

West Belfast LPG Meeting
Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 10am
Forthspring Inter Community Group
373-375 Springfield Road, Belfast, BT12 7DG

Name	Organisation	Present	Apology
Charlene Mitchell	LPG Coordinator, BHSCT	✓	
Deirdre Walsh	West Belfast LPG Chair	✓	
Charlene Harris	Forthspring Inter Community Group	✓	
Majd Almasalkhi	King's Trust	✓	
Christine Doyle	Early Years, Toybox Project	✓	
Kiely Lawlor	Autism NI	✓	
Dympna Johnston	Greater Shankill Partnership	✓	
Kathy Jan	Greater Shankill FSH	✓	
Tinya Parkes	Libraries NI	✓	
Nicola Masterson	Outer West FSH	✓	
Lucy Baxter	Cedar Foundation	✓	
Emma Lewis	Whiterock Children and Family Centre	✓	
Carol Bailie	Upper Springfield Whiterock FSH	✓	
Aisling Reynolds	Action for Children	✓	
Áine McCahey	MDT West Belfast	✓	
Cecelia Richardson	Social Work Student	✓	
Bernadette Donaghy	Depaul Ireland	✓	
Deborah Burnett	Greater Falls FSH	✓	
Michael Doherty	Glen Parent and Youth Group	✓	
Charlotte Sloan	Upper Springfield Development Trust	✓	
Carol Scullion	Action Mental Health		✓
Chloe McCann	Early Years, Toybox Project		✓
Fiona Meenan	BHSCT		✓
Joe McGovern	Extern		✓
Kerri McCarry	Health Improvement Team, BHSCT		✓
Megan McGlinchy	Kids Together		✓
Michelle Weir	Papyrus		✓
Nial Enright	USDT		✓
Phil Lindsay	Barnardo's		✓
Penny Ambrose	Beechmount Sure Start		✓
Rachel Balchin	Action Mental Health		✓
Vicky Chambers	Health Visiting, BHSCT		✓
Diane McMullin	Extern		✓
Marie-Therese Cassin	Cedar Foundation		✓
In Attendance			
Jennifer Heverin	LPG Administration, BHSCT	✓	

<u>Action</u> <u>by:</u>	
	1. Welcome and Introduction Chair, Deidre Walsh opened the meeting by welcoming those present and facilitating a round of introductions.
	2. Previous Minutes The minutes of 21st May were read through and agreed as an accurate representation of the meeting. No amendments required.
	3. Presentation – Action for Children, Aisling Reynolds The presentation was deferred to the next meeting in November.

4. FSH Updates

FSH Area:	Upper Springfield Whiterock FSH
Timeframe:	May to September 25
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	May 28 June 36 July 12 August 13 September 16 Total = 105
Number of services Request to date	2,753
Source of Service Requests:	Self Community Health visitor MDT Sure Start School CAMHS EISS
Key Gaps identified: Limited services for children with complex needs, parents unable to pay for placements. Childcare places, play therapy and ASD family support / activities.	
Key Successes identified: BCC Fund vouchers USW family support hub supported 97 families form dec to June with food and utility support. Hub families supported with additional white goods through CIN fund, this is ongoing. signed up 5 new associate members from May to sept. Flourish, SVP, CAP, SENSE NI, USDT community family link worker.	
AOB for Sharing: WCC appointed a new family support manager. Who has organised training works shops which hub and community members have been invited to attend. (Flourish, SOAL And CAP).	

hub families took part in the food fair at Conway mill in august, as well as various workshops for parent and child participation over the summer months.

Anchor point pilot crises scheme running in WCC a few hub families have availed of the service.

Hub families Attending ESOL Classes, a new conversational English session will be starting on 16th sept on a Tuesday afternoon.

Both local and BME families have signed up and started sewing classes and community cookery classes in WCC.

FSH Area:	Greater Falls	
Timeframe:	June, July, Aug 2025	
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	June - 25 July - 31 Aug - 19	
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	162	
Source of Service Requests:	School Community CAMHS Self GP MDT	Health Visitor Voluntary Organisation EWO EHWBT Gateway
Key Gaps identified: Limited supports for disability of varying levels, limited child therapy supports. Emotional regulation support specifically for children awaiting assessment for additional need. Lengthy waiting lists for additional needs. Waiting lists increasing e.g. family support, adult counselling, parent programmes etc.		
Key Successes identified: Use of vouchers for families in need		
AOB for Sharing:		

	FSH Area:	Greater Shankill	
	Timeframe:	Apr to Aug 2025	
	Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	Qtr 1 Apr - 42 May - 7 June -12	Qtr 2 Jul - 5 Aug - 5
	Number of Service Requests Received to date: 25-26	71	
	Source of Service Requests:	Self, Health Visitor, SW Assistant - GP Surgery Self via Upper North FS Hub, Surestart Primary School, Children's Disability Team, EWO ISCYP, Nursery School, Life NI, Autism NI Gateway, NOW Group, CAMHS, CAAS, Ark Housing, EISS	
	Key Gaps identified:		
	Key Successes identified: - Families supported with BCC Hardship Vouchers - Families matched with a Family Support Service		
AOB for Sharing:			

	FSH Area:	Outer West Belfast
	Timeframe:	July - September
	Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	July – 18 August – 23 September – 20 (@12/09/2025)
	Number of Service Requests Received to date:	YTD – 145 (from April 2025)
	Source of Service Requests:	Self MDT Community School Health Visitor GP CAMHS EWO Gateway
	Key Gaps identified: Summer schemes - (for referrals received June / July – all booked up) Disability Supports – ongoing.	
	Key Successes identified: Continuing to support families – use of Vasco Device has been successful, (easy to use with full translation of documents) Families requesting uniform support and we were able to provide support with vouchers still remaining.	
	AOB for Sharing: VASCO translator device is available for use if members are requiring support / help overcoming communication barriers for families. Vouchers still available for families struggling financially.	

