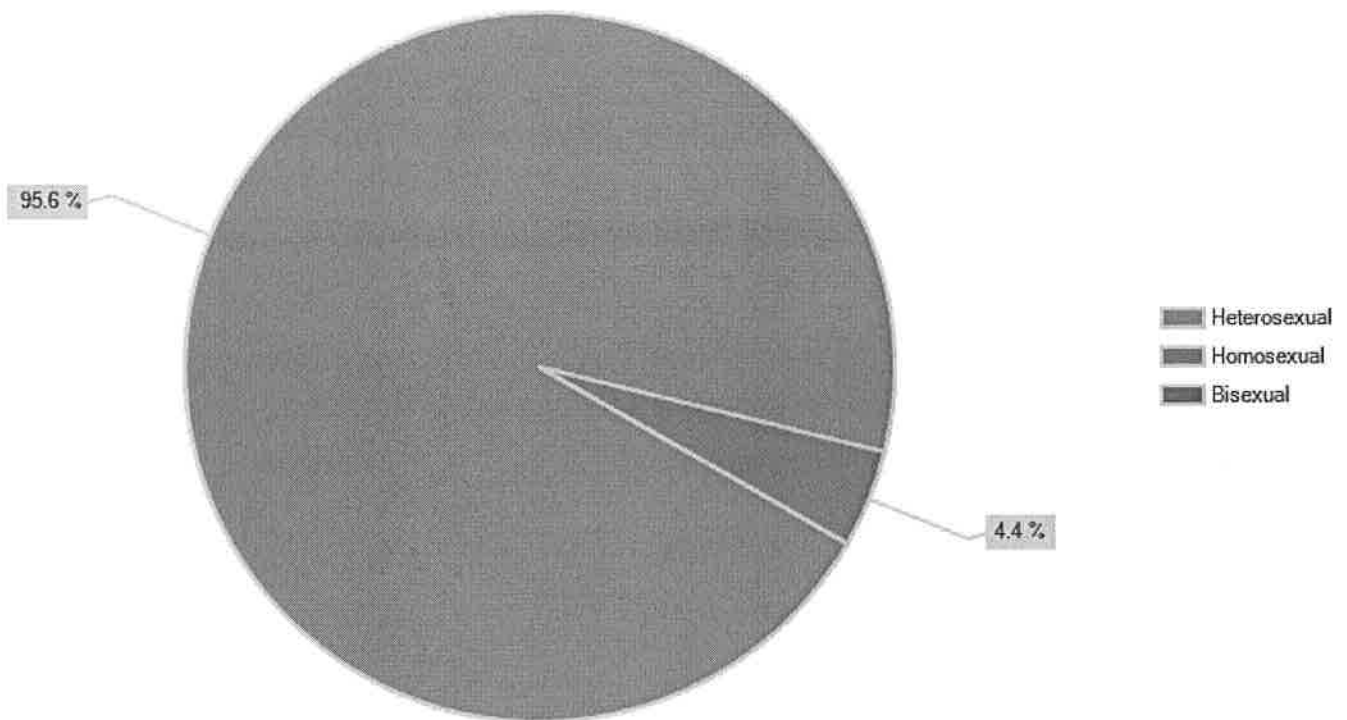
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Irish	35.7%	20
British	41.1%	23
Northern Irish	23.2%	13
Lithuanian	0.0%	0
Polish	0.0%	0
Portuguese	0.0%	0
Russian	0.0%	0
Latvian	0.0%	0
Filipino	0.0%	0
Other (state)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		56
<i>skipped question</i>		12

Question Seven – Religious Belief



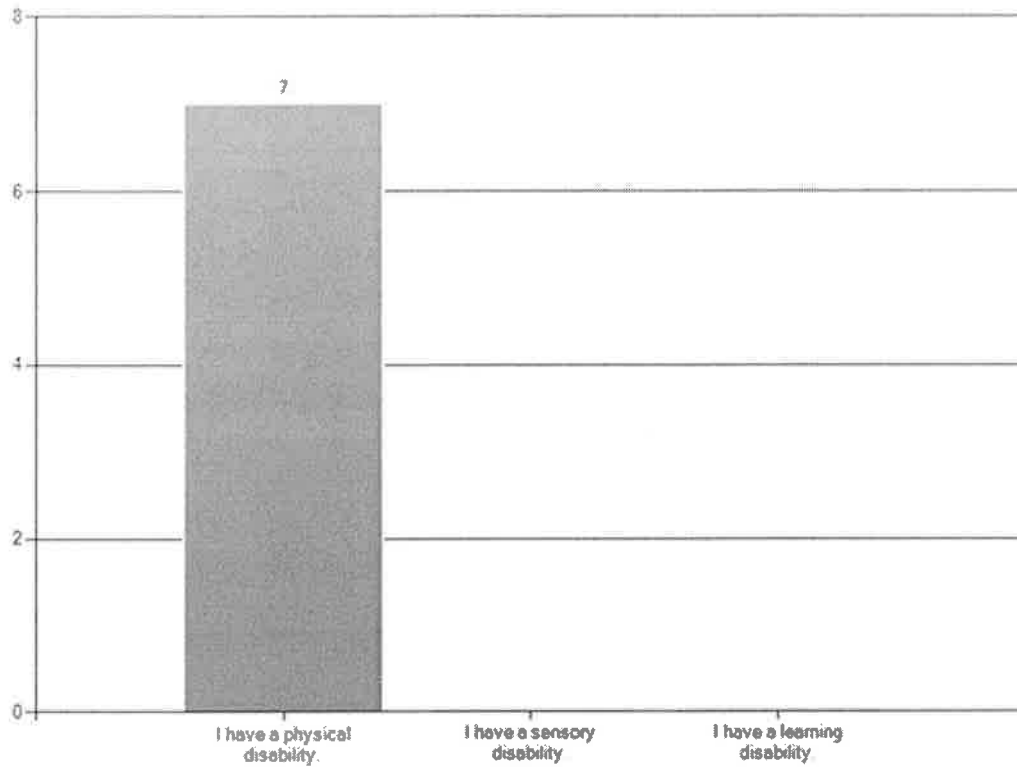
Religious Belief		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Protestant	40.4%	23
Roman Catholic	52.6%	30
Other Christian	3.5%	2
Other Faith	0.0%	0
No Religious Belief	3.5%	2
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		57

