2028–2038
PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PLAN

From Managing Division to Completing the Peace Process in Northern Ireland

A government-wide and society-wide framework for the final stage of peacebuilding, reconciliation and democratic transformation.

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FOREWORD

The 2028–2038 Peace and Reconciliation Plan provides a framework for moving Northern Ireland from managing division to completing the peace process. It treats peace and reconciliation as core government business while recognising that lasting progress requires the participation of the whole society.

2028 should be a point of delivery, not merely commemoration. The Plan must reflect the Northern Ireland of today: a society shaped by the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, by the experience of conflict and peacebuilding, and by increasingly diverse communities, identities, cultures and histories.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The challenge

Northern Ireland has moved from conflict to peace, but peace is not the same as reconciliation. Division, segregation, inequality, paramilitary coercion, racism, sectarianism and unresolved issues from the past continue to shape people's lives.

The opportunity

Northern Ireland in 2028 will be significantly different from Northern Ireland in 1998. The Plan must reflect a more diverse and multicultural society, including new communities, identities, cultures, languages and experiences.

The commitment

The 2028–2038 Plan will make peace and reconciliation core government business, supported by:

Clear departmental responsibilities.
Dedicated resources.
Timetables and measurable outcomes.
Annual public reporting.
Independent oversight.
Meaningful participation by communities and civil society.

The intended result

By 2038, Northern Ireland should demonstrate:

Substantially reduced segregation.
An end to paramilitary coercive control.
Greater equality and inclusion.
Expanded integrated and shared education.
More inclusive housing and public spaces.
Stronger civic participation.

Trusted institutions.
Rights-based approaches to the past.
A generation growing up with substantially less inherited division.

The Delivery Test

who → what → when → how much → measured how → reported when

Every major commitment should answer:

Who is responsible?
What will be delivered?
By when?
What resources are required?
How will progress and outcomes be measured?
When and to whom will results be reported?

The Government and Community Commitments

Government commitment

Every Department will translate the Plan into actions, budgets, timetables, measurable outcomes and annual reporting.

Community commitment

Government cannot deliver reconciliation alone. Political parties, local government, civil society, communities, education, business, trade unions and citizens all have responsibilities. Government's role is to provide the leadership, resources, structures, coordination and accountability through which those responsibilities can be fulfilled.

PART I: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose and Status of the Plan

The Plan covers the period 2028–2038 and provides a government-wide and society-wide framework for peacebuilding, reconciliation and democratic transformation. It should be read alongside the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, subsequent agreements, existing government strategies and relevant funding programmes.

The Plan should state clearly whether it is adopted as an Executive strategy, a statutory framework, a basis for consultation or a combination of these. Its status should determine the responsibilities, reporting requirements and review arrangements that apply to Departments and delivery partners.

What the Plan is.
The period it covers: 2028–2038.
How it relates to existing agreements, strategies and funding programmes.

How it will be monitored, reviewed and amended.
How responsibilities will be assigned across government and society.

2. Vision and Definition of Reconciliation

2.1 The vision

A peaceful, equal, inclusive and reconciled Northern Ireland in which division, discrimination, violence and coercion no longer determine people's lives or opportunities.

2.2 What reconciliation means

Relationships - building trust, connection and cooperation.
Structures - reforming institutions and systems that sustain division.
Attitudes - reducing prejudice and fostering mutual respect.
Outcomes - producing measurable improvements in people's lives.

2.3 The outcomes of reconciliation

Equality and human rights.
Dignity, identity and mutual recognition.
Participation and belonging.
Honest engagement with the past.
The removal of coercion, violence and structural division.

3. Principles and Foundations

3.1 The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement

Constitutional and political foundations

Consent.
Democratic institutions.
North/South and East/West relationships.
Partnership and participation.

Rights, equality and identity

Human rights and equality.
Mutual respect.
Identity rights.
Language and cultural rights.

Peacebuilding and accountability

Legacy and dealing with the past.
Ending paramilitarism.
Good relations and shared future duties.
Policing and justice reform.

3.2 Constitutional neutrality

This Plan does not seek to determine Northern Ireland's constitutional future. It supports the principle of consent and seeks to ensure that whatever constitutional future is determined democratically, it is approached through peaceful, inclusive and respectful means, with equality and human rights protected for everyone.

3.3 Operational principles

Equality and human rights.
Valuing diversity.
Meaningful interaction and active citizenship.
Participation and co-production.

3.4 Principles of transformation

Remember - understand history and the human cost.
Confront - face divisions, inequalities, racism, sectarianism, paramilitarism and the unresolved past.
Imagine - create a shared vision for the inclusive society we want.
Act - fund it, legislate for it, deliver it, measure it and hold government accountable.

