

**Press Release 26 October 2010**

**Event: Inner North Belfast Neighbourhood Renewal Community Health Audit launches at Bridge of Hope offices, 164 Duncairn Gardens.**

A health report that took nearly a year to debate, research and compile has recommended a raft of wide ranging initiatives designed to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Inner North Belfast.

The Inner North Belfast Neighbourhood Renewal Community Health Audit was unveiled to a large crowd of health practitioners last Autumn (26/10/10) in the offices of Bridge of Hope, a respected community based organisation that took part in the research and which works to improve the physical and emotional wellbeing of individuals affected by the conflict.

The report was headed up by a committee of local community health practitioners who worked alongside researcher Jane Turnbull of Education and Development. This collaborative approach was praised by Chief Executive of the Public Health Agency Dr Eddie Rooney who helped to launch the report.

There are 12,000 people living in the Inner North Belfast area which takes in the Waterworks, New Lodge and Duncairn wards. Nearly a quarter (23.9%) are under 16 years of age while nearly one fifth are aged over 60 (21.3%). The area statistically has high levels of people in receipt of benefits with nearly 2,500 on disability living allowance.

The constituency of North Belfast is one of the worst areas you can live in if you want a long and healthy life. According to the latest NINIS figures, life expectancy in North Belfast is nearly the lowest out of anywhere in Northern Ireland; and it has the highest proportion of people (59 per cent) living in the most deprived Super Output Areas in NI.

In Inner North Belfast high levels of deprivation and ill health have been well documented and the report suggests these issues have been aggravated by layers of disadvantage, poverty and conflict.

The Inner North Belfast Health Audit report and its recommendations essentially call for more work to be done to address these health inequalities.