

# **VICTIMS LIAISON UNIT - NEWSLETTER**

## **NOVEMBER 1999- ISSUE 2**

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### **The Victims Liaison Unit:**

**was set up by the Minister for Victims, Rt Hon Adam Ingram JP MP, to support the implementation of Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's report, "We Will Remember Them", published in May 1998.**

## **FURTHER FUNDING PACKAGE FOR VICTIMS ANNOUNCED**

**£4 million is to be released over the next 2 years in support of victims, the Secretary of State announced on 27 September. This included £1.25 million in addition to the initial £5 million allocation bringing the total funding for victims to £6.25 million.**

**Over the next 2 years, £3 million will be allocated to groups which support victims and £1 million to the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund, to help develop initiatives for individuals and their families.**

### **£3 million for victims groups**

**Detailing how the money would be spent Adam Ingram, the Minister for Victims, said:**

**"In consultations with those who have been directly affected by the troubles, it has been clear that what victims want most are services provided at a local level by people who know and understand their particular needs. For that reason, it has been decided to make £3 million available, over the next two years, to groups which support victims so that they can deliver services of real benefits to those who need it most.**

**"At the end of the two year period we will be in an informed position to review the overall needs of groups and the victims they support. It is hoped that, if resources permit, this commitment may be extended to a third year".**

**Within the total of the £3 million, up to £300,000 will be allocated in each of the two years to WAVE. This will allow WAVE to extend its regional services and ensure that a basic level of support is available throughout Northern Ireland to all who need it.**

**The remaining £2.4 million will be allocated to other groups providing support and services to victims.**

**The entire £3 million fund will be administered by the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust which has already developed considerable expertise in this area. Funding will be available from the end of the year for needs such as staff, premises, support programmes and equipment. Details on the criteria and standards to be met are currently being developed and will be published.**

## **£1 million for the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund**

**The additional funding announced also includes an extra £1 million for the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund, bringing the government's contribution to that initiative to £2 million. Recognising that not everyone wants to be part of a group, the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund will continue to develop measures to support individuals and their families.**

## **LIVE PROJECT**

**The Glenree Centre for Reconciliation, based in Enniskerry, Co Wicklow, plans to organise a new programme for victims and survivors of the violence in both parts of Ireland and Britain. The LIVE Project (Let's Involve the Victims Experience) will run from November 1999 to July 2000. It will involve a series of workshops and conferences, during which victims/survivors of violence can share their experiences and develop new skills and relationships.**

**Four groups of 30 people will be established; two from Northern Ireland, one from the Republic of Ireland and one from Britain. The two groups from Northern Ireland will represent both communities. Participants will be selected to create a geographical, gender and community balance in each of the groups. All costs will be met by the Glenree Centre.**

**If you would like more information on the LIVE Project, please contact:**

**(For Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland)**

**Glenree Centre for Reconciliation**

**Development Office**

**Exchequer Chambers**

**19/20 Exchequer Street**

**DUBLIN 2**

**Tel: 003531 662 0355/6797148**

**Fax: 003531 679 8004**

**E mail:**

**[info@glencree-cfr.ie](mailto:info@glencree-cfr.ie)**

**(for Britain)**

**The Tim Parry Jonathan Ball Trust**

**Town Hall**

**Warrington**

**Cheshire**

**WA1 1UH**

**Tel/Fax: 01925 442068**

**E mail: [info@childrenforpeace.org](mailto:info@childrenforpeace.org)**

## **FREE TICKETS FOR WATERFRONT CELEBRATION**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Gala Celebration of Christmas Peace at the Belfast Waterfront Hall takes place on Tuesday 7 December at 7.30 pm and Wednesday 8 December at 3 pm and 7.30 pm. Performers will include Maire Brennan (Clannad), Huntley Brown (piano), Neville York (steel drum), Don Shire (Silver Trumpet), Co Sligo Golf Club Male Voice Choir, People in Harmony (the combined choirs of Drumcree & Portadown Colleges). The guest speaker will be the Rev Dr Lloyd John Ogilvie, Chaplain to the United States Senate in Washington.**

