Consensus Building

The Role of Community Leadership and Mediation in Interface Areas

Seán Brennan

Intercomm

'Great battles are easier to fight than daily skirmishes'

Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer

'Peace, comes drifting slow…'

W.B.Yeats

'for all of our languages, we can't communicate'

North Belfast

- Patchwork Quilt of Sectarian Interfaces
- 81,944 Population
- 23% under age of 16
- 21% over age of 60
- 12% New Citizens
- 60% live in most deprived NI Electoral Wards
- 4 Wards in top 20% of Most Deprived Wards

North Belfast

- Unemployment
- Economic Inactivity
- Ill Health
- Crime
- Educational Failure
- Contested Housing
- Contested Spaces
- Ex-Combatants

Intercomm

Intercomm was founded in 1995 as a direct response to grassroots community concerns about inter-community conflict and social deprivation in North Belfast. Through our diverse range of programmes we aim to assist in combating the social, economic and political problems created by 30 years of conflict and help construct a concrete and viable peace. We have broadened our initiatives and outlook in recent years so as to learn from, and assist in, other conflict transformation processes worldwide, using local knowledge and expertise

Intercomm Programmes

- Peace Building
- Community Relations
- Community Development
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Social/Economic Development
- International Programmes

Intercomm Programmes

- Developing Leadership
- Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium
- Community Relations Project
- Intercomm Housing Project
- New Deal Work Programme
- Women's Enterprise And Vocational Education
- Police And Communities in Transition
- Future Together
- Belfast-Jerusalem Project
- Belfast-Bethlehem Project
- Journey's Out
- Stanford Partnership

International Work

- INCORE – United Nations University-University of Ulster
- Belfast-Jerusalem Project
- Belfast-Bethlehem Project
- Journey's Out
- Visiting Delegation's
- Lobbying
- Conference's

Consensus Building - Identifying Issues

'Peace, like health, covers conceptually a vast territory: and war, like disease, comes in many varieties' Ghandi

Inter-Community Conflict

- 1998 NI Assembly
- Parading or Protesting
- Loyalist Feud
- Holy Cross Dispute – 2001
- Dunlop Report – 2002
- NB Community Action Unit
- NB Community Empowerment Partnerships
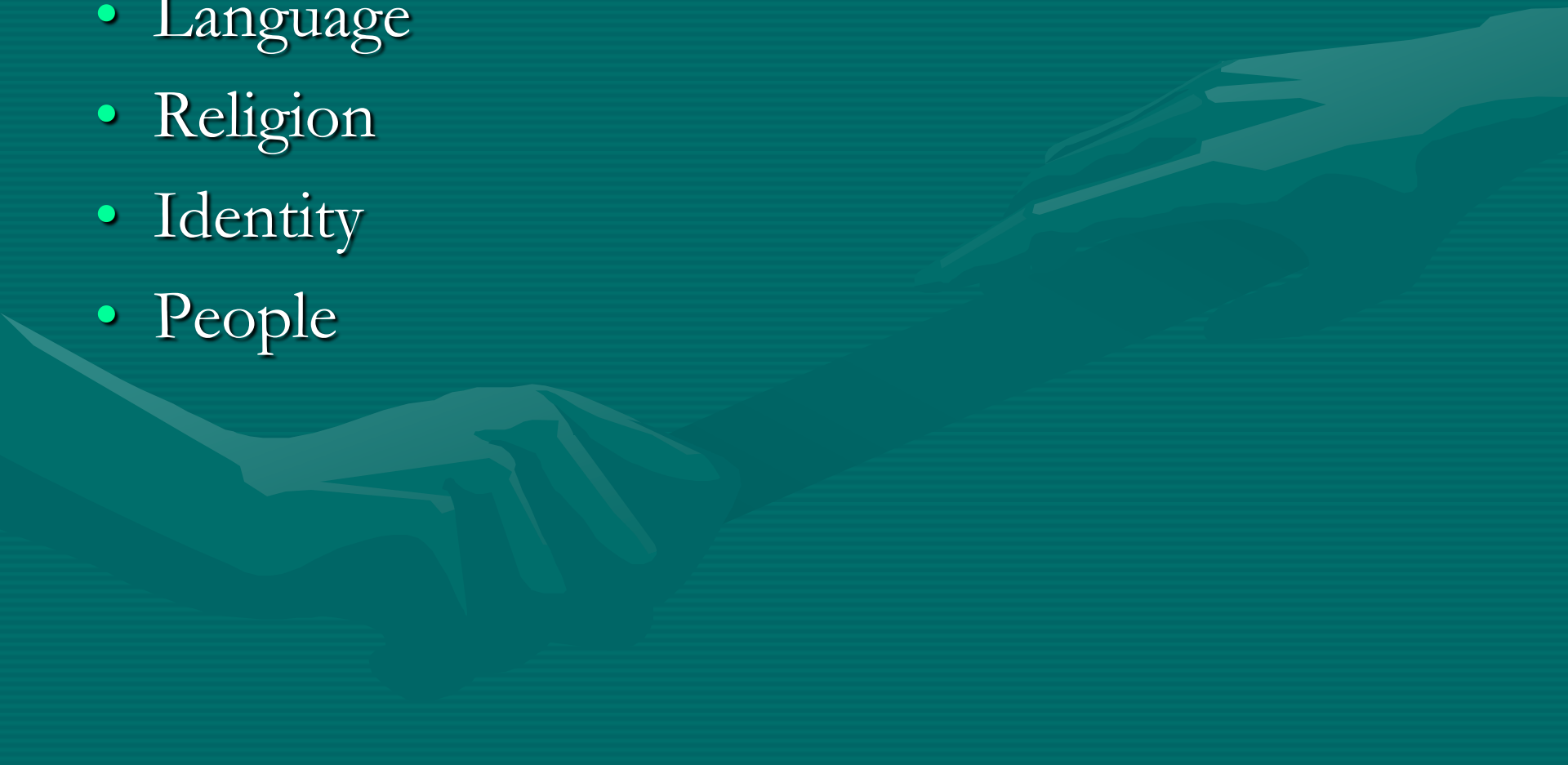
Role of Community Leadership

