



Annual Report 2023-24

Community Intercultural Programme



COMMUNITY INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Paul Barnes

CHAIR

2024

SECRETARY

29/1/25

Community Intercultural Programme

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and the consolidated financial statement of the charitable group CIP for the year ended 31 March 2024.

CIP, (Community Intercultural Programme) came into existence in Sept 2006 in response to the emerging needs of the Ethnic Communities in the region of Craigavon. CIP is committed to supporting people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, enabling them to fully integrate into and participate in an equitable society which represents difference and celebrates diversity

Vision

CIP's vision is of an inclusive society across the ABC Council area, which contributes to social cohesion and ensures equality for all.

Values

- *CIP actively promotes equality, values diversity and opposes discrimination in all its forms.*
- *CIP is an independent association, is non party political and is committed to an active anti- sectarian approach to its work*
- *CIP is committed to collective action informed by people's experiences and an analysis of their circumstances. Therefore CIP's primary method of operation is supporting and encouraging community action amongst disadvantaged communities.*
- *CIP will conduct its affairs in an honest, open, transparent and accountable way to its members.*
- *CIP values its volunteers as a key resource of the organisation.*
- *CIP will strive to represent the interests of all ethnic communities without 'fear or favour'*
- *CIP will strive for excellence in all we do in order to provide high quality and effective leadership and support.*

In order to meet its objectives, CIP provides a series of services benefiting the local community. Such services include:

Advice, Information and signposting - this programme of work provides a quality face-to-face service to BME clients across the ABC Council area with the aim of advancing citizenship, community development and human rights.

Family Support - this programme seeks to empower BME families, provide direct focused support and improve access to third party services that reduces social inclusion and relieves poverty.

Youth Empowerment – this programme aims to provide a range of services that promotes active citizenship, personal development, cultural diversity and a sense of belonging.

Comments from the Chair



It is always an inspiration for me to call in at the CIP Centre and overview the work that the organisation is performing. Despite funding challenges and limited resources, staff and volunteers have developed a high level of adaptability and resilience in delivering effective projects and programmes that have benefited a wide range of individuals, families and communities.

As a CIP Centre hosts both the Advice service and OASIS Youth, it is fascinating to watch how these activities dovetail and allow a staff team to understand ethnic family dynamics better and provide more targeted support.

The CIP Centre is also used by the Portuguese Saturday School, a dance group from Cape Verde, and Portuguese and Indian Church groups which makes the centre a busier and truly intercultural place.

Again I pay tribute to the dedicated staff and volunteer team who are committed to the well-being of the various user groups, who have gained the respect of the relative communities.

We are indebted to our funders who have supported us to deliver a wide range of vital services, without this support, CIP would not have been able to benefit so many people.

As a management committee, we believe that CIP is well-placed to address and respond to both the current and future challenges facing ethnic minority groups.

Paul Burrows

Reflections from staff



Stephen Smith (Portuguese Support Worker)

Over the last 8 years, it has been my privilege to assist the Portuguese-speaking communities in Craigavon and the wider area. Approximately 2000 people have been supported in a variety of integration-focused matters. Wider community has not grown significantly over the last year, but the level of need continues the outstrip demand.

Reflecting on these years it is heartening to see the number of individuals and families that have settled in the area and are fully integrated and no longer require the services of CIP. Another encouraging factor has been the number of children and young people who have grown through OASIS programmes and as a result have succeeded in gaining employment, and settling in the local community, while others have moved to higher education and now found employment in the community sector.



Veronica Dempsey (Romanian Support Worker)

I arrived in NI in the mid-2000s and faced many struggles in terms of understanding the life and procedures of Northern Ireland. Because of my personal experience, I am aware of the challenges faced by Romanian migrants and their families on their arrival into a new and very different living environment. My work entitles assisting families as they seek employment, understand procedures and access to services. Very few of my Romanian clients speak English and it still presents a massive barrier to their integration, especially due to historical discrimination and low income, which produces a range of poverty-related issues. Many of my clients have complex needs. I am called to a system integrating their children in school, accessing entitlements and providing advice regarding social services and programmes that will benefit them.

I found my job very challenging but also very satisfying.



Polina Malcheva (Bulgarian Support Worker)

I have supported and worked with the Bulgarian and Bulgarian Roma communities since 2018. Over the years the need and demand for support from the Bulgarian Roma community haven't changed much. Many clients require assistance with daily issues every week. The main reason



Oasis Youth

Oasis is an inclusive, youth focused programme that engages with ethnic children and youth through targeted provision. The club provides a range of comprehensive and interlinked projects throughout the year. The following is a sample of the key initiatives that were delivered which supported 518 different children and young people from 16 different cultural groups,

Gets Active Programme



Over the last 12 months there has been a great increase in need of provision for Portadown Gets Active. The needs of the communities who have benefited from the programme to date are growing as the Cost of Living crisis continues.

Some of the key issues we have been supporting children & Young people with are:

- Provision of food at each session we deliver due to the increase of food insecurity
- Provision of physical activity each week and during holiday programmes due to limited access to sports clubs and afterschool programme as a result of affordability.
- Access to a provision which supports children to express their culture and a safe and secure environment and also learn about other cultures. Need more now than ever due to the increase in bullying, racism and hate crimes in communities.
- Activities which support children and young people to boost their mental health and wellbeing by providing fun learning opportunities and information stalls and awareness at family days for parents on how best to support their family.

In 2023-2024 Gets Active supported 148 children and 50 peer mentors through the programme. Gets active also includes After School Club delivered over 40 weeks.

With out the support from our partners Children in Northern Ireland and funders McClay Foundation and ALMAC we would not be able to deliver our afterschool club and holiday provision, support our peer mentors to continue

Neighborhood Renewal projects

Oasis Junior Pod – Exploring the needs of young people and issues impacting young people through podcasting. Programme was supported by peer mentors from previous project and sharing learning of the project.



Oasis BREATHE – Health & Wellbeing focused project engaging young people in opportunities to learn more about impact of risk taking behavior. Social action delivery of a successful Health fair with over 200 in attendance.

Irish Youth Foundation – Youth leadership and summer provision project, supporting young people to engage in activities developing their soft skills, providing a provision over summer in an inclusive and shared space.

Culture Club – Delivery of So Pa Sabi Cape Veridian Dance Crew programme. Including the delivery of 4 community cultural events and supporting children and young people to try something new and develop an understanding of other cultures. This initiative was funded by TNL Community Fund

Uniting Communities – Partnership with Scotch Street Youth & Community Centre & Healthy Kidz. Youth focused programme with the theme of Sports, Culture and good relations. Initiative was funded by Department of Communities.

EA Craigavon Newcomer – Core provision
Hours of delivery Tuesday 6-9pm Senior Drop In (Yr8 – Age 18) & Friday 6-9pm Junior Drop In (P5-P7)
Membership & attendance stats for 23/24
333 members
94 sessions
2807 participant attendances
298 hours delivery





Oasis made the move from Oasis Youth Centre (34-36 Bridge Street) on 1st October 2023 and has operated in CIP Centre (7 Foundry Street) on a permanent basis. A positive foot forward for the organisation to all be under 1 roof and collaboration of all staff to ensure the success of the wider organisation.