

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme – working together to end the harm

#endingtheharm



INFOGRAPHICS 2

We have produced a number of infographics to explain the programme. Find out more about them on Page 2

BANJAXED 4

HOCS recently hosted a performance of the thought-provoking play Banjaxed which was attended by stakeholders

WICT 6

500 women graduate from Phase 1 of the Women Involved in Community Transformation Programme

What is the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme?

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme Newsletter.

We will be using this regular publication as a way of highlighting some of the good work currently underway but first, we thought it would be useful to explain what the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme is.

The Programme is a series of 38 commitments from the Northern Ireland Executive aimed at tackling

paramilitarism, criminality and organised crime.

It is the Executive’s response to the 2016 Panel Report which was set up following the Fresh Start Agreement in 2015 to make recommendations on the disbandment of paramilitary groups.

A total of £50m has been pledged over five years to support delivery of the Action Plan. It involves Government Departments, law

enforcement agencies, local councils and community and voluntary sector partners working together.

The focus is on robust law enforcement, implementing long term prevention measures, addressing social issues that affect communities and building confidence in the justice system.

“ If we all play our part and work together to better our community – great things can happen. ”



The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme in infographics

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme

Long term prevention

Commitment to ending paramilitarism is a key priority for the Northern Ireland Executive.

Further Education colleges have developed courses to support young people based on best practice.

270

200 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

Northern Ireland Executive
@endingtheharm

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme

Building capacity to support transition

“We’re all mothers, we share the same stories, we’ve got the same heartaches and the same traditions.”

20

20 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

Northern Ireland Executive
@endingtheharm

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme

Building confidence in the justice system

When it comes to tackling paramilitarism, law enforcement is vital, but listening to communities and hearing their concerns, building relationships with key partners and working together to develop effective solutions to problems in order to prevent harm is also critical.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

Northern Ireland Executive
@endingtheharm

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme

Strategies and powers to tackle criminal activity

The Paramilitary Crime Taskforce, which includes PSNI, NCA and HMRC has:

£378k

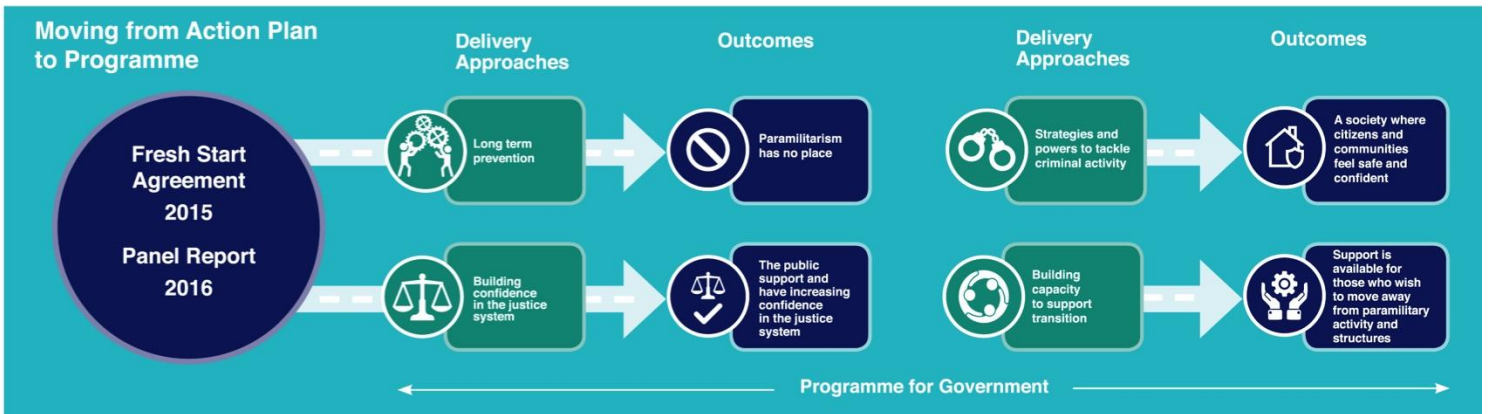
110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

110

110 young people have completed the programme since 2016.

Northern Ireland Executive
@endingtheharm



Key Facts

38

The Tackling Paramilitarism Programme is a series of 38 commitments from the Northern Ireland Executive.

£50m

A total of £50m has been pledged over five years (2016-2021) to support delivery of the Programme.

