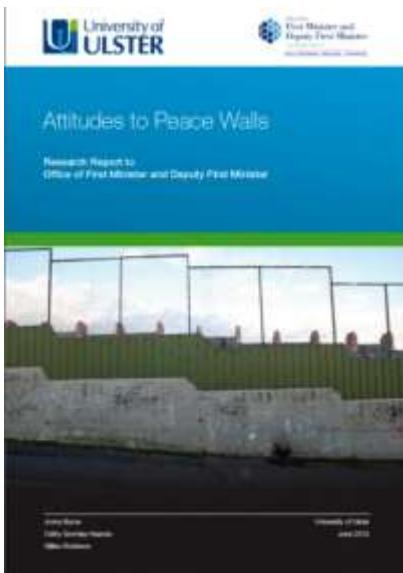


# Public Attitudes to Peace Walls



Dr. Jonny Byrne  
Dr. Cathy Gormley Heenan  
Professor Gillian Robinson  
University of Ulster  
November 2012

# Research Process

- Research commenced March 2012
- Fieldwork March-April 2012
- Preliminary Analysis May-June 2012
- Draft report to OFMDFM June 2012
- Report published September 2012
- Community Workshop Sept 2012
- Statutory Workshop October 2012
- Public Seminar November 2012
- Policy Brief December 2012

# Terminology

- For the purposes of this report we use the term Peace Walls as this is the term used in every day conversation. However in the actual surveys and cover letters we use the term Peace Line to ensure that respondents are clear what we are asking about and we define what we mean as follows
- ***'We are using the term Peace Line to cover all kinds of interface barriers that keep communities apart including walls, gates and security barriers'.***

# Methods

- Two postal surveys – general population; peace walls residents
- Incentive of £10 voucher or donation to charity.

Two separate but similar questionnaires:

- Proximity to a Peace Line and opinions on the area as a place to live;
- Perceptions of why Peace Lines were established;
- Perceptions of the impact of Peace Lines;
- Awareness of policy initiatives;
- Roles and Responsibilities in relation to Peace Lines;
- Views on methods of transforming and/or removing Peace Lines.

# Sampling: Peace Lines location

Location	Sub Area
North Belfast	Hazelwood Whitewell Ligoneill Ardoyne Glenbrynn Old Park Cliftonville Tigers Bay New Lodge
West Belfast	Upper Springfield Falls Shankill Suffolk Lenadoon
East Belfast	Short Strand Inner East
Derry~Londonderry	Fountain Bishop Street Tullyalley Currynerin Tope of the Hill Irish Street

# Response Rate

Location	Response (n) %
North Belfast	(276) 26%
West Belfast	(305) 26%
East Belfast	(147) 30%
Derry~Londonderry	(110) 23%
Peace Lines areas TOTAL	(840) 26%
Rest of Northern Ireland	(611) 32%

# What do the results tell us?

- Knowledge and understanding of peace walls
- Roles and responsibilities
- Awareness of policies and initiatives
- Future of peace walls
- Condition required for transformation
- Imagining the future

# Central findings

- The **impact of peace walls** on local residents:
  - 76% make people feel safer
  - 69% still necessary because of potential for violence
  - 67% sends out bad image of Northern Ireland
  - 53% see them as a tourist attraction
- The **impact of peace walls** on general population:
  - 81% send out bad image of Northern Ireland
  - 38% see them as a tourist attraction

# Responsibilities / Knowledge

- 31% community overall responsibility
- 4% DoJ are responsible
- 66% hardly anything/nothing at all = initiatives
- 29% local politicians keep people informed
- 28% local community reps keep people informed
- 63% interested/very interested in finding out more

# Removing Peace Walls

- 14% like walls to come down now
- 44% like them to come down in the future
  - 58% - positive expression
- 22% like things the way they are now
- 9% make subtle changes to the peace walls

# Imagine

- 38% envisage a time when there are no walls
- 45% cannot imagine a time with no walls

If removed...

- 37% violence during particular events/dates
- 58% fairly/very worried about policing the space

# Preparation (Table 18)

- **Community safety and security**
  - 56% CCTV (P-65% C-52%)
  - 46% more policing (P-57% C-42%)
- **Engagement**
  - 41% local community leaders working together (C-45% P-32%)
  - 38% opportunities bring people together (C-40% P-30%)
  - 34% local politicians working together (C-35% P-32%)

# The wider impact

- 51% - 67% local residents felt that conditions would not improve or worsen (Table 19)
- 51% general population felt issues surrounding peace walls were important for everyone in society
- 78% (GP) believe that segregation of communities is common across NI even where there are no peace walls
- 64% (GP) indicate that peace walls should be a big priority for government

# Policy Implications

- Consultation – practically what does that look like?
- Appetite for information
- Creating the conditions = Policing, Security and Engagement, Imagination
- Underlying needs and concerns
  - Protecting culture
  - Securing identity
  - Instilling a sense of community

# What have people said?

- Transforming research into policy
- Perception versus Reality = violence
- Contradictory results are the reality
- Change the conversation (walls context of security)
- PSNI – do they have the resources to do the job
- Over exposure and under achievement
- Black, white and shades of gray
- Multitude of interventions, targets, deadlines

# Summary

- Degree of positivity around the subject area
- No longer considered a taboo area
- The public want to know
- How is information being disseminated?
- Underpinning cultural and social community concerns
- Measure, Quantify, Imagine success