5. Members Updates

Aisling Reynolds – Action for Children

Action for Children received money from Dragon's Den to make a short film to help teachers identify young carers and to know what support systems to put in place. The next step is to get the videos into schools.

Áine McCahey – MDT West Belfast

The team have been seeing a lot of school avoidance, mainly 14-15 year old boys. A short discussion then took place around the problem of school uniforms on children with sensory issues avoiding school as they feel uncomfortable in the uniform. Some schools are making reasonable adjustments for children to wear their PE kit, however not all schools will permit this.

Michael Doherty – Glen Parent and Youth Group

Michael's group have spent the last 18 months devising a 5-Year Plan for their area called 'Making Life Better in Lenadoon'. This was a thorough exploration of the area which involved door-to-door interviews with residents and meetings with local organisations and schools to find out at grass roots level the needs of the community. The main themes emerging were addiction, mental health and lack of green spaces. There is also a concern around diminishing community services.

Bernie Doherty – DePaul Ireland

DePaul are currently running a Women's Community Transition Programme for women coming out of prison.

DePaul have also found many people struggling with their heating and electricity bills and have concerns around this especially as we are not yet in winter.

Majd Almasalkhi – King's Trust

The 'Get Started' Programme is theme focused, aimed at 16-30 year olds. An expert on a specific and chosen topic will be brought in for one week to work with the group then they will look at how to explore this topic further.

King's Trust can also run programmes outside of their own centre, if anyone has a group of around 10 young people they can get in touch to see if any courses or programmes can be delivered.

Christine Doyle – Toybox Project, Early Years

Toybox work with Traveller families and offer play sessions for families with children under the age of 4. Christine has been tasked with feeding back anything raised through LPG which will impact on the families that she works with. LPG have also asked that Christine share any information on issues impacting on Traveller families in the area.

Kiely Lawlor – Autism NI

Autism NI run local parent and carer support groups for people to come together and swap stories and information. The Autism NI Helpline is also a fantastic resource. It is open for anyone as a first port of call for any help or information needed. There are also a number of courses being offered through Autism NI.

	Dympna Johnston – Greater Shankill Partnership Dympna introduced the new Greater Shankill Hub Coordinator Kathy Jan and she was welcomed to the group. GSP have been involved in the ‘Live Better’ programme which is looking at health inequalities between different areas. Charlotte Sloan – USDT The Kinship Community Link Worker post has been extended, and it is hoped that the role will extend into further areas of Belfast. Tinya Parkes – Libraries NI Tinya is based in Whiterock Library. They run lots of activities such as Rhythm and Rhyme and Storytime. Libraries NI are trying to specifically target support for BAME families and homeless people. They are keen to work with other community groups in the area and are open to setting up new groups or programmes as required. Nicola Masterson – CRJI CRJI counselling services and mediation services are still ongoing. Deborah Burnett – Blackie River Blackie River Centre are running a NCFE CACHE Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Children’s Care Learning and Development. It is an unfunded course over 10 weeks and delivered online. If interested, please contact Penny Ambrose on 02890 319634. Money And Pensions Support (MAPS) offer a Money Matters course via the FSH. It is a basic advice course giving staff the confidence to speak about money. Charlene Mitchell – LPG Coordinator <i>update on behalf of the Queens University Pathway programme.</i> The Pathway Opportunity Programme is a pre access programme delivered as a partnership between: Queens University Widening Participation Unit, Queens Academic Schools and Queens Admissions department. There are 300 places on the programme for young people across NI, and an additional 12 places are ring fenced for young people attending schools in NB constituency with a postcode of BT15 who choose the Medicine Pathway on the programme (funded through the Mater Hospital Young Philanthropists). These young people will receive additional benefits including A Level tutoring and additional support, as well as a short placement at the Mater hospital on top of all the other Pathway Programme benefits. More information about this programme will be circulated when available.
	6. LPG Updates Newsletter The LPG fortnightly newsletter will be sent via an online link from now on. This will allow us to monitor distribution and download activity.

	Action Plan The first draft of the Action Plan is complete and will be circulated shortly for comment. We will be adding the Action Plan to the agenda for discussion at our next West Belfast LPG meeting in November. RAISE The RAISE area plans have now been published online and there are currently calls for funding applications. Applications close on 30th September. Information has been circulated through LPG for this.
	7. A.O.B No other business was discussed and the meeting closed with Charlene and Deirdre thanking all those in attendance.

2025/26 Dates for West Belfast LPG Ordinary Meetings

DATES (Wednesday)	TIME	VENUES
22 nd January	10am	Whiterock Children's Centre
5 th March	10am	Forthspring Inter-Community Group
21 st May – Planning Meeting	10am	Forthspring Inter-Community Group
16 th July	10am	Cancelled
17 th September	10am	Forthspring Inter-Community Group
19 th November	10am	Spectrum Centre
21 st January	10am	TBA
18 th March	10am	TBA