24

Already more than 24 organisations from the public sector and in local communities are working together on the Programme.

300

A total of 300 people are accepted as homeless due to intimidation by paramilitaries (yearly average).

60%

There has been a 60% increase in paramilitary style attacks over the last four years.

94

There were 94 victims of paramilitary style attacks in 2016/17.*

* From PSNI statistics

“When it comes to tackling paramilitarism, law enforcement is vital but listening to communities and hearing their concerns; building relationships with key partners and working together to develop effective solutions to problems in order to prevent harm is also critical.”

PSNI



Long term prevention

Education Authority assigns youth outreach workers

IN response to Action A4 in the Executive Action plan, “The Executive should commission appropriate initiatives aimed at promoting lawfulness in schools and through youth work in communities,” the Education Authority (EA) is taking forward two programmes: a capacity building programme for teachers and youth workers and a youth outreach programme.

Eight youth outreach workers have been assigned to deliver a bespoke outreach programme in the areas most at risk of paramilitary activity. The aim is to build relationships with those young people who are disengaged from youth services and at higher risk of involvement in paramilitarism in order to develop their resilience and awareness of risk factors.

EA held an induction day for the Youth Outreach Workers at the Balmoral Hotel, Dunmurry, on 26 April. The event involved the youth workers and their supervisors, Youth Work Alliance, Co-operation Ireland and officials from the Department of Education and Programme Team.

Julie Harrison, Programme Director, gave a presentation to explain the context of the Programme to the group.

Co-operation Ireland gave an update on the development of bespoke transition plans for the communities most at risk of paramilitarism, highlighting the fact youth outreach was a key theme emerging from the transition plans and the youth outreach programme will be closely aligned with these plans.



Some of those who attended the induction event

Youth workers have been assigned to deliver a bespoke outreach programme that supports vulnerable young people in communities most impacted by paramilitarism and coercive control.



Liam Curran, EA, explained that the programme also includes Theatre of Witness workshops, the development of a lawfulness module and residential and other events to support young people, their peers and siblings.

The day also included thought provoking sessions delivered by youth work practitioners on the type of intervention that might be delivered through the youth outreach programme and the issues and challenges in working with the young people involved.

One of the youth workers said: “There is a cycle at play here; this element of the Programme I believe can break that cycle.

“These aren’t new situations for the Youth Service to consider. The issues being faced by some young people and the lifestyles they’ve fallen into aren’t going to be shot or beaten out of them. That tactic was tried in the 70s and the 80s and 90s; it didn’t work then.

“Many of these young people are ‘damaged goods’ long before they get into a stolen car or sell a bit of gear ... they’re already broken boys. We’ve a chance here to give them a ‘Fresh Start’.”

He added: “This can be an amazing programme – I’m enthused by it. I look forward to changing outcomes for young people. I look forward to giving young people at serious risk a genuine fresh start.

I look forward to being the change I want to see in my community.”

Special Performance of Banjaxed held at Castle Buildings



L-R Anthony Harbinson, Patricia Downey, Monica McWilliams, David Sterling, D/C/Supt Tim Mairs, Paul Smyth, Julie Harrison at the event

HEAD of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, David Sterling, recently hosted a special performance of Banjaxed, a play which focusses on the risks young people face when they get involved with criminal gangs, as part of ongoing work on the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme.

Representatives from Government Departments, partner agencies within the voluntary and community sector, and the IRC attended the thought provoking play, which also included a panel

discussion on paramilitary style attacks and other related issues.

Addressing the audience, David Sterling said: “Everyone in this room knows that paramilitaries have exploited their own communities and others through criminality.

“They destroy lives and harm the people they so often claim to represent.

“One of the tasks that we have been set is to create the

conditions within which paramilitarism has no place. That is why this Action Plan, and the contribution you are all making to it, is so important.

“I strongly believe that we need a ‘one team’ approach to dealing with these issues, and will be encouraging you all to take this on board.

“We need to keep working together to ensure that the issues we are seeking to address are given appropriate priority across Government Departments and



Head of Civil Service David Sterling with the cast of Banjaxed



The Q+A session



The shocking scene of a paramilitary style attack

with our colleagues in law enforcement, local councils and in the community and voluntary sector.”