## **NIVT CONFERENCE - FEBRUARY 2000**

**Following on from "Remember and Change", the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust will be organising another conference in February 2000. NIVT will issue invitations to**

**groups in the near future.**

**Further details will be available from:**

**Norma Patterson**

**Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust**

**22-24 Mount Charles**

**BELFAST**

**BT7 1NZ**

**Tel: 028 90 245927/Fax: 028 90 329839**

## **UPDATE ON VICTIM SUPPORT GRANT SCHEME**

**In the first issue of the Victims Liaison Unit Newsletter we announced that we were looking at options for distributing a £200,000 community group fund. The 'Victim Support Grant Scheme' has now been running for 4 months and is attracting applications from groups across Northern Ireland. The Scheme, which is being administered by the Community Relations Council, is intended as a pilot exercise and will run for one year. It is not intended to grant aid to individuals from this particular scheme. In addition to the £200,000 fund, the Victims Liaison Unit has provided the Community Relations Council with funding to appoint a full-time person to administer the scheme and provide support to victims groups.**

**Applications will be considered under any of the following criteria:**

- **Establishing new groups working with victims. The groups will need to demonstrate that there is an unmet need that cannot be filled by an existing group or service.**
- **To carry out a needs analysis.**
- **Training volunteers or staff in the wide range of relevant support services.**
- **To produce training or other resource materials which could be of use to groups or individuals working in this area.**
- **To demonstrate models of good practice.**

**Priority will be given to projects which can produce results in the time and financial scale of this scheme. The maximum possible allocation per project will be £10,000; it is anticipated that the majority of grants will be less than this.**

**Application forms are available from:**

**Michaela McCabe**

**Community Relations Council**

**6 Murray Street**

**Belfast**

**BT1 6DN**

**Tel: 028 90 439953**

## **OVER 350 ASSISTED BY EDUCATIONAL BURSARY SCHEME**

**The Educational Bursary Scheme was one of a number of immediate responses to Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's Report, "We Will Remember Them", recognising the impact the Troubles have had on the education of victims.**

**At the closing date on 28 February 1999, 522 applications had been received. The Selection Panel gave careful consideration to all the applications, taking account of the criteria developed for the scheme, and recommended providing assistance to over 350 individuals.**

**In order to provide a bursary award to all who met the criteria, the Government agreed to increase the total amount available from £250,000 to £300,000. Awards include financial assistance with tuition, fees and books. A significant number of applicants are also receiving a personal computer.**

**This initiative was launched as a pilot scheme. The Directors of the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund are currently considering the issues of training and education; it is hoped they will be able to use the experience gained from the Educational Bursary Scheme to inform the plans they have to address the needs of victims in this area.**

**The Steering Group of the Educational Bursary Scheme, which was chaired by Lynda Wilson, Director of Children Services at Barnardos, is grateful to everyone who took the time to relate their personal experiences of the impact of the troubles on their education.**

## **POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM PILOT SCHEME GRANTS**

**Positive feedback has been received from the four groups funded to carry out pilot schemes looking at innovative ways of meeting the needs of local communities.**

**The projects, which received approximately £50,000 in total, included:**

- **Increased befriending services to meet growing referrals to WAVE and a project co-ordinator post for their Omagh Centre.**
- **Weekends away provided by Survivors of Trauma, for over 50 elderly house-bound victims.**

- **A number of workshops for young adolescents to help them interact through discussion of their personal experiences of the troubles and their hopes for the future, provided by the Shankill Stress and Trauma Group.**
- **A training package created by Disability Action, for a programme of guided personal growth to assist people who have acquired disabilities as a result of the 'Troubles'.**

## **COUNSELLING VIEWS WANTED**

**Numerous concerns about counselling were reported to the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) while preparing the Living with the Trauma of the "Troubles" report. Widespread confusion was apparent regarding what constitutes counselling and there were many concerns regarding the level of expertise attained by some practitioners and the degree of supervision which they receive.**