Part II: The Eight Transformations

4. The Eight Transformations

Transformation 1: End Paramilitary Coercion and Control

Measure the cost of division
End paramilitarism and coercive control
Policing, justice and community safety

Transformation 2: Remove Physical and Psychological Barriers

Transform interfaces and contested spaces
Build shared and safe public spaces

Transformation 3: End the Reproduction of Segregation

End segregation in education
Build an inclusive housing system
Tackle poverty and inequality as peace issues

Transformation 4: Build an Inclusive and Anti-Racist Society

Build an inclusive society
End racism, sectarianism and hate
Welcome new communities

Transformation 5: Put Women, Children and Young People at the Centre

Women and girls
Children and young people

Transformation 6: Address the Past, History, Identity and Culture

Dealing with the past
A shared understanding of history
Culture, identity and belonging

Transformation 7: Strengthen Democracy, Participation and Public Trust

Democracy and civic participation
Strengthen the role of the Assembly
Rebuild public trust in institutions

Transformation 8: Make Peace and Reconciliation Permanent Government Business

One government-wide plan
Central Peace and Reconciliation Delivery Unit
Independent oversight mechanism
Cross-border and British-Irish cooperation
Peace as an economic strategy
Permanent Peace and Reconciliation Fund

Transformation 1: End Paramilitary Coercion and Control

4.1 Measure the cost of division

Government should establish a Cost of Division Index covering the financial, economic and human costs of segregation, paramilitarism, duplication of services, hate crime, political instability and lost economic opportunity. The Index should be published annually and used to guide investment and policy decisions.

4.2 End paramilitarism and coercive control

Prevent recruitment, especially of children and young people.
Remove intimidation and control over communities.
Dismantle criminality and organised crime.
End threats and territorial influence.
Tackle extortion and illegal profit.
Prevent damaging collaboration with extremist networks.
Remove paramilitary leverage over political processes.

4.3 Policing, justice and community safety

Representative and community policing.
Consistent, victim-centred hate-crime response.

Disruption of paramilitary activity.
Accessible, trauma-informed victim support.
Affordable and timely access to justice.
Sustained engagement to strengthen community confidence.

Transformation 2: Remove Physical and Psychological Barriers

4.4 Transform interfaces and contested spaces

For every remaining significant interface barrier or contested space, there should be an agreed plan developed with communities, a responsible body, a timetable, funding for participation and investment in safe, inclusive alternatives.

4.5 Build shared and safe public spaces

Shared facilities.
Greenways and active travel.
Community transport.
Inclusive cultural and civic venues.
Interface connectivity.

Transformation 3: End the Reproduction of Segregation

4.6 End segregation in education

Integrated education.
Shared education.
Cross-community learning.
Integrated teacher training.
Common civic and human-rights education.
Anti-racism and peace education.
Youth work and informal education.

4.7 Build an inclusive housing system

Shared housing.
Inclusive communities.
Regeneration.
Safe housing choice.
Anti-intimidation measures.

4.8 Tackle poverty and inequality as peace issues

Child poverty.
Unemployment and low pay.
Poor housing.
Health inequalities.
Educational disadvantage.

Rural deprivation.
Regeneration.

Transformation 4: Build an Inclusive and Anti-Racist Society

4.9 Build an inclusive society

Inclusive neighbourhoods.
Inclusive public spaces.
Inclusive services.
Inclusive cultural spaces.
Inclusive workplaces.
Inclusive community infrastructure.

4.10 End racism, sectarianism and hate

Race hate.
Sectarian hate.
Xenophobia.
Religious hatred.
Online hate.
Hate crime.
Institutional discrimination.

4.11 Welcome new communities

Integration.
Equal access to services.
Anti-racism delivery.
Community participation.
Representation.
Protection from hate crime.
Inclusive cultural and civic life.

Transformation 5: Put Women, Children and Young People at the Centre

4.12 Women and girls

Women’s contribution to peace.
Gendered experiences of conflict.
Violence against women and girls.
Political participation and leadership.
Economic equality.

4.13 Children and young people

Youth participation.
Integrated and shared education.

Youth leadership.
Anti-paramilitary programmes.
Civic education.
Digital resilience.
Intergenerational dialogue.

Transformation 6: Address the Past, History, Identity and Culture

4.14 Dealing with the past

Recognition and support.
Truth and accountability.
Justice and independence.
Trauma-informed services.
Respectful and truthful memorialisation.
Preservation of historical evidence.
Victim and survivor participation.
Recognition of harm across all communities.

This Plan should operate alongside and complement the Victims and Survivors Strategy 2024–2034, with responsibilities clearly aligned to avoid duplication and ensure that the rights and needs of victims and survivors are embedded across policy, delivery, monitoring and review.