Referring to the fact there has been a 60% increase in paramilitary style attacks over the last four years, with 94 victims of paramilitary style attacks in 2016/17 alone, he added: “This is simply unacceptable. We need to get to a place where these violent attacks, carried out by people who claim to be protecting their communities but are in fact causing serious harm, are a thing of the past.

“We have to create an environment where criminals masquerading as community protectors don’t have control.

“The work we are all involved in is helping to narrow the ground for this type of activity to exist therefore we should not

underestimate the importance of this work and of the shared effort it requires. We are having a positive impact on people’s lives but it is important that we do not get complacent. It will require consistent effort by all of us to do more so that we can help to create a safe society where paramilitarism has no place.”

The thought provoking play was commissioned by the Youth Justice Agency and written by playwright Patricia Downey.

Explaining the content such as punishment style attacks, selling of fake goods and drugs, and the issue of coercive control, playwright Patricia Downey said: “Everyone knows young people are being used to sell drugs. Then when they cross someone they end up being shot.

“Shootings have multiplied recently and I felt it was very important to

have them addressed in the play. There are lots of mixed messages coming through from communities that need to be tackled.”

The play was well received by the audience and stimulated an interesting question and answer session with a panel which included IRC member Monica McWilliams, Detective Superintendent Tim Mairs, from the Paramilitary Crime Taskforce, Paul Smyth, from the StopAttacks Forum, playwright Patricia Downey and Anthony Harbinson.

Some of the issues discussed included collaborative working and a culture of lawfulness.

The event also contributed to an ongoing public discourse around paramilitary style attacks in the run up to the launch of our public awareness campaign in the Autumn.



Building capacity to support transition

Women making a difference in their communities

NEARLY 500 women attended a special graduation event, hosted by Sarah Travers from BBC, on Thursday 26th April, to celebrate successfully completing the first phase of the Women Involved in Community Transformation programme (WICT).

The programme, which is aimed at increasing the participation and influence of women in community development, was established by the Department for Communities as part of the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme.

The three person panel that drew up recommendations for tackling paramilitarism, as agreed in the Fresh Start Agreement in 2015, said that the role of women was a key part of the solution to ending the harm caused by paramilitarism.

As a result, WICT was 1 of 38 commitments which emerged under the programme theme of ‘building capacity to support transition’.

Over the past six months, the participants, who come from across Northern Ireland, have been taking part in a number of training modules, including Leadership and Mentoring, Women in the Justice System; Women in Peace-building; Citizenship and Personal Development and Health/Well-being as part of the programme and the graduation was their opportunity to celebrate their achievements at the special black-tie event at Titanic, Belfast.

Addressing the participants at the event, Ian Snowden, Deputy Secretary for the Department for Communities, said: “This programme is helping women and the communities where they live to develop a vision for positive change.

“It helps women develop the skills to work in their communities, enables them to make new connections with community and voluntary groups and supports them to become involved in positive community activity.

“It also supports the development of influential relationships for women to build participation in our political structures and grow civic leadership from the neighbourhood level upwards.

“The programme has been a great success. I am certain that the transformational impact we wish to achieve for our communities through the programme will become a reality for all the participants.”

The programme has been delivered in 26 locations across



Northern Ireland by the Women’s Intervention Partnership (WIP), a consortium which includes Training for Women Network, Co-operation Ireland, Intercomm and Foyle Women’s Information Network.

TWN’s Chief Executive, Norma Shearer, said: “This programme had been an amazing success with around 500 women from across Northern Ireland completing it. These women are the future, and in their hands, the future is secure.”

One of the participants said: “I would love to get others involved in the programme, it really saved my life, and I want to help others. We teach each other new skills.”

The following morning, Anthony Harbinson, chair of the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme Board, was interviewed on Good Morning Ulster and highlighted how important it is to get women involved in making a difference to their communities.

Anthony said: “Women make up at least 50% if not more of the local population, they have a voice but that voice isn’t often heard and we need to build that, we need to build up the community backbone that is generated within the family, to actually hear the voice of all sections of our community. I want them involved in local groups, I want them involved in local campaigns, I want them to become involved in civil and political society as we go forward. I want to hear their voice.”

The graduation event marks the end of phase one of the programme. Phase two, which is now underway and will run until March 2019, will consolidate the participants’ learning via five pathways: Social Innovation; Community Leadership programme; Women in Civil Society; Communication and Engagement; and a Co-design/Bespoke module.