**The report noted that practitioners are not required to be trained to any particular standard, neither is there a universally accepted accreditation or registration process. The report recommended that the Department should convene a working group to address these concerns and a project group, led by SSI, has been established to review the standards of counselling practice. The review is examining counselling in general, rather than narrowly focusing on "Troubles" related counselling as suggested in the SSI report. An ad hoc reference group representing a wide range of interests in counselling has been assembled to advise the project team and a literature survey has been completed. The next stage in the review is to conduct some research, which will aim to identify the key characteristics of those, involved in counselling.**

### **Do you have views on counselling?**

**The project team hopes that the survey can be as inclusive as possible. If your organisation:**

- **Provides counselling;**
- **Trains counsellors;**
- **Refers individuals for counselling or**
- **Knows of other such organisations and individuals who would be willing to participate in the survey**

**Please contact the project team leader, John Park, at the address given below. The team would also be grateful to receive any other comments or information about counselling in Northern Ireland.**

**The project team will produce a review report which will outline the findings of the project, identify and promote good practice examples, suggest a minimum set of counselling standards and recommend the appropriate qualification, accreditation**

**and supervision requirements for counsellors.**

**John can be contacted at:**

**Social Services Inspectorate**

**DHSS**

**Castle Buildings**

**Stormont Estate**

**BELFAST**

**BT4 3ST**

**Tel: 028 9052 0705**

**Fax: 028 9052 0527**

**E mail: [john.park@dhssni.gov.uk](mailto:john.park@dhssni.gov.uk)**

## **AN INSIGHT INTO THE FAMILY TRAUMA CENTRE**

**As part of its initial response to the Bloomfield Report, the Victims Liaison Unit provided £700,000 towards the setting up of a Family Trauma Centre. Here, Marie Kenny, Clinical Team Co-Ordinator, writes about the first six months of operations and the purpose of the centre:**

**The Family Trauma Centre officially opened on 23 February 1999. We have almost completed recruitment of therapeutic staff to the centre. We have a total of four family therapists, a part-time clinical psychologist, two trainee family therapists and a trainee child psychotherapist. We have consultation and on-going supervision support from a consultant psychiatrist. In addition we have two specialist registrars in psychiatry working with the team half a day per week.**

**Since we opened in February we have seen many families affected by trauma, and in particular Troubles related trauma. For some of these families the trauma may have happened many years previously, but the affects have been profound on both the individual and the family as a whole. Some families have been affected more recently and there have been cases when we have seen families within two weeks of a traumatic event. Like so many in Northern Ireland we have much to learn about how the Troubles have affected families. We do know that having a safe place in therapy to tell their stories enables families and individuals to speak of their trauma and how this has impacted on the family unit.**

**This opportunity to tell their stories enables families to begin to heal and move on.**

**The Family Trauma Centre is a regional resource centre working in partnership with statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and community groups. We provide a comprehensive therapeutic service, which includes psychological assessment and treatment for families and individuals residing in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board area, who have suffered from trauma related to the Troubles or other specific trauma.**

**The Centre has a regional remit, with regard to families affected by the Troubles. For example these may be families who have requested services from outside their own areas and who wish to be seen in Belfast. As we provide a supervision and consultation service to colleagues regionally, we are happy to consult with colleagues or provide supervision for families or individuals that have been affected by the Troubles. We see families and children of all ages affected in this way.**

**Referrals can be taken from GP's, social services, hospitals, specialist teams, voluntary agencies, community groups, schools and self referrals pending assessment. Referral forms are available on request from the centre. We also provide a consultation service either by telephone or face to face, to those seeking advice or support for a client who has been traumatised in their local community. A member of staff will be on call Monday to Friday between 12-1 pm and 2-3 pm for telephone consultations or to answer queries regarding referrals.**

