

Clanmil Communiqué

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

Our hopes for homes and communities

By Clare McCarty, Group Chief Executive at Clanmil Housing

As life in Northern Ireland settles down after the elections in May the focus now for all is on what our politicians will commit to over the next five years, on behalf of all of us.



Children from south Belfast worked with Clanmil to produce a unique play reflecting their hopes for communities to grow and thrive together.



The eagerly awaited draft Programme for Government which was published by the NI Executive on 26 May “sets out the direction of travel and the specific things we want to change.” No surprise then that as a housing association we were keen to see what is proposed for housing and for the communities in which we work.

The Executive’s purpose of “improving wellbeing for all – by tackling disadvantage, and driving

economic growth” is one we can all wholeheartedly embrace. The vital role that good homes play in changing lives, building communities and tackling disadvantage is at the very heart of what we do. “Improving the supply of suitable housing” has been listed as one of 42 indicators that will be used to measure progress. Our politicians must recognise that to provide new homes we need to work in partnership to fund them and public land lying fallow must be freed up for redevelopment.

Our vision goes further than new homes, important though they are. Our hope is for a Northern Ireland for all, where the historical boundaries built up around housing can start to melt away. For vibrant communities with people from different backgrounds and life experiences participating because they feel safe and

valued, and we want this to apply to all of our homes. We see the indicator to “increase shared space” and the aspiration for “a shared society that respects diversity” as extremely welcome support for this work from our Government, who can work alongside us to help realise it.

The proposed outcome “to enjoy long, healthy and active lives” needs to translate into realistic financial support to allow the valuable work to help people live independently to continue, including the critical uplift being sought for Supporting People funding - the money that underpins many supported and independent living schemes which are such an important lifeline to the most vulnerable in society.

We support our tenants in whatever way we can to have an opportunity to get the most from life and do this through financial

inclusion initiatives, employability training and by listening to our communities in delivering neighbourhood plans. We are encouraged that “increasing the confidence and capability of people and communities” is also an aim of the Programme for Government.

To “maximise what we can achieve collectively” recognises the great potential that working in partnership with the voluntary and community sectors in Northern Ireland, including Housing Associations, can achieve – given the right support and political will. We need support to increase our agility and to maximise what we can achieve together.

For our part we will value our politicians and take every opportunity to inform, to share and to listen, so that all of us together can build a great Northern Ireland.

Strengthening Communities

We want the people who live in our homes to have opportunities to get the most they can from life. Over the past year we have made a significant impact through our Community Development work.



Impact of our Community Development work 2015/16



Social impact of our community development work in 2015/16 =

£635,500

Increase in people's wellbeing measured using the HACT Wellbeing Valuation Tool

MONEY ADVICE SERVICE 2015/16:

For every £1 spent we recovered



£11.37

for our tenants in unpaid benefits, written off debt and charitable donations

Benefit to tenants =

£490k

including **£82k** rent payment of arrears



EMPLOYABILITY 2015/16:



52

people completed training programmes leading to

3

people getting work and

4

moving on to further training and

4

apprenticeships

Homes that are Welcoming to All

Clanmil is committed to delivering homes that are safe and welcoming to all and take this approach to every new development.

As part of the Executive's Together: Building a United Community strategy we are working to promote four new shared neighbourhoods – at Felden in Newtownabbey, at Embankment in South Belfast, at Main Street, Dundrum and at Dromore Street in Banbridge.

Recently more than 110 children from three south Belfast primary schools raised the

curtain on a unique dramatic performance at Stranmillis College Theatre. The play, called 'A River Crossing', was developed by Primary 7 pupils from Holy Rosary, Rosetta and Forge Integrated primary schools in partnership with Clanmil and Partisan Productions and reflected the children's hopes for communities to grow and thrive together.

Clanmil ties up three-way finance package worth £135m



We are delighted to announce a £135m finance agreement with three lenders in Northern Ireland that will underpin our plans to build 2,500 new social homes as well as modernising some of our existing homes.

The package combines loans from Danske Bank (£60m), First Trust (£50m) and Ulster Bank (£25m), all on attractive terms, and will enable us to access grants from the Department for

Communities, combining public and private funding to create a total investment of some £315m.

The investment is expected to generate up to 500 construction jobs and support more than 400 associated jobs in the supply chain, demonstrating that in addition to our social contribution, the social housing sector in Northern Ireland is playing an important role in bolstering and growing our economy.

If you would like further information on any of the articles featured, or if you would like to discuss any other aspect of Clanmil's work, please contact us at – Clanmil Housing Association, Northern Whig House, 3 Waring Street, Belfast, BT1 2DX
Tel: 028 9087 6000 Fax: 028 9087 6001 e-mail: housing@clanmil.org.uk web: www.clanmil.org
Follow us on Twitter @ClanmilHousing and on Facebook.