

People & Place

A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal



Code of Practice and Guiding Principles July 2013

GRANGE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP

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Introduction

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme aims to reduce the social and economic inequalities which characterise the most deprived areas. It does so by making a long term commitment to communities to work in partnership with them to identify and prioritise needs and co-ordinate interventions designed to address the underlying causes of poverty. When Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships were established the intention was that they would be representative of local community interests, including faith based organisations, together with appropriate Government Departments, public sector agencies, private sector interest and local elected representatives.

The Department's Accounting Officer is responsible for approximately £26m of Neighbourhood Renewal spend per year. This funding is administered to Neighbourhoods to take forward those Projects aligned with the strategic objectives of each Partnership's Action Plan. To ensure the effective use of public funds, this Code of Practice sets out the key principles which will underpin the roles and responsibilities of those involved through the partnerships in the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal. Compliance with the Code of Practice will be a material consideration in the Department's appraisal of project applications.

1. Name and Status

The name of the Partnership shall be the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (hereinafter referred to as “the Partnership”), [an unincorporated association], which has been established to manage, develop and oversee the delivery of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy in Grange.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The Department and Members of the Partnership should have a good working knowledge of the Grange area and its community and have a vision of how they want Grange to develop in the future. This vision should reflect the four strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Community, Social, Economic and Physical renewal.
- 2.2 The overall aim of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership shall be to bring together a representative mix for the area comprising of key community, political, statutory and private sectors, to take the lead in local planning, identification and implementation of agreed priorities and actions as set out in the agreed action plans. An official from the Department for Social Development will sit on the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership to discharge the Department’s role in implementing Neighbourhood Renewal.
- 2.3 The objectives of the Partnership are to manage, develop and oversee the regeneration of Grange to;
- i. Ensure that people living in the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Area have access to the best possible services and to opportunities which make for a better quality of life, better prospects and the creation of a safer environment for themselves and their families.

- ii. Develop economic activity in the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Area and connect the community to the wider economy of Grange and Northern Ireland.
- iii. Develop confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life in the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Area.
- iv. Improve the environment and image of the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Area so that it becomes an attractive place to live and invest in.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Partnerships

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme aims to reduce the social and economic inequalities which characterise the most deprived areas. It does so by making a long term commitment to communities to work in partnership with them to identify and prioritise needs and co-ordinate interventions designed to address the underlying causes of poverty.

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership should be representative of local community interests, including voluntary organisations, faith based organisations, together with appropriate Government Departments, public sector agencies, private sector interest and locally elected representatives.
- 3.2 The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership will be responsible for;
 - i. Analysing and prioritising the needs of their Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.
 - ii. Engaging with and consulting local communities to drive and implement Neighbourhood Renewal.
 - iii. Leading the process in the preparation of an Action Plan.

- iv. Overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan.
- v. Reviewing the Action Plan annually to ensure that it reflects the priority needs in the area.
- vi. Monitoring and evaluating progress against the priorities in the Action Plan quarterly.
- vii. Publicising and building awareness of Neighbourhood Renewal by informing and updating their local communities of progress made on a regular basis.

3.3 The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership will;

- i. Develop and agree the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan with the Department. The Action Plans must seek to improve the social, economic and environmental conditions of Grange by:
 - Identifying evidence based needs,
 - detailing and prioritising the needs of the area that are to be met,
 - detailing and prioritising the activities to meet that need,
 - advising the needs of the area that are to be met, and
 - identifying how projects can be best delivered i.e. by statutory, community/voluntary sector and private sector bodies.
- ii. Monitor the Action Plan on a quarterly basis against action plan targets and provide an update to the Department.
- iii. Review the Action Plan annually and present to the Department for acceptance. In doing so the Partnership will:

- Secure a balanced representation in respect of the Neighbourhood Renewal area.
- Liaise with the Department, other Neighbourhood Partnerships and relevant bodies to ensure the interests of the local community are properly and fully reflected including promoting good community relations and avoiding duplication of services.
- Only make changes to the Code of Practice with the consent of or by instruction of the Department.
- Not have any direct funding responsibilities; the Partnership will focus on identifying local priorities and will work to influence and contribute to the determining of Government spending priorities for their neighbourhoods and act as a vehicle for local planning and implementation.
- Consent to the publication by internet and other media of the details of the Partnership membership to ensure openness and transparency.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Department

4.1 The Department for Social Development (DSD) will:

- i. Retain responsibility for the development of policy and management of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.
- ii. Provide strategic direction on matters relating to Neighbourhood Renewal.
- iii. In conjunction with Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Department will ensure that relevant data collection and website development required for the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy will be updated and maintained.

