

CINNAMON ADVISORS

Here at Cinnamon Network everything we do is built on relationships, which is why our advisors are so important.

Spread across the country, this amazing group of diverse people work with churches and help them to develop really effective, sustainable, long-term social action projects that address key needs within the community. Cinnamon Advisors really help to connect churches with the full range of support and opportunities available to them.

Our Cinnamon Advisors have plenty of first-hand experience of planning and delivering effective social action projects. In addition, our advisors know how to help churches, funders and civic agencies work together to impact their communities. It goes without saying that they are passionate about empowering local churches to transform communities.



Cinnamon team meeting with leaders in Northern Ireland

Cinnamon Advisors help churches to:

- navigate their journey of community transformation by pulling up a chair alongside them;
- map the needs and assets in their community and identify an appropriate project, including adapting the project to their local context;
- identify resources and volunteers within their church;
- develop strong partnerships with other local agencies and churches.



Cinnamon Advisor Victoria Lawrence (fourth from right) speaking at a Churches Together Network.

CASE STUDY BRINGING CINNAMON TO THE SHANKHILL ROAD

The Shankhill Road in Belfast has become synonymous with the Northern Ireland Conflict that raged for more than 30 years. Roughly one third of all murders committed during the period happened within one square mile of the road. Whilst the politics in the area may have stabilised, the Shankhill Road continues to be one of the most deprived areas in Belfast.

Not knowing how to address the multitude of problems faced by the people and with continued decline in church attendance in the area, the Diocesan Development Officer for the Shankhill Road approached Cinnamon Network.

Cinnamon's starting point was to bring together the various churches on the Shankhill Road, to discuss their greatest needs and challenges. The meetings were facilitated by Cinnamon's Advisor in Northern Ireland, Tommy Stewart. With Tommy's support, the church leaders continued to meet to discuss working together to develop a shared mission and build greater cohesion. This unity has already enabled churches not only to work more closely with each other, but also to work more closely with other voluntary and statutory agencies in Belfast to access funding and support.

A number of Cinnamon Recognised Projects have been started by the churches in the area with the help of Cinnamon Micro-Grants and other

investment. In turn, the success of these individual projects has led to an agreement by all the churches to develop a Shankhill Missional Centre, to act as a focal point for the community.

The centre is currently in the planning stages and is being supported by both Cinnamon and the Church Army. Once built, it will be developed as a model of good practice for other urban areas in the Diocese.

Whilst the partnership is in its infancy, volunteering within the churches has already increased and there is a tangible sense that, for the first time in years, churches are being seen as alive, active and relevant to society. With the development of the Shankhill Missional Centre, it is hoped that the churches can continue to build positive relationships to transform the community for the better.

"As a Diocese we have partnered with two Cinnamon Recognised Projects (TLG & Baby Basics). The key factor in developing these partnerships was the involvement of the Cinnamon Advisor, Tommy Stewart. His local knowledge, guidance and support has been invaluable at every stage of both projects. This has enabled us to gain insight and to build relationships with everyone involved. Tommy is always available and willing to help. Without his professionalism it would not have been possible to engage with Cinnamon." Trevor Douglas, Development Officer, Diocese of Connor.



Cinnamon team members with representatives from the Diocese of Connor, who work on the Shankhill Road.