

POLICY UPDATE

ISSUE 6

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This Policy Bulletin is an opportunity to briefly update you on what we have been involved in over the last few months and to look at what we will be working on in the coming months. We hope you find it useful.

AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF WOMEN

NIRWN on behalf of the WCRP (Women's Centres Regional Partnership) Policy Sub Group provided a written submission to the Committee for Culture, Arts & Leisure on their Inquiry into Participation in Sport and Physical Activity. The Committee are trying to identify, analyse and consider solutions to the ongoing decline in adult participation in sport and physical activity as evidenced in the NI Continuous Household Survey.

Our written submission highlighted that women often experience different barriers to participation in public and social life than men; including participation in sport and physical activity. The key message we tried to communicate was that in our experience women are not reluctant to engage in Sport and Physical Activity when the right environment and conditions are created and every attempt to remove barriers is made.



As a result of our written submission the DCAL Committee invited us to present our evidence orally to the Committee to question us and find out more about the work of the Women's Centres. On March 11th, 2010 Louise Coyle, NIRWN, Tiziana O'Hara WCRP and Geraldine Compton, Waterside Women's Centre travelled to Parliament Buildings to present our evidence and answer the Committee's questions. Our experience was a positive one; the Committee were very engaged; asked good questions and seemed interested in how longer term funding and more Women's Centres could create greater impact.

We emphasised how the holistic nature of Women's Centres; the complementarity of the courses and services delivered and the genuine commitment to addressing and removing barriers for women means that physical activity courses are often over subscribed. This we argued, illustrates that women are not reluctant to engage when the right environments exist – quite the reverse!

View the full transcript of our meeting with the Committee on www.wcrp.org.uk

RECENT RESPONSES - To view NIRWN responses in full please log onto www.nirwn.org.uk/consultations

CONSULTATION	DEPARTMENT
Public Transport Reform	Department of Regional Development
EQIA on Agri Environment Programme and Less Favoured Area Compensatory Allowance Scheme	Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
Bill of Rights for NI	Northern Ireland Office
A Commissioner for Older People in NI	Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister
Draft Regeneration and Housing Bill	Department of Social Development
Local Partnership Working on Policing and Community Safety	Department of Justice

RURAL WOMEN'S POLICY FORUM

What is the Rural Women's Policy Forum? The Rural women's Policy Forum is a vibrant Policy Forum which exists to help rural women engage with decision makers and to ensure that the key issues facing rural women are presented to Government as an opportunity for change to be implemented. The Rural Women's Policy Forum serves as means for rural women to share information and updates relating to relevant policies and strategies.

Who is it for? The Rural Women's Policy Forum currently has 59 members who are made up of; individuals, organisation representatives and government department representation but there is no limit to this membership. It is open to all rural women, and to those who represent and work on behalf of rural women.

What's in it for me? The Rural Women's Policy Forum provides with the opportunity for full engagement in the policy decisions that affect our daily lives. Topics on the next Agenda include: The Rural Childcare Fund; Community Planning, The Rural White Paper.

REGISTER NOW
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When is it?

Meetings are held quarterly and co-ordinated by NIRWN. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday August 23rd at 10.15am-12.45pm in the Community Relations Council Building, Dungannon.

On the horizon..... NIRWN will be making a contribution to the following consultations in the coming months. Why not contact our Policy Officer to discuss the many ways in which you can contribute to consultation responses.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME REVIEW (DSD)

The Department for Social Development (DSD) is undertaking a review of its Regional Infrastructure Programme. This review aims, with other initiatives, to create a programme of change designed to enhance support for the voluntary and community sector through a challenging period of increasing demand and limited resources.

Closing date for responses is 30th September 2010

PROGRAMME FOR COHESION, SHARING AND INTEGRATION

The Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister is conducting a public consultation exercise on the CSI programme. This Programme sets out goals that OFMDFM believes are crucial to achieving a shared and better future for all. The whole of Government has a role to play and this Programme has been endorsed by the Executive.

Closing date for responses is 29th October, 2010

DRAFT EARLY YEARS (0-6) STRATEGY (DE) - The purpose of the new Strategy is to set out a vision and plan for ensuring better outcomes for children by improving the provision and quality of services to the youngest children, their parents and families for the next 5 years.

Closing date for this response is 30th November 2010

RURAL WHITE PAPER (DARD) - Scheduled for consultation in the Autumn

If you would like to be included in our circulation list regarding policy consultations, please contact our Policy Officer, Louise Coyle on 028 86769191 or email louise@nirwn.org.uk

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