Good Friday Agreement
Peace Architects v Peace Builders

Conflict Issues-
The Red Hand of Ulster

- Land
- Language
- Religion
- Identity
- People

Transforming Paradigms

- Power Paradigm v Needs Paradigm
- Communication
- Transparency
- Dialogue
- Process
- Transformative Learning
- Hierarchies of Scale
- Solutions

Leadership

In War you need Weak Enemies,
In Peace you need Strong Partners

Liám Maskey

Community Leadership – Mediating a new 'We'

- Interface Violence
- Legacy of the Conflict
- Contested Physical Space
- Contested Policy Space
- Physical Regeneration
- Social Regeneration
- Community Safety
- Active Citizenship

The Art of War

'Plan for what is difficult when it is still easy, do what is great when it is still small. The most difficult things in the world must be done while they are still easy, the greatest things in the world must be done while they are still small. For this reason sages never do what is great, and this is why they achieve that greatness'.

Sun Tzu

Mediation and Consensus Building

- NB Conflict Transformation Practitioners Forum
- Interface Working Group
- Community Empowerment Network
- Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium

NB Conflict Transformation Practitioners Forum

- Inclusive

- Transparent

- Solution Based

- Communicative Action

- Interface Monitors Forum

- Peace Building in Interface Communities

QUB Accredited Peace Building in Interface Communities

- Understanding Conflict Issues in a Divided Society
- Conflict Issues in Interface Communities
- Conflict in Communities
- Exploring Interface Areas
- Understanding Grassroots Peace Building

- Understanding Grassroots Peace Building
- How to Influence Processes of Governance
- Lobbying for Change
- Leadership Skills and Peace Building Models
- Peace Building in a Post-Conflict Environment

Interface Working Group

- Dialogue Group
- Cross-Community
- Intra-Community
- Cross-Departmental
- Cross-Agency
- Intra-Agency

IWG Report

- 3 Year Consultation
- 3 Key Themes
- Youth
- Good Relations
- Regeneration
- 10 Point Peace Building Plan

IWG 10 Point Plan

- Create a pool of North Belfast detached youth/interface outreach workers
- The development of a specific fund to aid the delivery of inter-community activities and good relations work, with an emphasis upon interface issues and young people.
- The creation of an Interface/Youth Providers Forum
- The creation of a Youth Work Training Programme
- Highlight the best practice adopted in reducing interface violence and conflict amelioration achieved recently around parading

- A pilot study area for A Shared Future
- of a Good Relations Development Officer should be considered to work with the North Belfast Interface Working Group in order to create and promote good relations within communities.
- Pilot social economy project
- The notion of re-imaging communities should be taken forward by the North Belfast Interface Working Group in order to improve physical environment and explore the use of murals, flags and symbols.
- North Belfast Interface Working Group should be supported with regard to the production of a scoping exercise based upon identifying the nature and meaning of contested space as well as inter and intra community conflict within North Belfast.

Community Empowerment Network

- 13 Community Empowerment Networks (CEP)
- 10 Geographical CEP
- 3 Thematic CEP
- CEN
- Sub-Groups

Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium

- Prevent Interface Tensions & Violence through Empowerment

- Improve the Quality of Life for All Interface Communities

- Assist Process of Transforming Belfast into a Post-conflict Society

- Ensure Participation and Endorse City-wide Community Development Approach to Conflict Transformation

- Internationalise Belfast's Experience and Expertise, establishing 'best practice' in Conflict Transformation

Challenges

- Gate Keeping/Gateways
- Siloisation
- Elitism
- Fear
- Ignorance
- Sustainability
- Cluttered Policy Environment
- New Political Administration
- Spoilers

Leadership Solutions Stanford Programme

- Belfast City Council –DSD/OFMdFM Partnership
- Getting to 'we'
- Shaping the 'ask'
- Sustaining Grassroots Peace Building
- Sharing Learning
- Widening Participation – Track Too
- Policy Development & Service Delivery

Leadership-Mediation
'Doing the Deal'

- Shared Future

- Trustworthiness

- Loss Acceptance

- Just Entitlement

Conclusions

'you are going nowhere without me;
And I'm going nowhere without you'!

David Ervine

Solution Based

- Parallel Living requires Parallel Thinking
- Partnerships – Coalition's of 'the Shilling'
- Intellectual Interfaces –Policy not to Practice
- Champions for Change in Local Government
- Maximise Economic Regeneration through Social Regeneration
- Peace by Piece
- A New 'We'-
- External/Internal - Partners