**The past six months have been a busy time at the Family Centre. Initially we needed to consolidate both clinical skills and organisational issues in relation to the setting up of a clinical timetable and recruitment of staff. We have been meeting with different agencies both in the Eastern Health & Social Services Board and regionally to ensure that both statutory and voluntary agencies are informed about the work of the Trauma Centre. The Centre will provide training and teaching to statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups who work with people traumatised by the Troubles.**

**The Trauma Centre can be contacted at 1 Wellington Park, Belfast, on 028 9020 4700.**

## **BBC RADIO ULSTER ... GIVING VOICE TO THE UNHEARD VICTIMS OF THE TROUBLES**

**At the beginning of the year Radio Ulster launched its 'Legacy' series. Broadcast at 8.58 am every day throughout 1999, the two minute interview gives those who have been affected by events over the last 30 years the opportunity to tell their story.**

**The BBC has said, "For many of those who have taken part, Legacy has marked a new beginning in their lives, helping them come to terms with the pain they have suffered".**

**If you would like to contribute to the programme you can ring the Legacy Line on**



**028 9033 8406 and leave your details on a confidential answering service.**

**You can hear the programme on FM stereo 92.4-95.4/MW 1341(873) or using the BBC on-line service at [www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/nca-legacy](http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/nca-legacy)**

## **POSSIBLE NEW SUPPORT GROUP FOR EX-ARMY PERSONNEL AND THEIR RELATIVES**

**Rita Restorick, the mother of Lane Bombardier Stephen Restorick, who was killed in Bessbrook on 12 February 1997, is trying to form a support group in Great Britain for the bereaved parents or spouses of army personnel killed as a result of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. She would also be interested in hearing from ex-soldiers living in Great Britain who have been injured in Northern Ireland. Rita can be contacted in the first instance, via the Victims Liaison Unit.**

## **A PLACE AND A NAME ... THE REPORT OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S VICTIMS COMMISSION**

**Following ratification of the Good Friday Agreement, Mr John Donahue TD, Irish Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, obtained his Government's approval to conduct a review of the services and arrangements in place, to meet the needs of those who have suffered as a result of violent action arising from the conflict in Northern Ireland.**

**A report of his findings and recommendations has now been issued. Copies can be purchased from:**

**Government Publication Sales Office**

**Sun Alliance House**

**Molesworth Street**

**Dublin 2**

**Or by mail order from:**

**Government Publications Sales Office**

**Postal Trade Section**

**4-5 Harcourt Road, Dublin 2**

**Cost £3 IR £3.81**

**Tel: 003531 661 3111 Ext 4040/4045**

## **LEARNING ... THAT LASTS A LIFETIME**

**The Spirit of Enniskillen Trust launched their Year 2000 programme on 25 October 1999. The purpose of the programme is to give young people the opportunity to explore how other cultures are dealing with conflict and diversity. Past -participants commenting on their experience with the Spirit of Enniskillen, typically report an enhanced sense of their own personal identity and an increased sensitivity towards other cultures.**

**The Trust wishes to attract young people from a wide variety of backgrounds and the scheme is open to all, between the ages of 16 and 19, who are resident in Northern Ireland.**

**In 2000, 50 young people, in groups of 10, will be offered the opportunity to travel to five different international destinations - including Cyprus, Croatia/Bosnia, Germany and the USA. Each group will be accompanied by two experienced adult co-ordinators to facilitate the preparation, evaluation and follow-up programme offered by the scheme. On return, participants will be expected to use their experiences in making a contribution towards respect and co-operation between all communities in Northern Ireland.**

**If you require further information or application forms please contact:**

**The Spirit of Enniskillen Trust**

**The Warehouse**

**7 James Street South**

**BELFAST**

**BT2 8DN**

**Tel: 028 9023 3080**

**Further information and application forms can also be downloaded from the web at:**

**[www.soetrust.co.uk](http://www.soetrust.co.uk)**

**Please note that completed applications should be returned no later than 17 December 1999.**

# **DETAILS OF HELP IN GREAT BRIATIN**

## **1. Veterans Advice Unit:**

**We have been asked to bring attention to the Ministry of Defence's Veterans' Advice Unit (VAU) which exists to assist all former members of the Armed Forces, including those who served in Northern Ireland. The VAU may be contacted on 0845 602 0302.**