Some photos from the graduation event and some of the linked coverage



Building confidence in the justice system

Policing with the Community

THE PSNI is continuing to develop arrangements and plans to progress engagement activity as part of the Action Plan.

In 2017, LucidTalk was commissioned to carry out research to establish the levels of confidence in policing and ascertain if support for paramilitarism has decreased by conducting community surveys in those areas still susceptible to paramilitarism.

The findings provided a basis for initiatives and events to be conducted in the local District areas including: increased visibility and patrolling in anti-social behaviour hotspots and sites of previous paramilitary style attacks (PSAs); and patrolling operations and investigations to disrupt criminal activity by paramilitaries and organized crime gangs.

Work is ongoing involving local community groups and Neighbourhood Policing Teams, schools and youth groups as

well as direct engagement with local residents to provide reassurance.

The PSNI has also collaborated with a team from The Open University's Centre for Policing Research and Learning to develop an online course aimed at enhancing community policing capabilities in Northern Ireland.

This free course, 'Collaborative problem solving for community safety', offers a range of techniques for community police officers, other community-based public service professionals and members of community groups which are working to solve problems collaboratively and creatively.

It examines some of the ways in which OU specialists in creative problem solving recommend tackling difficult problems, and how to implement them in a community setting.

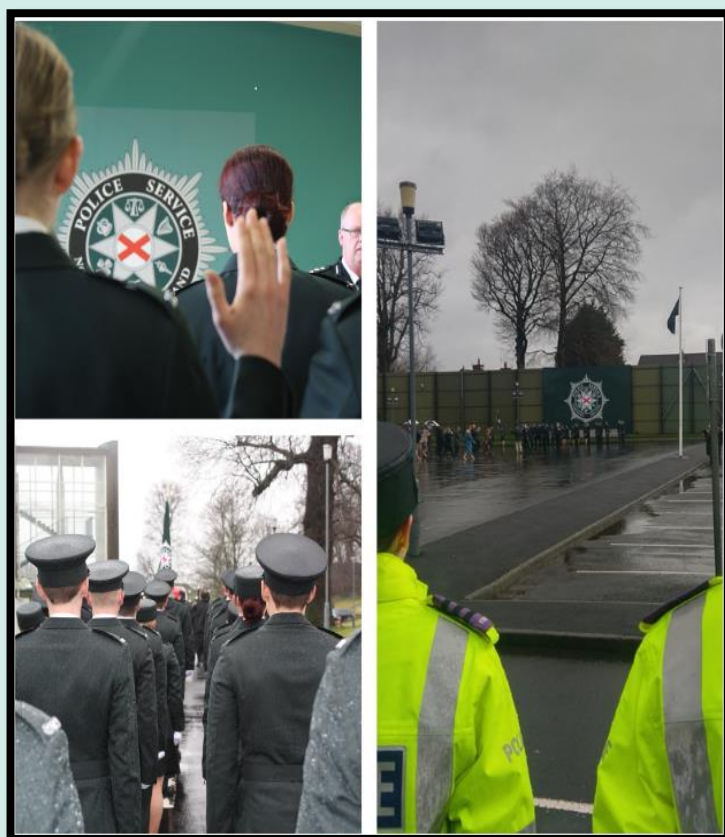
A technique library to support the successful modules continues to be developed and 300 hardcopies of it will be distributed to key personnel including Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Podcasts to support the modules with questions and case studies have also been completed and uploaded onto the internal PSNI Player and the modules continue to be promoted to external stakeholders.

All new trainee PSNI officers will be required to complete the initial 4 modules as a pre- entry requirement.

The development of a further 4 modules, to include Leadership v Management and Unconscious bias/Policing Craft is now underway with OU.

To access the course, click [here](#).



The latest group of police officers at their graduation after successfully completing their training



Strategies and powers to tackle criminal activity

The work of the Paramilitary Crime Taskforce

THE work of the joint Paramilitary Crime Taskforce (PCTF), which includes PSNI, HMRC and NCA, continues at pace, with a series of high profile operations.

During the 2017/18 financial year, the PCTF conducted 193 searches; made 47 arrests, of which 44 people were charged or reported to the PPS, seized an estimated £58,000 worth of drugs and restrained £50,000 worth of cash.

Earlier this year, the team successfully obtained the first Freezing Order worth £150,000 and the seizure of illicit tobacco products prevented a loss of £1.2m in revenue.