- iv. Use its lead responsibility to focus public sector resources and services so as to improve the living conditions of people living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas. This will be achieved through bi-laterals with other Departments and will be a standing agenda item on the Ministerial Group for Neighbourhood Renewal.
- v. Produce an Annual Report for each of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships detailing expenditure, activities and progress against outcome indicators.
- vi. Support training for Partnership members to develop their skills and knowledge in Neighbourhood Renewal matters, including induction training for new members.
- vii. Assess all proposed use of funding; ensuring that Neighbourhood Renewal grant conditions have been met and funds are meeting evidenced need.
- viii. Ensure that adequate monitoring and evaluation of the Projects is carried out.
- ix. Allocate and account for DSD funding to the various providers appointed to take forward the projects, programmes and activities included within the Neighbourhood Action Plans.
- x. Assist Partnerships and provide Technical Assistance funding (where applicable) to enable the following:
 - Preparation, implementation and review of Action Plans
 - Running costs, secretariat functions (including set-up costs).
- xi. Publish and maintain details on partnership membership and Neighbourhood Renewal funded projects via the Department website and other media deemed appropriate.

5. Representation

- 5.1 The Partnership must include a broad range of representatives from the local voluntary and community sector (as defined within the Concordat)¹, statutory organisations, including schools, private sector, faith based organisations and local elected representatives, each of which for ease of reference will be called ‘member organisations’.
- 5.2 Where, for legitimate reasons, representation of a sector is not possible, the Partnership must demonstrate to the Department that effective linkages have been made through other means.
- 5.3 Partnerships should ensure that effective communications are maintained with other strategic partnerships in their area, eg Police and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership
- 5.4 Members should be appointed by open, transparent and inclusive means. The Partnership may in light of its work on the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan invite additional members to join the partnership or sub groups.
- 5.5 There should be a balance of representation between the sectors on the Partnership that is representative of the geographic area.
- 5.6 The partnership should appoint a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from within its own membership - The nominations for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson should reflect the sectoral and gender split within the Partnership. Each should hold post for a maximum of two years.
- 5.7 Details of the composition and “member sectors” of the Grange Neighbourhood Partnership are shown at Annex 1.

¹ <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/consultation-concordat-for-relationships-between-govt-vc-sector.pdf>

5.8 Members should have equal voting rights, expert advisors should have no voting rights.

6. Roles and Responsibility of the Partnership Chair

6.1 The Chairperson is responsible for:

- i. The overall conduct of each partnership meeting. He/she should ensure that all business is carried out in a structured manner and that all views are heard. Other than in extreme circumstances, every member should be given the opportunity to express a view and have it considered.
- ii. Agreeing a conducive date, time, place and agenda for each meeting, evening meetings should be given primary consideration where these would facilitate majority attendance. The timing of meetings has to be consistent with deadlines for the decisions required on the agenda items.
- iii. Ensuring that accurate records of meetings are held and ensure that these are available for consideration by the Department, its agents etc and the local community.
- iv. Ensuring that all records, minutes of meetings and information relating to the Partnership's business are retained for a period of not less than 7 years and make any such record available to the Department / its Agents for inspection upon request.
- v. Ensuring that meetings have a sufficient number of members present for decisions to be taken. All conflicts of interest should be recorded in the minutes. (See section 9).

- vi. On behalf of the Department, keeping a record of attendance and notifying the Department of any members who are in danger of being disqualified (see Section 9).
- vii. Exercising a second or casting vote, when necessary.
- viii. Ensuring appeals by members against decisions of the Partnership are referred to the Director of the Department for Social Development's regional Development Office.
- ix. Calling a meeting of the Partnership where it is deemed necessary or advisable to dissolve the Partnership; for which twenty one days notice shall be given and by giving written notice to the Department.
- x. Ensuring that each member completes a Membership Declaration on joining the Partnership.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of the Partnership Members

7.1 Members must

- i. Sign a declaration confirming that they will comply with the conditions set out in the Partnership's Code of Practice and Guiding Principles – **Annex 2**.
- ii. Take reasonable steps to ensure that their contribution is genuinely representative of their organisation and/or sector they are from. They are responsible for bringing their knowledge, expertise and experience to the work of the Partnership for the good of the neighbourhood renewal area.
- iii. Engage in two-way communications with their organisations and/or sector on key issues being considered by the Partnership so that they can express the views and interests of their organisation and/or sector.