Question Eight – Sexual Orientation



Sexual Orientation		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Heterosexual	95.6%	43
Homosexual	4.4%	2
Bisexual	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		45
<i>skipped question</i>		23

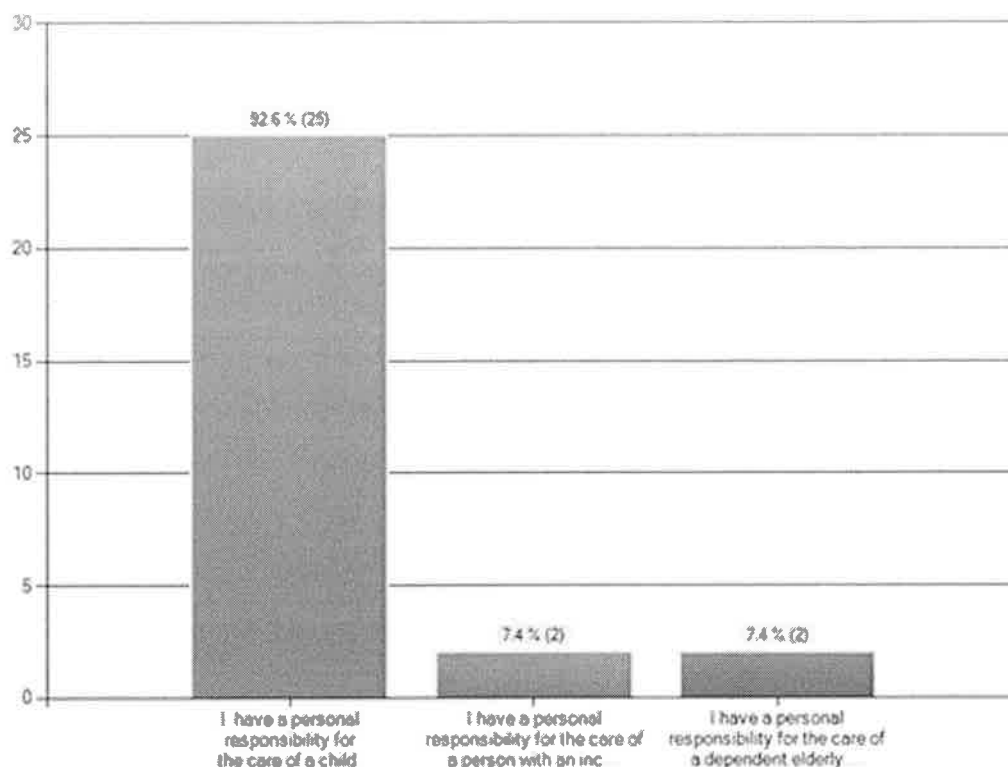
Question Nine - Disability



A person has a disability if s/he has a "physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". - Disability Disagreement Act 1995

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I have a physical disability.	100.0%	7
I have a sensory disability.	0.0%	0
I have a learning disability.	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		7
<i>skipped question</i>		61

Question Ten - Dependents



Dependants		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I have a personal responsibility for the care of a child.	92.6%	25
I have a personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability.	7.4%	2
I have a personal responsibility for the care of a dependent elderly person.	7.4%	2
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		27
<i>skipped question</i>		41

Appendix 4 – Focus Group Details

- 5.4 The following is a copy of the text of the advertisement that was placed in local papers promoting the Focus Group sessions. These were also promoted through the Good Relations Officer.

MAGHERAFELT DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS AUDIT 2011

Magherafelt District Council has commissioned Holywell Consultancy to conduct a consultation process with local residents to assess the level of residents' satisfaction with its services and facilities and to examine the impact of good relations issues within the Council area. Three focus groups will be held to inform this process on:

Date	Venue	Time
Monday 14 th March	Magherafelt Council Offices 50 Ballyronan Road Magherafelt BT45 6EN	7.30pm
Monday 21 st March	Walsh's Hotel 53 Main Street, Maghera BT46 5AA	7.00pm
Wednesday 23 rd March	Back Row Recreation Centre 5-7 Tobermore Street Draperstown	7.00pm

These sessions are open for all to attend. Please confirm your attendance by contacting Carol on (028) 71 267 997 or email caol@holywellconsultancy.com. Please let us know if you have any special requirements that need to be met to allow you to participate in the sessions.