

REACT

Reconciliation Education And Community Training



WELCOME to the first edition of REACT's quarterly newsletter, providing information on local community events and training.

REACT'S BACKGROUND

Issue 1: October 2009

NEWSLETTER

REACT (Reconciliation, Education and Community Training) as an organisation is now in its tenth year of operation throughout the city of Armagh. The organisation originally worked with ex-prisoners and their families but as time has moved on, so has the progression and direction of the organisation itself.

In 2002, EPIC Mid Ulster was rebranded to become REACT, and focused more on addressing community needs through reconciliation and community relations work, community based education, youth development and training. The core of the organisation is now aimed at developing whole communities with an emphasis on reaching out to those most marginalised whilst also encouraging diversity.

REACT, as an organisation, is continuing to rise to the challenges of dealing with contentious issues by encouraging those affected by the legacy of the conflict to move forward through community dialogue and participation in development programmes. This helps promote peace building and reconciliation not only within the City of Armagh but also further afield.



FROM LEFT: Charmain Jones, Co-ordinator; Marion Jamison, Community Relations Officer; Barbara Murray, Administration and Finance Officer; Anne McCusker, Community Development Officer; Nadine Rowe, Administrative Officer and Sarah McNeill Youth Development Officer.

VISION

"To have confident, cohesive communities participating fully in a peaceful and equal society"

MISSION

"Building capacity and empowering groups and individuals through support and development"

STAFF PROFILES

CHARMAIN JONES - CO-ORDINATOR

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My name is Charmain Jones and I am the Co-ordinator for REACT. I have been fortunate to work for REACT since September 2008 and have been busy not only working for REACT but also supporting the local L.A. (Lisanally and Alexander) Project in Armagh through the DSD "Areas at Risk" Programme.

I helped REACT develop a new strategic plan for the organisation from 2009—2012. The major focus of our work is building upon previous successes including the development

of the Armagh Bands Forum, our community relations work, our ever growing youth programmes and high participation levels of local people undertaking accredited and non accredited courses.

We aim over the next three years to continue to explore and develop our services to the local community, enhance participation of local residents in personal development programmes and promote and create opportunities for individuals and groups to take part in reconciliation work.

In terms of our future development, REACT are exploring new courses in the community i.e. O.C.N in Ulster Scots, continuing to search for more appropriate premises to serve the local community, undertake a number of exciting fundraising events i.e. Zipline over the River Lagan and make new links and partnerships with other organisations both locally and regionally. We will also be celebrating our 10th anniversary in March with the local community and other statutory and voluntary bodies.

Anne McCusker - Community Development Officer

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I started as the Community Development Officer in June 2009. The project aims to work throughout Armagh with community groups and individuals both in rural and urban areas to address a range of issues that may be affecting them. Help can be given in seeking funding, developing a community group, committee roles and

skills, health concerns, social issues and isolation. There are a range of programmes people can get involved in, including Cook It!, the walking club, 50+ trips and support or training programmes tailored to suit your needs. REACT recently got chosen for the Fresh project which is a programme designed to promote healthy lifestyles

and balanced diet. To find out more, just get in touch!



50+ Day Out to Newcastle, including dinner and dancing at Mary Catherine's Cottage.

Barbara Murray & Nadine Rowe - Administrative Officers

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Barbara joined REACT in March 2006 as an Administrative and Finance Officer and provides invaluable support to both Charmain and Marion. Nadine began working with the REACT team in June 2009 and provides administrative support primarily to Anne.

Sarah McNeill - Youth Development Officer

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Hi, I'm the Youth Development Officer with REACT and came into post in April 2009. Busy summer programmes included:

The Summer Splash, funded by Armagh Community Safety Partnership on the theme of addressing anti-social behaviour. Activities included a team building residential with the young men, the PSNI and Fire Service, exploring anti-sectarianism and anti-racism among young people. We



Summer Splash On the Zip Wires

visited both the PSNI and Fire stations in Armagh, carried out a community cleanup in the Folly and Orange-field estates.

The Summer Intervention was funded by the SELB Youth Service grant. Attendance was excellent and the young people enjoyed archery, zip wires, zorbing, film making and much more.



Living History at Ulster Scots Summer School

The Ulster Scots Summer School in partnership with Hartford CDA. 30 young children enjoyed a 5 day jam packed programme with an Ulster Scots theme, including music tuition, Scottish dancing, living history, arts and crafts and sport.

Autumn youth programmes include the drop-in, a Raising Aspirations Programme and a Provoking Thought programme.

Marion Jamison - Community Relations Officer

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The community relations programme responds to a wide variety of issues that affect relationships within and between communities. This can be anything from neighbour disputes, bonfires, flags to providing opportunities for people from different communities to come together and learn about each others history, culture and identity.

Our current programme provides support to the Armagh

Bands Forum which includes the organising of a training programme between September and March each year.

Our cross community project Armagh Together in conjunction with the Armagh Unemployed Group has seen over forty people participate in various



Armagh Bands Forum Committee

courses and outings over the last two years.

We also participate in a cross community forum facilitated by Armagh City and District Council and provide opportunities for the local community to meet with statutory agencies including the PSNI to discuss issues relevant to their community and voice their concerns.

SERVICES AVAILABLE AT REACT

Training, Funding Advice, Grant Tracker, Meeting Room Facility, Youth Drop-in, Equipment Hire.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 7th November 2009—Sainsbury's Bag pack—Volunteers Needed!
- 22nd October—Drugs & Alcohol OCN Level1
- 4th November - Raising Aspirations Programme begins (13 - 17 yr olds)
- 24th November—AGM, 7.00pm, Armagh Fire Station
- Every Wednesday—Youth Drop-in
- Every Thursday—Walking Club
- Thursday nights (7.00pm-8.30pm) Youth Club at Southern Regional College

For further information on any of the above please call

REACT on 028 37526869

MEMBER OF THE MONTH



What does your group do?

We are a very active and lively group of 50 + men and women and meet every Tuesday at Redrock Orange Hall from 3.00pm—5.00pm. A live band plays every week and we enjoy dancing, tea and craic. We go on a number of trips throughout the year, joining up with other 50+ groups, go for days out enjoying a meal and a dance. The Tuesday Club enjoy at least one cross border trip each

year. Only recently a bus load from the group enjoyed a very successful 3 day trip to Ballykelly, touring around the area, meeting up with a local group. To find out more contact Mervyn Dougan on 02837551552.



Day Trip to Newcastle & Mary Catherine's Cottage

If you are a local resident and are interested in any training opportunities or any of our programmes, simply contact the REACT office to give us your details and we will put your details on our mailing list.

CALLING LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS, WHY NOT JOIN REACT?

BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER

Priority booking for REACT events and training

Make an appointment for funding information and support

Receive all our publications and leaflets including our Newsletter.

Use of REACT's website and newsletter to promote your group.

CONTACT ANNE FOR MORE DETAILS

CONTACT DETAILS

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If you have any comments or feedback on our newsletter we would love to hear from you. To advertise your group or service please contact Nadine.

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