



BELFAST 20/20 TAKE BACK THE CITY ONLINE SEMINARS

Financing & Ownership Thurs 9 April, 10am-12pm Online

Sustainability Thurs 23 April, 2-4pm Online

Architecture Thurs 30 April, 10am-12pm Online

Planning Thurs 7 May, 2-4pm Online

The Coronavirus crisis has laid bare a system wide failure in housing policy.

Join our Take Back The City Online Seminars to discuss what went wrong and how we can build safe and sustainable communities in future.

Our mission is to produce visionary and practical guidance on solving homelessness in an age of climate breakdown.

To do this, we want to facilitate a growing network of people who are up for using whatever time, influence and resources (however limited!) they have to make this happen.

Take Back the City Online Seminars are not just about exchanging

ideas. The sessions will be recorded and used to inform the development of actual proposals for sites across Belfast. The #BuildHomesNow campaign groups will use the proposals to campaign against detrimental plans which exclude housing for the homeless, attract financial partners to turn the proposals into a reality and build coalitions with people and organisation interested in taking back our city.



FINANCING & OWNERSHIP – GUARANTEEING EQUALITY AND RETAINING WEALTH

Thursday 9th April,
10am-12pm Online.

[**Register Here**](#)

We operate three models of housing provision for people – social housing (provided by the Housing Executive and Housing Associations), private rented and private ownership. Homelessness is spiralling despite the profitability of each of these models. How do we build at scale and at speed? What do alternative models such as cooperative ownership or group co-housing offer in terms of protecting people's right to housing?

Speakers including Tiziana O'Hara (Cooperative Alternatives), Paul Gosling (writer & broadcaster), Hugh Brennan (Ó Cualann Housing), Ama Goulden (Coin Street Community Builders).



SUSTAINABILITY - BUILDING THE COMMUNITIES OF TOMORROW

Thursday 23rd April,
2-4pm Online.

[**Register Here**](#)

Climate breakdown is the number one global priority. A just transition to a green city has to be a local priority and core to every decision impacting the environment and the lives of the people of this city. How do we build homes and communities which embed healthy habits into everyday activities - heating our homes, providing care, disposing & treating waste, travelling to school and work, shopping, growing and sharing resources.

Speakers including Dr Amanda Slevin & Prof John Barry (QUB & Place-Based Climate Action Network), Davie Philips, Cloughjordan Ecovillage/Cultivate.



ARCHITECTURE – COMMUNITY BY DESIGN

Thursday 30th April,
10am-12pm Online.

[**Register Here**](#)

The buildings people live in have a material impact on their mental and physical wellbeing. The physical environment children grow up in impacts on their ability to play, study, grow and develop to their fullest potential. It impacts on older people's ability to live at home for longer, on people with disabilities being able to live independently. Our homes need not just to meet our needs, but to adapt as our needs change. Designing to meet basic Decent Homes Standard is not enough – for a sustainable future, we need to build in ways that reduce carbon emissions and overall energy use, 'from cradle to cradle'. How do we meet this range of challenges and apply accepted best practice and standards in architecture to our context here?

Speakers including Clare Mulholland (QUB), Dr Nuala Flood (QUB), Fran Bradshaw (Anne Thorne Architects).



PLANNING – HOW TO PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Thursday 7th May,
2-4pm Online.

[**Register Here**](#)

Build Homes Now, like many other groups fighting for social, economic and environmental justice, have had negative experiences of the planning process. The bias in favour of commercial developments and private interests seems embedded into the letter of the law and goes beyond mere political preference. How do we engage, navigate and/or circumvent these processes to put people and the environment first?

Speakers including Nicholas Quinn (solicitor Ó Muirigh's and others (TBC).

BUILDING A PROGRESSIVE PLATFORM

It's a mess

It's a start

It's a flawed work of art

Your city, your call

Every crack, every wall

Pick a side, pick a fight

Get your epitaph right

SNOW PATROL – TAKE BACK THE CITY

Belfast is not sustainable. In 2019 housing need, housing stress and homelessness among children increased by one third. In west Belfast alone, there are almost 2,000 households recognised as homeless, including 1,145 children under the age of 18.

Demonstrating the failed vision of our official housing policy, in the same year just over £100 million was spent on new build social housing while over £400 million was paid out in housing benefit to private landlords across NI.

Large swathes of underused land are zoned for commercial development while land adjacent to so-called 'peace-walls' follow a strict 'no social housing' policy. Our approach to housing and planning prioritises private interests and is still shaped by sectarian influences 22 years into a peace process.

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH

Estates continue to be built with minimal considerations for sustainability – where our energy comes from, how we travel, what we buy, how we share. The planet burns while we wait on people with power to decide when is the right time to act.

WE NEED ACTION NOW

We have campaigned to end homelessness for years. But it's not enough to build homes alone; we need to build the smart communities of tomorrow.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We need to connect people with housing problems to people who are willing to be generous with their solutions. If you have skills in planning, architecture, financing, sustainability, urban design, technology, smart cities, permaculture design, coding or any other interests – join us! We need people passionate about making change. We want to harness the expertise, creativity and can-do attitude that makes Belfast great - and match that with the best in international talent. Together, we want to create a determined and effective voice that cannot be ignored by the powers that be.

#BUILDHOMESNOW

#TAKEBACKTHECITY

BuildHomesNow is a diverse collective of young people, parents, refugees and life-long residents of Belfast. We have at least two things in common - experience of homelessness and a determination to make ending homelessness a top public priority. We are currently campaigning for significant social housing to be built on sites across the city – Mackies, Hillview, Sirocco, Glenmona and Belfast Harbour.



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