- iv. Undertake to bring any criticisms or concerns they might have about the value, role and functioning of the Partnership to the meeting for discussion, to provide the Partnership with an opportunity to address them.
- v. Participate in an honest and open manner. To achieve openness, it is important for members to feel able to share information and express their opinions freely in meetings. Therefore, members will be expected to be responsible when reporting the groups' discussions to ensure that their reports are accurate and fair to all those present.
- vi. Members should treat each other with respect. Aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour or language will not be tolerated.
- vii. On occasion keep confidential any information that has not yet been made public and/or is provided in confidence, nor use confidential information for their individual personal advantage or for anyone known to them or to disadvantage or discredit the Partnership or anyone else.
- viii. Endeavour to make decisions on the basis of consensus. If a matter cannot be agreed by consensus it shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members present. In the case of a stalemate the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote. There will be no proxy voting.
- ix. Disclose any potential conflict of interest on joining the Partnership.
- x. On an ongoing basis declare any personal or business interests which may, or may be perceived to, influence their judgement when performing their duties as a member of the Partnership. If at a meeting of the Partnership a particular issue arises that could give rise to a potential conflict of interest then the member should disclose their interest and withdraw from any further discussion or consideration of the matter.

- xi. Where receiving remuneration from the Department through their professional engagement in a Neighbourhood Renewal programme or initiative shall withdraw from any meeting, at which his or her own instruction or remuneration, or that of his or her firm, is under discussion by the Neighbourhood Partnership.
- xii. Immediately inform the Department and Chair of any circumstances which will or may affect the ability of the Partnership/or individual members to carry out its role and responsibilities.
- xiii. Comply with the equality legislation to the extent that it applies to the Partnership.
- xiv. Attend and participate in such workshops and training sessions as the Department deems appropriate.
- xv. Be guided by the Seven Principles in Public Life identified by the Nolan Committee see Annex 3.

8. Roles and Responsibility of the DSD representative

- 8.1 A Development Office official(s) (as nominated by the Department) will sit on each Partnership as a non-voting member in order to:
- i. Provide policy direction in relation to the structure of action plans relevant to the Department's priorities.
 - ii. Act as a conduit between the Partnership and Government at a local level, to facilitate communication/exchange of information.

- iii. Update the Partnership as and when required on relevant Departmental policy and Neighbourhood Renewal matters.
- iv. Ensure emerging relevant issues are referred back to the Department for early action/resolution to facilitate the ongoing work of the Partnership.
- v. Where necessary, escalate issues to more Senior Officers for consideration and advice to the Partnership.
- vi. Encourage the full participation of key statutory organisations on the Partnership.
- vii. Be instrumental in the Partnership's identification and determination of priorities for Neighbourhood Renewal.

9. Attendance

- 9.1 The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership shall hold regular meetings, which shall take place at intervals of no more than three months. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chairperson or by any two members of the Partnership upon not less than 14 days' notice being given to the other members of the Partnership of the matters to be discussed.
- 9.2 The quorum for meetings of the Partnership will be a minimum of 40% full members.
- 9.3 Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the full Partnership without reasonable explanation may be disqualified from membership for non-attendance.
- 9.4 In such an event the member organisation shall be informed and requested to nominate a replacement member.

- 9.5 A member may at any time resign by giving not less than one month's notice in writing to the Partnership. - Any member vacancy arising from a resignation will be referred to the Chairperson to be filled.
- 9.6 If in exceptional circumstances both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are absent from a meeting, then members of the Partnership present shall nominate a Chair for the meeting before any business is transacted.
- 9.7 The Partnership may, with the consent of the Department, unanimously and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual or member organisation; providing that the individual concerned or the appointed representative of the member organisation concerned (as the case may be) shall have the right to be heard by the Partnership before a final decision is made.
- 9.8 The Partnership may from time to time invite people to attend and speak at meetings who will not have voting rights.