## **2. Victims Support**

**Victim Support offer a service to all victims of crime. They operate a telephone helpline throughout Great Britain on 0845 303 0900.**

# **CRIMINAL INJURIES ... REVIEW PUBLISHED**

**The report of the Review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation, which was carried out by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, has now been published. In total 64 recommendations have been made, mainly to improve the scheme in the future, but also to recognise a limited number of past cases of financial hardship. The Government has said that time is needed to consider the many complex recommendations before reaching any conclusions. It is not possible to say exactly when a response to the report will be made, but it is unlikely to be produced before the end of the year. During this time, further consultation on the various recommendations will take place with the major interest groups and members of the public who contributed to the Review. If you would like further details please contact the Compensation Policy Unit on Belfast 028 90 258814.**

# **THE NORTHERN IRELAND MEMORIAL FUND**

**Peace - Reconciliation - Support**

## **What is the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund?**

**The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund is an independent charitable fund that seeks to promote peace and reconciliation by ensuring that individuals and families who have suffered as a result of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland are remembered by providing them with help and support in a practical and meaningful way.**

## **What 'needs' have the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund identified?**

**The Board of Directors of the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund have spent the past months consulting with a range of individuals and groups supporting victims. The co-operation and assistance received from those individuals and groups provided the Directors with an invaluable insight into the needs of a range of victims' interests.**

**Following these consultations, five areas of need were identified where it was**

**suggested the Funds should focus its initial response:**

- 1. The provision of help in the areas of Counselling and Trauma.**
- 2. The provision of help for the management of Pain and for Respite Care.**
- 3. Assistance for individuals experiencing financial difficulty.**
- 1. The provision of Training and Educational assistance for Children and Adults.**
- 2. The development of Networking, Lobbying and Information services for Groups supporting Victims.**

**How will the Memorial Fund provide help?**

**For each of the five areas targeted, the Directors are developing a package of measures that they believe address some of the very real needs identified.**

**The Directors intend to introduce the first of these measures, a Small Grants Scheme, before Christmas 1999. This scheme is aimed at individuals who, as a result of their experiences, are currently encountering financial difficulties, and who would benefit from a grant to help purchase an essential item or service.**

**How can I find out more about the Small Grants Scheme?**

**The scheme will be advertised widely in a variety of locations including all of the main Post Offices in Northern Ireland before the end of the year. Individuals currently held on the mailing list for the Victims Liaison Unit Newsletter will receive details directly by post.**

**What other schemes do the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund plan to introduce?**

**The Directors hope to launch several new schemes in the year 2000, each aimed at providing help and support in some of the five areas identified. Exact details of each scheme will be made available in due course.**

**How is the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund sustained?**

**The British Government made an initial contribution of £1 million to the Fund, and on 27 September 1999 the Secretary of State announced that the Government would continue to support the work of the Fund with a further contribution of £1 million in the year 2000-2001. However, to introduce and sustain all the measures the Fund proposes, it will be seeking contributions and support from both local and overseas sources, and provides the wider community with the opportunity to support those who suffered the most.**

**How can I support the work of the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund?**

**If you think you may be able to help support the work of the Memorial Fund, please contact the Fund's Administrator on Belfast 028 9052 7939.**

**SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?????????**

**We value your comments and feedback and would encourage you to let us know what you think of the Newsletter. If there is something you would like to see more or less of let us know by writing to:**

**Newsletter**

**Victims Liaison Unit**

**Room 123**

**Stormont House Annex**

**Stormont Estate**

**BELFAST**

**BT4 3ST**

**Or email: [victims@nics.gov.uk](mailto:victims@nics.gov.uk)**

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