

£500,000 For Victims In GB

Victims initiatives in Great Britain are to receive funding of £500,000 over the next three years. The new Victims Minister, Des Browne, made the announcement on a visit to the Warrington Peace Centre in July.

From this funding £250,000 has been allocated to the Legacy Project, which is an initiative of the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust, based at the Warrington Peace Centre. The Legacy Project will aim to identify and meet the needs of victims of the Troubles living in Great Britain, co-operate and collaborate with other groups and organisations working in

victim support, develop a resource base for victims throughout the UK and Ireland, and will also forge new links between Great Britain and Northern Ireland with those who provide support to victims in both the voluntary and statutory sectors. Consideration is being given to other areas where the remaining £250,000 can be best put to use.

New Victims Minister



In June following the general election, Des Browne was appointed as Victims Minister taking over from Adam Ingram. He has been the MP for Kilmarnock and Loudon since 1997 and was previously Parliamentary Secretary to the late Donald Dewar and more recently to Adam Ingram. Other responsibilities include human rights and criminal justice.

www.nio.gov.uk

If you'd like to find out more about victims issues online, then why not visit the NIO website. Just click onto www.nio.gov.uk



where you'll find information on the Victims Liaison Unit, previous editions of the VLU newsletter, press releases and publications such as Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's Report "We will Remember Them".

Recent press releases include details on victims funding initiatives in GB, new aid for the physically injured and plans for the new Criminal Injuries Scheme.

If you browse further you'll also find details of other NIO responsibilities such as criminal justice, policing and compensation.

Contents:

Christmas Peace Celebrations Hit the Right Note	2
Clio Wants Your Views	2
Losing Our Head	3
Coroner Services Under Review	3
News from the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund	4

Christmas Peace Celebrations ...Hit the Right Note

The 'Pavorotti of Christian Music', Dr Paul Pitts from Florida, is set to hit the right note when he joins Belfast and Londonderry in Christmas celebrations of peace. The concerts, which will take place at the Waterfront Concert Hall and the new Millennium Theatre in Londonderry, will also feature the fabulous American pianist Huntley Brown and trumpeter Don Shire.

The Male Voice Choir and the Ladies Choir of the Police Service of Northern Ireland

and the band of the Garda Síochána will also be taking part in the Belfast celebration which takes place on Tuesday 18 December at 2.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

The celebration in the Millennium Theatre, on Monday 17 December at 7.30 p.m., will also feature the Youth Orchestra of the Western Education and Library Board.

This is the 5th year the Gala Celebration has taken place, organised by Rev Alan Mitchell from Sligo Presbyterian Church

who, as before, will be making a number of complimentary tickets available for victims of the Troubles. If you would like to receive a ticket please contact:

Mrs Doreen Mitchell
The Old Coach House
College Road
Sligo
Tel: 00353 71 62337
Fax: 00353 71 71656
e-mail: alansoffice@eircom.net

Clio Wants Your Views

Do you have views on the Core Funding Scheme for Victims/Survivors Programme? If so, CLIO Evaluation Consortium would like to hear from you! The group is carrying out the independent evaluation of the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust (NIVT) administered scheme and have written the following letter. Copies of the leaflets mentioned in their letter are enclosed.

Dear Friend

As the research group responsible for producing an evaluation of the NIVT administered Core Funding for Victims/Survivors Programme, we are contacting you to introduce ourselves and invite your participation in the evaluation of this scheme.

You will find enclosed a leaflet explaining who we are, and outlining the objectives, principles and process of the evaluation. As you will see from the leaflet, there are two main strands to the evaluation; firstly, assessing the effectiveness of the projects funded and the extent to which they have contributed to the Core Funding programme's overall goals, and secondly measuring

the effectiveness of the NIVT's management of the Core Funding programme.

We have already been in contact with groups that have been funded through this programme, but are hoping to also hear from victims/survivors groups or individual victims/survivors who have not been impacted by this funding programme.

We are particularly interested in hearing from victims/survivors groups who did not apply for a grant as to the reasons for this. For your information we have also enclosed a copy of the original leaflet that spells out the objectives and application criteria of the funding programme.

Any comments pertinent to this particular funding programme that you might wish to submit in writing would be very welcome, and should be sent to us at the address below. Please ensure these reach us as soon as possible. All written submissions will be confidential to the research team; please enclose contact details if you would not mind us contacting you for clarification.

Yours faithfully

Alex Tennant
Coordinator, Clio Evaluation Consortium
28 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7FE

Coroner Services Under Review

Arrangements for death certification, inquests, post mortem examinations, and the full range of services provided by Coroners including treasure trove are under review in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The review is expected to take 18 months and the group carrying out the review would welcome the views of individuals or groups who have experience of the Coroners Office services.