10. Roles and Responsibilities of the Strategy Manager/NR Co-ordinator

10.1 The Strategy Manager or Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator will:

- i. Engage with relevant organisations to identify and develop new service delivery models/projects which will deliver the priorities and outcomes identified in the Action Plan.
- ii. Engage with all relevant statutory bodies and non-Government funding bodies to lever in additional funding to deliver on priorities identified within the Action Plan.
- iii. Produce an agreed communications plan which will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Partnership to ensure it is fit for purpose.

- iv. Liaise with and provide input to the Department in the production and publication of an annual report of activities undertaken and outcomes achieved by the NRP in April of each year.
- v. Meet with DSD representatives quarterly to review activities undertaken and report on progress towards achievement of key targets and outcomes.
- vi. Provide secretariat and logistical support to the Chairperson and the Partnership.
- vii. Facilitate at least 6 NRP meetings and 12 sub groups/working group meetings per year and issue minutes of same at least 5 working days to NRP in advance of next scheduled meeting

The Function of the Sub-Groups

- 11.1 The Partnership will establish sub-groups; these subgroups should be developed around the four strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and must be aligned to the key priorities as detailed in the Action Plans.
- 11.2 These sub-groups will develop, plan, monitor and review specific themes or projects.
- 11.3 Terms of Reference have been established for such sub-group including arrangements on roles, responsibilities, meetings and membership of the sub-group. Membership may include external advisors to contribute to the work of the sub-groups as appropriate.
- 11.4 All activities carried out by sub-groups will be reported to the next available Partnership meetings. Decisions made by the sub-group, unless otherwise delegated, will be subject to ratification by the Partnership.

11. Governance and Accountability

12.1 Lead Partner

- i. The Department is aware that not all Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships are deemed to be a legally constituted body/organisation. In these cases a Lead Partner will be appointed to manage and account for any “Technical Assistance” support provided to the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership. This role may be undertaken by a local statutory agency such as the District Council or a properly constituted community organisation capable of receiving, managing and accounting for public money. For Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, technical assistance support is currently provided by Newtownabbey Borough Council. Any changes to the lead partner arrangements must be ratified by the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership and the basis for the change must be recorded in the notes of the meeting of the Partnership and a Memorandum of Understanding must be agreed between the two parties.

12.2 Sharing of Information

- i. All Government Departments, Agencies and other funding bodies may share information on Projects and Programmes to enable them to prevent and detect fraudulent applications and to co-ordinate the processing of complementary applications. Accordingly, information provided by the Partnership on monitoring returns and any other information provided by the Partnership may be stored electronically and may be made available to other Departments/Agencies for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of information and preventing or detecting crime. Such information may also be placed in the public domain.
- ii. For the purpose of monitoring regularity of meetings and budgeting, the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership will operate on the same financial period as the Department, and shall commence on 1st April each year and end on 31st March each year.

12.3 Fraud and Irregularity

- i. The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership shall be aware that the Department is required to adopt and implement policies and practices to safeguard itself against fraud and irregularity. All cases of attempted, suspected or proven fraud shall be reported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership to the Department and other relevant authorities as soon as they are discovered, irrespective of the amount involved.

Composition of Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership – May 2013

1	Chair (Community Relations Forum)	Kathy Wolff
	<u>Statutory Sector</u>	<u>Representation</u>
2	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Sharon Crooks (Jennifer Willis or June McGookin may deputise)
3	PSNI	Alan Bowes
4	Ballyclare Nursery School	Karen Castles
5	Ballyclare Secondary School	Janet Copeland
6	Ballyclare High School	Trevor Martin
7	Fairview Primary School	Paula Matthews
8	Ballyclare Primary School	Kim Mulligan (Simon McLean may deputise)
9	North Eastern Education and Library Board	Davey Norris
10	Northern Regional College	Arlene Watson
11	Northern Health and Social Care Trust	Bronagh McElhone
12	Northern Health and Social Care Trust	Angela Denver (Pamela Davis may deputise)
13	Department of Employment and Learning	Fred Tohill
	<u>Community & Voluntary Sector</u>	<u>Representation</u>
14	Ollerdale Residents Association	Valerie Jenkins
15	Grange Residents Association	Caroline McAlister
16	Grange Residents Association	Corry McMurray
17	Grange Residents Association	Celia Drummond
18	Grange Residents Association	Margaret Gracey
19	Grange Youth and Community Group	James Kernaghan