4.15 A shared understanding of history

Schools.
Museums, archives and public history.
Oral history.
Arts and culture.
Intergenerational dialogue.
Inclusion of experiences historically absent from traditional accounts.

4.16 Culture, identity and belonging

British, Irish and Ulster identities.
Minority identities.
Languages.
Traditions.
Cultural expression.

Transformation 7: Strengthen Democracy, Participation and Public Trust

4.17 Democracy and civic participation

Civic Forum.
Citizens' Assemblies.

Citizens' Peace Assembly.
Community participation structures.
Youth participation.
Representation of marginalised communities.
Accessible participation for disabled people and people facing intersecting disadvantage.

4.18 Strengthen the role of the Assembly

Scrutiny of budgets and legislation.
Departmental plans.
Equality and race equality.
Housing.
Education.
Policing.
Paramilitarism.
Victims and survivors.
Poverty.

The Assembly should hold an annual debate on progress against the Plan. Ministers should account to the relevant Assembly Committee for departmental performance, including missed targets.

4.19 Rebuild public trust in institutions

Equality.
Transparency.
Accountability.
Representation.
Accessibility.
Responsive public services.
Community participation.

Transformation 8: Make Peace and Reconciliation Permanent Government Business

4.20 One government-wide plan

Government should implement one joined-up framework to replace fragmented initiatives. Existing strategies and programmes should operate as complementary components of the wider Peace and Reconciliation Plan, with clear departmental responsibilities, shared outcomes, common monitoring and coordinated reporting.

4.21 Central Peace and Reconciliation Delivery Unit

Strategy and coordination.
Funding coordination.
Data and evidence management.
Monitoring and public reporting.

Cross-departmental accountability.

4.22 Independent oversight mechanism

Annual assessment.
Public reporting.
Outcome monitoring.
Scrutiny of government performance.
Tracking expenditure against priorities.
Reporting directly to the Assembly.
Corrective action where commitments are missed.

4.23 Cross-border and British-Irish cooperation

North/South cooperation.
British-Irish cooperation.
Local authority cooperation.
Civic and economic cooperation.
Cultural cooperation.
Shared environmental initiatives.

4.24 Peace as an economic strategy

Investment in disadvantaged areas.
Shared regeneration.
Social enterprise.
Tourism.
International peace expertise.
Cross-border economic cooperation.
Youth employment.
Skills and innovation.

4.25 Permanent Peace and Reconciliation Fund

Multi-year.
Strategic.
Transparent.
Outcome-based.
Accessible to smaller organisations.
Protected from short-term political pressures.

PART III: DELIVERY PROGRAMME

5. Governance and Accountability

Government responsibilities

Executive-level ministerial accountability.

Departmental delivery plans.
Dedicated budgets.
Annual reporting.
Legislative and policy alignment.

Assembly responsibilities

Annual debate.
Committee scrutiny.
Budgetary oversight.
Examination of missed targets.
Review of corrective action plans.

Independent oversight

Annual assessment.
Public scorecard.
Expenditure monitoring.
Outcome evaluation.
Independent recommendations.

Local government responsibilities

Local Peace and Reconciliation Delivery Strand.
Local outcomes and community participation.
Annual reporting aligned with the Plan.

6. Delivery Method

6.1 Delivery cycle

Evidence → Aim → Objectives → Co-produced programmes → Responsible actors → Resources → Communication → Monitoring → Evaluation → Review and revision

6.2 Minimum requirements for every programme

- A clear description of the problem.
- Identification of affected people and communities.
- Available evidence and baseline measures.
- A specific aim.
- Measurable objectives.
- A defined delivery mechanism.
- A responsible actor.
- Resource requirements.
- Equality and human-rights assessment.
- Public reporting arrangements.
- A review and revision mechanism.

6.3 Meaningful participation

People and communities affected by peacebuilding must have a meaningful role in its design, implementation and review. Participation must go beyond consultation and include practical opportunities to shape priorities, programmes and evaluation.

7. 2028–2038 Roadmap

Period	Main activity	Required output
2028	Establish the Plan, Delivery Unit, oversight arrangements and baselines.	Approved Plan, governance structure and baseline data.
2028	Establish baseline measures for sectarian attitudes and prejudice.	Public targets and annual measurement system.
2029–2030	Begin priority delivery.	Initial programmes on interfaces, paramilitarism, education, housing, anti-racism and participation.
2031–2032	Expand and adjust programmes.	Published outcome evidence and revised delivery where necessary.
2033	Conduct five-year independent review.	Public review and resource reset.
2034–2037	Accelerate implementation.	Removal of outstanding structural barriers.
2038	Assess the endpoint.	Determination of whether special peace-process arrangements remain necessary.