If you would like to submit your views, contact

Mike Gallagher

The Review of Coroner Services

100 Pall Mall

St James's

London

SW1Y 5HP

Tel 020 7664 8898

The terms of reference for the Review are as follows:

- To consider the most effective arrangements for identifying the deceased and for ascertaining and certifying the medical cause of death for public health and public record purposes, having regard to proposals for a system of medical examiners.
- To consider the extent to which the public interest may require deaths to be subject to further independent investigation, having regard to existing criminal and other statutory and non-statutory investigative procedures.
- To consider the qualifications and experience required, and the necessary supporting organisations and structures, for those appointed to undertake the duties for ascertaining, certifying and investigating death.
- To consider arrangements for the provision of post mortem services for the investigation of deaths.
- To consider the consequences of any changes arising from the above for the registration service and the role of the coroners under the Treasure Trove Act 1996, and to consider where Departmental responsibilities for the arrangements should be located, having regard both to coherence for bereavement services and effective accountability.

Please Let US Know....

This is the sixth issue of the Victims Liaison Unit newsletter which is forwarded to all those who have been in contact with the Victims Liaison Unit or who have expressed an interest in this subject.

We hope you find the newsletter useful. If not, and you do not wish to receive any further correspondence from us, please

let us know. If, on the other hand, you know someone who is not on the mailing list, but would like to be, we would be happy to hear from them.

Finally, if you would like more copies of future newsletters please let us know.

Contact details are at the top of the front page.

Losing Our Head!

Billy Stevenson, who was head of the Victims Liaison Unit moved to a new post within the Civil Service in September.

Billy has seen the Unit through some challenging and rewarding times since its formation in June 1998 and we wish him well for the future.

Billy's replacement from the 5th of November is Sarah Todd. Sarah tells us she is delighted to be in post and looks forward to meeting with many of the groups over the coming months.

The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund

Peace – Reconciliation – Support

What is the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund?

The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund is an independent charity that was established following the publication of Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's report "We Will Remember Them". The Fund's aim is to promote peace and reconciliation by providing practical support and recognition to individuals and families who have suffered as a result of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland.

What help is available from the Fund?

The Fund has to date introduced six schemes :

1. The Education and Training Scheme

is the Fund's most recent scheme and was launched during the Summer. It is designed for children and adults whose education or career has been affected by the Troubles and who now want to improve their prospects through education or training. The scheme is open to individuals who as a result of the Troubles have either:

- lost a grandparent, parent, partner, child, brother or sister;
- have themselves been injured;
- have become the primary carer for an immediate family member who has been injured.

2. The Chronic Pain Management Scheme

provides grant assistance to enable individuals who have suffered physical

injuries resulting in persistent chronic physical pain to access private consultations and treatment with a specialist in chronic pain management.

3. The Respite Break Care Scheme

is for individuals for whom it has not been possible to take a break away from home and who as a result of the 'Troubles' have either:

- lost a child;
- lost a partner;
- have themselves been physically injured in an incident;
- have become the Primary Carer for an immediate family member who has been physically injured.

4. The Amputee Assessment Scheme

is designed to give amputees the opportunity to be assessed to determine if they might positively benefit from an alternative prosthesis to the one that they are currently using.

5. The Wheelchair Assessment Scheme

is designed to give wheelchair users the opportunity to be assessed to determine if they might positively benefit from an alternative wheelchair to the one that they are currently using.

6. The Small Grants Scheme

provides individuals, who are currently experiencing financial difficulties, with small grants up to £500 to assist with the purchase of essential household items and services, if you have either:

- lost a parent, partner or child;
- have yourself been injured;
- are the primary carer for an immediate family member who has been injured;
- lost a brother or sister and were financially dependent on them at the time of the incident, or if they were with their brother or sister at the time of the incident.

Further information and application forms on any of the Memorial Fund's schemes can be obtained by contacting the Memorial Fund Grants Administration Office on **028 9024 5949**.

On the move

Many of you will be aware that the Memorial Fund's Grants Office had moved from Mount Charles to temporary accommodation. From the 19th November the new permanent address will be;

*The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund
Grants Administration Office,
1st Floor, Albany House,
73-75 Great Victoria Street,
Belfast BT2 7AF*

Telephone numbers are:

(028) 9024 5949 and (028) 9024 5965

Please note that all application forms and other correspondence in relation to grant applications, should be forwarded to the new address from 19th November 2001.