20	Grange Youth and Community Group	Joanne Drummond
21	Grange Youth and Community Group	Emma Graham
22	Ballyclare Presbyterian Church	Ruth Davison
23	Youth for Christ	Jonny Farrell
24	Sacred Heart Chapel	Fr Eugene O'Hagan
	<u>Newtownabbey Borough Council</u> <i>Numbers to be determined by Partnership Chair in consultation with the Department</i>	<u>Representation</u>
25	Councillor	Jim Bingham
26	Councillor	Mandy Girvan
27	Alderman	Paul Girvan
28	Councillor	John Mann
29	Councillor	Pat McCudden (Vice Chair)
	<u>Support</u>	<u>Representation</u>
30	DSD	Hugh Killough
31	DSD	Anne Currie
32	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Jo Colville (Officer)
33	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Aideen McCambridge (Manager)

Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership

DECLARATION FOR PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

I have read and fully understood the details contained within the Code of Practice between the Department for Social Development and Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership.

I agree to comply with the conditions as detailed in these documents and to abide by those principles and procedures in my role as a member of the Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

The Seven Principles in Public Life identified by the Nolan Committee

- **Selflessness** – holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or friends;
- **Integrity** – holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligations that might influence them in the performance of their duties;
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals / organisation for regards, benefit or grant aid, holders of public office should make choices on merit;
- **Accountability** – holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office;
- **Openness**– holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest demands;
- **Honesty** – holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest; and
- **Leadership** – holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Statement on Conflict of Interest

The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership will broadly reflect the composition of the area they represent. Members of the Partnership should not allow the impression to be created that they are, or may be, using their position to promote a private or personal interest rather than the general interests of the area.

If a member of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership has a private or personal interest in a matter arising at a Partnership meeting, they should disclose it to that meeting, unless it is completely insignificant or an interest that is generally shared with others attending the meeting.

Members of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership who have direct financial interest in any project being considered by the Partnership for support as it is aligned to the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Action Plan, should declare the nature of the interest. Following such a disclosure, the other members of the group shall discuss and agree whether the declared interest can reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the member in the assessment and discussion of that particular project.

If the members agree that the declared direct pecuniary interest is remote or insignificant and cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the relevant member, the member may proceed to be involved in the assessment and discussion of the project as if no conflict of interest arose.

If members agree that the interest can reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the relevant member, the member will be required to take no part in the assessment and discussion of the project.

The declaration and decision of the members must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Members of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership who have a direct interest which is not a financial interest in any project which is being considered by the Partnership for support as it is aligned to the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Action Plan, should declare the nature of the interest. Once the interest is declared, the member may then take part in the assessment and discussion of the as if no conflict of interest arose. The declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Members of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership may acquire information that has not yet been made public and/or is confidential. It is a betrayal of trust to breach such confidences. Members must not use confidential information either:

- (a) for the personal advantage of themselves or anyone known to them; or
- (b) to disadvantage or discredit of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership or any members of it.

The members of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership and persons who are otherwise associated with it may from time to time be offered hospitality or tokens of goodwill – for example working lunches may be a proper way of conducting business provided that no extravagance is involved. Similarly, it is reasonable for a member to represent the Partnership at a social function organised by outside persons or bodies. Members are advised to err on the side of caution in such matters. Members will be personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership.

Fraud Awareness

The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership requires that all Partnership members, associate members and members of staff to act at all times with honesty and integrity and to safeguard the resources for which they are responsible.

The purpose of this statement is to set out the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership in preventing fraud and the procedures to be followed where fraud is detected or suspected.

Definition:

-deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, misappropriation, concealment, collusion and false representation

Persons outside as well as inside an organisation can perpetrate fraud and attempted fraud should be treated as seriously as accomplished fraud. Computer fraud is where information technology equipment manipulates programs or data dishonestly, or where the use of an IT system is a material factor in the perpetration of fraud. Theft or fraudulent use of computer time and resources is included in this definition

Responsibility:

If fraud does occur (or is suspected) a vigorous and prompt investigation must be carried out.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership should take the appropriate disciplinary and legal action and make any necessary changes to systems and procedures to ensure it will not happen again.



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