8. Reporting, Monitoring and Review

8.1 Annual Peace and Reconciliation Report

Progress against targets.
Failures and barriers.
Expenditure.
Evidence of outcomes.
Community experience.
Outstanding commitments.
Priorities for the following year.

8.2 Peace and Reconciliation Scorecard

The Scorecard should distinguish between activity measures, output measures, outcome measures and impact measures. It should report baselines, targets, current performance, trends, departmental responsibility, spending, community experience and corrective action.

8.3 Five-year independent review

What has changed.
What has failed.
What remains divided or unresolved.

What funding achieved.
What communities report.
Whether participation reflected Northern Ireland's diversity.
What should change for the second half of the Plan.

PART IV: THE ENDPOINT

9. The 2038 Outcome

Safety and freedom from coercion

Sustained peace.
No paramilitary coercive control.
Reduced hate crime.
Greater community safety.

Equality and inclusion

Meaningful equality.
Reduced discrimination.
Inclusive housing and public spaces.
A society in which new and established communities belong.

Shared institutions and relationships

Reduced segregation.
Expanded integrated and shared education.
Strong civic participation.
Trusted institutions.
Effective cross-community relationships.

The past and future generations

Trusted, rights-based legacy processes.
More honest and inclusive historical understanding.
Young people growing up with substantially less inherited division.
Formerly marginalised groups participating equally in civic, political, cultural and social life.

10. Completing the Peace Process

The Plan is not designed to keep a permanent peace programme in place. Its purpose is to create the conditions in which Northern Ireland no longer needs a special peace process.

- Conflict management - responding to violence and instability.
- Conflict transformation - reducing harm and changing the conditions that fuel division.
- Reconciliation - building trust, equality, shared institutions and shared relationships.
- A normal democratic society - where people live, work and learn together without segregation, coercion or fear.

In simple terms, the goal is to finish the peace process by making it unnecessary.

CONCLUSION: 2028 IS THE TURNING POINT

2028 must be a point of delivery, not merely commemoration. The next stage of peacebuilding must reflect the full diversity of contemporary Northern Ireland and create a society in which everyone has a stake, everyone has a voice and everyone can live without fear, discrimination, coercion or exclusion.

By 2038, success should be measured by whether people's lives are measurably less shaped by division, discrimination, violence, coercion and inherited fear-not by the number of programmes delivered, meetings held or pounds spent.

The goal is not simply to preserve the peace we have achieved. It is to complete the work of building the peace we have not yet achieved.

APPENDICES - TO BE COMPLETED BY DELIVERY AGENCIES

Appendix 1: Delivery Framework and Responsibilities

This appendix should contain the detailed allocation of responsibilities across the Executive, Departments, local government, the Assembly, statutory bodies, civil society and communities.

Executive-level accountability.
Departmental delivery plans.
Local government delivery strands.
Civil society and community responsibilities.
Assembly scrutiny.
Independent oversight.
Funding and reporting responsibilities.

Appendix 2: Strategic Map of Existing Structures and Resources

For consistency, each organisation or Department should use the following format:

Heading	Contents
Organisation or Department	Name of body or institution.
Primary contribution to the Plan	Short description of its role.
Key delivery areas	Main activities relevant to the Plan.
Existing strategies and systems	Relevant strategies, programmes and duties.
Arm's-length bodies	Relevant public bodies and delivery agencies.
Funding streams	Relevant sources of financial support.
Reporting responsibilities	Required monitoring and reporting.

Appendix 3: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Definitions of activity, output, outcome and impact.
Baselines and targets.
Indicators and data sources.
Reporting frequency.
Responsibility for data collection.
Community and lived-experience evidence.
Equality and human-rights assessment.

Appendix 4: 2028–2038 Roadmap

Repeat the roadmap in a more detailed form, with milestones by year or phase and a clear link to departmental and local delivery plans.

Appendix 5: Proposed Peace and Reconciliation Scorecard

Transformation	Indicator	Baseline	2030 target	2033 target	2038 target	Responsible body	Reporting frequency
End paramilitary coercion	Communities reporting intimidation	To establish	To establish	To establish	To establish	Relevant departments	Annual
Reduce segregation	Children receiving shared or integrated education	To establish	To establish	To establish	To establish	Department of Education	Annual
Build inclusion	Reported racist and sectarian incidents	To establish	To establish	To establish	To establish	Relevant departments	Annual
Strengthen participation	Participation in civic structures	To establish	To establish	To establish	To establish	Executive and Assembly	Annual

Targets should be inserted only after the baseline methodology has been agreed.