A significant operation involving 200 PSNI officers, HMRC and NCA, took place across the greater Belfast area on 13 April. A total of 12 properties were searched and seven people were arrested, three of whom were later charged or reported in connection with extortion and prostitution offences.

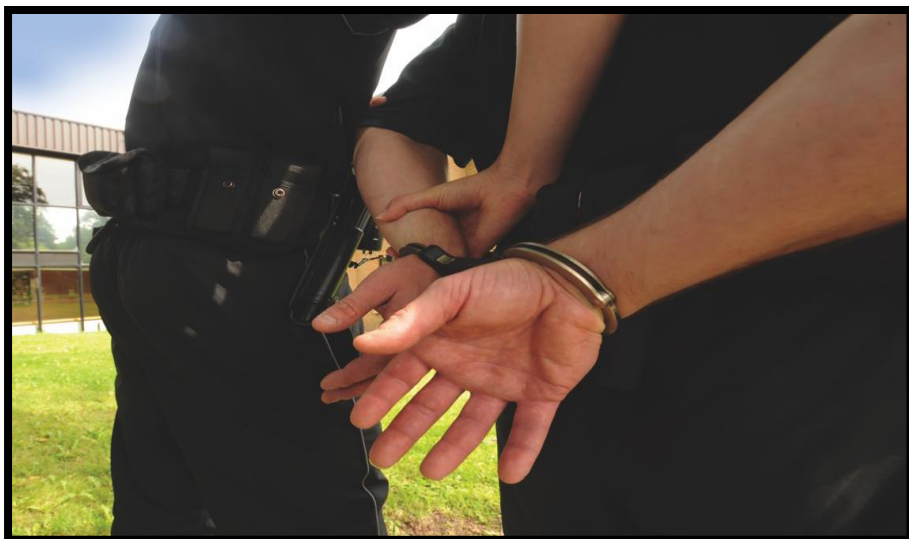
Speaking during a press conference in relation to the operation, ACC Stephen Martin said: "There will be no hiding place for paramilitaries."

Earlier this week, the team carried out a search in the Ballymurphy area of Belfast and seized a quantity of suspected drugs. A 28-year-old man was arrested and later charged to appear at Belfast Magistrates Court in July on drugs offences.

The Taskforce has also recently briefed independent Policing Board members and the Independent Reporting Commission on its work.

“When it comes to tackling paramilitarism, law enforcement is vital but listening to communities and hearing their concerns; building relationships with key partners and working together to develop effective solutions to problems in order to prevent harm is also critical.”

PSNI



Task force seizes almost £500,000 of paramilitary assets in less than 2 years

FIRST UPDATE FROM JOINT CRIME FIGHTING UNIT NEWSLETTER Pg 1
Task force to 'step up' war on paramilitaries

NEWSLETTER Pg 5
Progress 'being made' on paramilitary crime

Twitter

We are now live on Twitter!

We had a soft launch on 28 March and now have more than 400 followers.

Please remember to let us know if you're doing anything we could tweet about and don't forget to tag us and share #endingtheharm

Find us on  @endingtheharm



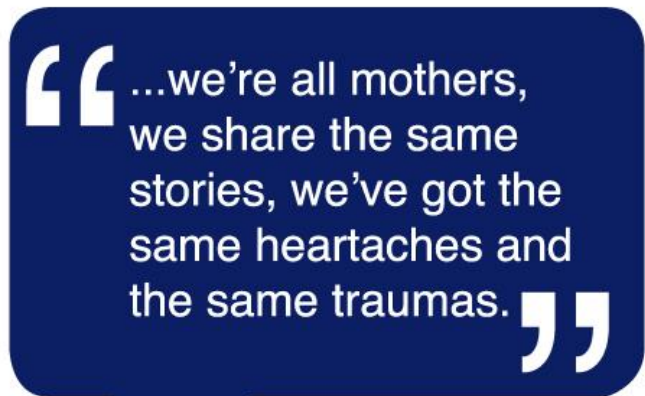
If you want to get involved or find out more, please get in touch.

Contact Details:

Phone: 028 9037 8674 or 028 9052 0798

Email: TPPT@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Have you see our new Z Card yet? If not and you would like a copy please let us know.



WICT participant.



Northern Ireland Executive

www.northernireland.gov.uk